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WE MUST HAVE REILLY HERE, AND YOU MUST ENDEAVOR TO CONVERT HIM FROM POPERY.—p. 28

COLLIER'S UNABRIDGED EDITION.

THE WORKS

OF

WILLIAM CARLETON.

VOLUME I.

WILLY REILLY.

FARDOROUGHA THE MISER.

THE BLACK BARONET;
OR, THE CHRONICLES OF BALLYTRAIN.

THE EVIL EYE;
OR, THE BLACK SPECTRE.

ILLUSTRATED.

NEW YORK:
P. F. COLLIER, PUBLISHER.

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Willy Reilly.

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

Most of our Irish readers must be aware that the following story is founded upon an incident in the history of the affections, which, ever since its occurrence, has occupied a large portion of popular interest. From the very first discovery of their attachment, the loves of "Willy Reilly" and his "Fair Cooleen Bawn" became celebrated, and were made the burden of many a rude ballad throughout Ireland. With the exception, however, of the one which we subjoin, they have all nearly disappeared; but that production, rude as it is, has stood its ground, and is permanently embodied as a favorite in the ballad poetry of the people. It is not, though couched in humble and unpretending language, without a good deal of rustic vigor, and, if we may be allowed the expression, a kind of inartistic skill, furnished either by chance or nature—it is difficult to determine which. We are of opinion, however, that it owes a great portion of its permanent popularity to feelings which have been transmitted to the people, arising not so much from the direct interest of the incidents embodied in it, as from the political spirit of the times in which they occurred. At that unhappy period the Penal Laws were in deadly and terrible operation; and we need not be surprised that a young and handsome Catholic should earn a boundless popularity, especially among those of his own creed, by the daring and resolute act of taking away a Protestant heiress—the daughter of a persecutor—and whose fame, from her loveliness and accomplishments, had already become proverbial among the great body of the Irish people, and, indeed, throughout all classes. It was looked upon as a kind of triumph over the persecutors; and, in this instance, Cupid himself seemed to espouse the cause of the beads and rosary, and to become a tight little Catholic. The character of Sir Robert Whitecraft (a fictitious name) is drawn from traditions which were some time ago floating among the people, but which are fast fading out of the popular mind. The mode of his death, and its concomitants, the author has often heard told in his youth, around the hob, during the long winter evenings. With respect to the description of the state of the unhappy Catholics, however I may have diminished, I have not exaggerated it; and I trust that I have done ample justice to the educated Protestants of the day, many of whom not only opposed the Government openly and directly—whose object was extermination by the withering operation of oppressive laws—but threw up their commissions as justices of the peace, and refused to become the tools and abettors of religious persecution. To such noble-minded men I trust I have rendered ample justice. The following is the celebrated ballad of "Willy Reilly," which is still sung, and will long continue to be sung, at many a hearth in Ireland:

"Oh! rise up Willy Reilly, and come alongst with me,
I mean for to go with you and leave this country,
To leave my father's dwelling, his houses and free lands—"
And away goes Willy Reilly and his dear *Cooleen Bawn*.

They go by hill and mountains, and by yon lonesome plain,
Through shady groves and valleys all dangers to refrain;
But her father followed after with a well-arm'd chosen band,
And taken was poor Reilly and his dear *Cooleen Bawn*.

It's home then she was taken, and in her closet bound,
Poor Reilly all in Sligo jail lay on the stony ground,
Till at the bar of justice before the Judge he'd stand,
For nothing but the stealing of his dear *Cooleen Bawn*.

"Now in the cold, cold iron, my hands and feet are bound,
I'm handcuffed like a murderer, and tied unto the ground;
But all this toil and slavery I'm willing for to stand,
Still hoping to be succored by my dear *Cooleen Bawn*."

The jailer's son to Reilly goes, and thus to him did say,
"Oh! get up, Willy Reilly, you must appear this day,

For great Squire Folliard's anger you never can
withstand;
I'm afear'd you'll suffer sorely for your dear *Cooleen
Bawn.*

"This is the news, young Reilly, last night that I
did hear,
The lady's oath will hang you, or else will set you
clear."
"If that be so," says Reilly, "her pleasure I will
stand,
Still hoping to be succored by my dear *Cooleen
Bawn.*"

Now Willy's drest from top to toe all in a suit of
green,
His hair hangs o'er his shoulders most glorious to
be seen;
He's tall and straight and comely as any could be
found,
He's fit for Folliard's daughter, was she heiress to
a crown.

The Judge he said, "This lady being in her tender
youth,
If Reilly has deluded her, she will declare the
truth."
Then, like a moving beauty bright, before him she
did stand.
"You're welcome there my heart's delight and
dear *Cooleen Bawn!*"

"Oh, gentlemen," Squire Folliard said, "with
pity look on me,
This villain came amongst us to disgrace our
family,
And by his base contrivances this villany was
planned;
If I don't get satisfaction I will quit this Irish land."

The lady with a tear began, and thus replied she,
"The fault is none of Reilly's, the blame lies all
on me:
I forced him for to leave his place and come along
with me;
I loved him out of measure, which has wrought our
destiny."

Then out bespoke the noble Fox, at the table he
stood by,
"Oh, gentlemen, consider on this extremity,
To hang a man for love is a murder you may see,
So spare the life of Reilly, let him leave this country."

"Good, my lord, he stole from her her diamonds,
and her rings,
Gold watch and silver buckles, and many precious
things,
Which cost me in bright guineas, more than five
hundred pound,
I will have the life of Reilly should I lose ten
thousand pounds."

"Good, my lord, I gave them him as tokens of
true love;
And when we are a-parting I will them all remove;
If you have got them, Reilly, pray send them home
to me;
They're poor compared to that true heart which I
have given to thee.

"There is a ring among them I allow yourself to
wear,
With thirty locket diamonds well set in silver fair;
And as a true-love token wear it on your right hand,
That you may think on my broken heart when
you're in a foreign land."

Then out spoke noble Fox, "You may let the
prisoner go,
The lady's oath has cleared him, as the Jury all
may know:
She has released her own true love, she has renewed his name,
May her honor bright gain high estate, and her offspring rise to fame."

This ballad I found in a state of wretched disorder. It passed from one individual to another by ear alone; and the inconsecutive position of the verses, occasioned by inaccuracy of memory and ignorance, has sadly detracted from its genuine force. As it existed in the oral versions of the populace, the narrative was grossly at variance with the regular progress of circumstances which characterize a trial of any kind, but especially such a trial as that which it undertakes to describe. The individuals concerned in it, for instance, are made to speak out of place; and it would appear, from all the versions that I have heard, as if every stanza was assigned its position by lot. This fact, however, I have just accounted for and remedied, by having restored them to their original places, so that the vigorous but rustic bard is not answerable for the confusion to which unprinted poetry, sung by an uneducated people, is liable. As the ballad now stands, the character of the poet is satisfactorily vindicated; and the disorder which crept in during the course of time, though strongly calculated to weaken its influence, has never been able to injure its fame. This is a high honor to its composer, and proves him well worthy of the popularity which, under such adverse circumstances, has taken so firm a hold of the present feeling, and survived so long.

The author trusts that he has avoided, as far as the truthful treatment of his subject would enable him, the expression of any political sentiment calculated to give offence to any party—an attempt of singular difficulty in a country so miserably divided upon religious feeling as this. The experience of centuries should teach statesmen and legislators that persecution, on account of creed and conscience, is not only bad feeling, but worse policy; and if the author, in these pages, has succeeded in conveying this self-evident truth to his readers, he will rest satisfied with that result, however severely the demerits of his work may be censured upon purely literary grounds. One thing may be said in his defence—that it was utterly impossible to dissociate the loves of this celebrated couple from the condition of

the country, and the operation of the merciless laws which prevailed against the Catholics in their day. Had the lovers both been Catholics, or both been Protestants, this might have been avoided; but, as political and religious matters then stood, to omit the state and condition of society which resulted from them, and so deeply affected their fate, would be somewhat like leaving the character of Hamlet out of the tragedy.

As the work was first written, I described a good many of the Catholic priests of the day as disguised in female apparel; but on discovering that there exists an ecclesiastical regulation or canon forbidding any priest, under whatever persecution or pressure, to assume such apparel for the purpose of disguising his person or saving his life, I, of course, changed that portion of the matter, although a layman might well be pardoned for his ignorance of an ecclesiastical statute, which, except in very rare cases, can be known only to ecclesiastics themselves. I retain one instance, however, of this description, which I ascribe to Hennessy, the degraded friar, who is a historical character, and who wrought a vast weight of evil, as an informer, against the Catholic priesthood of Ireland, both regular and secular.

With respect to the family name of the heroine and her father, I have adopted both the popular pronunciation and orthography, instead of the real. I give it simply as I found it in the ballad, and as I always heard it pronounced by the people; in the first place, from reluctance, by writing it accurately, to give offence to that portion of this highly respectable family which still exists; and, in the next, from a disinclination to disturb the original impressions made on the popular mind by the ballad and the traditions associated with it. So far as the traditions go, there was nothing connected with the heroine of which her descendants need feel ashamed. If it had been otherwise, her memory never would have been enshrined in the affections of the Irish people for such an unusual period of time.

DUBLIN, February, 1855.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

I AM agreeably called upon by my bookseller to prepare for a Second Edition of "Willy Reilly." This is at all times a pleasing call upon an author; and it is so especially to me, inasmuch as the first Edition was sold at the fashionable, but unreasonable, price of a guinea and a half—a price which, in this age of cheap literature, is almost fatal to the sale of any three-volume novel, no matter what may be its merits. With respect to "Willy Reilly," it may be necessary to say that I never wrote any work of the same extent in so short a time, or with so much haste. Its popularity, however, has been equal to that of any other of my productions; and the reception which it has experienced from the ablest public and professional critics of the day has far surpassed my expectations. I accordingly take this opportunity of thanking them most sincerely for the favorable verdict which they have generously passed upon it, as I do for their kindness to my humble efforts for the last twenty-eight years. Nothing, indeed, can be a greater encouragement to a literary man, to a novel writer, in fact, than the reflection that he has an honest and generous tribunal to encounter. If he be a quack or an impostor, they will at once detect him; but if he exhibit human nature and truthful character in his pages, it matters not whether he goes to his bookseller's in a coach, or plods there humbly, and on foot; they will forget everything but the value and merit of what he places before them. On this account it is that I reverence and respect them; and indeed I ought to do so, for I owe them the gratitude of a pretty long literary life.

Concerning this Edition, I must say something. I have already stated that it was written rapidly and in a hurry. On reading it over for correction, I was struck in my cooler moments by many defects in it, which were kindly overlooked, or, perhaps, not noticed at all. To myself, however, who had been brooding over this work for a long time, they at once became obvious. I have accordingly added an underplot of affection between Fergus Reilly—mentioned as a distant relative of my hero—and the *Cooleen Bawn's* maid, Ellen Connor. In doing so, I have not disturbed a single incident in the work; and the reader who may have perused the first Edition, if he should ever—as is not unfrequently the case—peruse this second one, will certainly wonder how the additions were made. That, however, is the secret of the author, with which they have nothing to do but to enjoy the book, if they can enjoy it.

With respect to the O'Reilly name and family, I have consulted my distinguished friend—and I am proud to call him so—John O' Donovan, Esq., LL.D., M.R.I.A., who, with the greatest kindness, placed the summary of the history of that celebrated family at my disposal. This learned gentleman is an authority beyond all question. With respect to Ireland—her language—her old laws—her history—her antiquities—her archæology—her topography, and the gene

alogy of her families, he is a perfect miracle, as is his distinguished fellow-laborer in the same field, Eugene Curry. Two such men—and, including Dr. Petrie, *three* such men—Ireland never has produced, and never *can* again—for this simple reason, that they will have left nothing after them for their successors to accomplish. To Eugene Curry I am indebted for the principal fact upon which my novel of the "Tithe Proctor" was written—the able introduction to which was printed *verbatim* from a manuscript with which he kindly furnished me. The following is Dr. O'Donovan's clear and succinct history of the O'Reilly family from the year 435 until the present time:

"The ancestors of the family of O'Reilly had been celebrated in Irish history long before the establishment of surnames in Ireland. In the year 435 their ancestor, Duach Galach, King of Connaught, was baptized by St. Patrick on the banks of Loch Scola, and they had remained Christians of the old Irish Church, which appears to have been peculiar in its mode of tonsure, and of keeping Easter (and, since the twelfth century, firm adherents to the religion of the Pope, till Dowell O'Reilly, Esq., the father of the present head of the name, quarrelling with Father Dowling, of Stradbally, turned Protestant, about the year 1800).

"The ancestor, after whom they took the family name, was Reillagh, who was chief of his sept, and flourished about the year 981.

"From this period they are traced in the Irish Annals through a long line of powerful chieftains of East Breifny (County Cavan), who succeeded each other, according to the law of Tanistry, till the year 1585, when two rival chieftians of the name, Sir John O'Reilly and Edmund O'Reilly, appeared in Dublin, at the parliament summoned by Perrot. Previously to this, John O'Reilly, finding his party weak, had repaired to England, in 1583, to solicit Queen Elizabeth's interest, and had been kindly received at Court, and invested with the order of Knighthood, and promised to be made Earl, whereupon he returned home with letters from the Queen to the Lord Deputy and Council of Ireland, instructing them to support him in his claims. His uncle, Edmund, of Kilnacrott, would have succeeded Hugh Connallagh O'Reilly, the father of Sir John, according to the Irish law of Tanistry, but he was set aside by Elizabeth's government, and Sir John set up as O'Reilly in his place. Sir John being settled in the chieftainship of East Breifny, entered into certain articles of agreement with Sir John Perrot, the Lord Deputy, and the Council of Ireland, whereby he agreed to surrender the principality of East Breifny to the Queen, on condition of obtaining it again from the crown *in capite* by English tenure, and the same to be ratified to him and the heirs male of his body. In consequence of this agreement, and with the intent of abolishing the tanistic succession, he, on the last day of August, 1590, perfected a deed of feofment, entailing thereby the seignory of Breifny (O'Reilly) on his eldest son, Malmore (Myles), surnamed *Alainn* (the comely), afterwards known as THE *Queen's O'Reilly*.

"Notwithstanding these transactions, Sir John O'Reilly soon after joined in the rebellion of Hugh, Earl of Tyrone, and died on the first of June, 1596. After his death the Earl of Tyrone set up his second brother, Philip, as the O'Reilly, and the government of Elizabeth supported the claim of Sir John's son, Malmore, THE COMELY, in opposition to Philip, and Edmund of Kilnacrott. But Malmore, the Queen's O'Reilly, was slain by Tyrone in the great battle of the Yellow Ford, near Benburb, on the 14th of August, 1598, and the Irish of Ulster agreed to establish Edmund of Kilnacrott, as THE O'REILLY.

"The lineal descendants of Sir John passed into the French service, and are now totally unknown, and probably extinct. The descendants of Edmund of Kilnacrott have been far more prolific and more fortunate. His senior representative is my worthy old friend Myles John O'Reilly, Esq., Heath House, Emo, Queen's Co., and from him are also descended the O'Reillys of Thomastown Castle, in the County of Louth, the Counts O'Reilly of Spain, the O'Reillys of Beltrasna, in Westmeath, and the Reillys of Scarva House, in the County of Down.

"Edmund of Kilnacrott had a son John who had a son Brian, by Mary, daughter of the Baron of Dunsany, who had a famous son Malmore, commonly called *Myles the Slasher*. This Myles was an able military leader during the civil wars of 1641, and showed prodigies of valor during the years 1641, 1642, and 1643; but, in 1644, being encamped at Granard, in the County of Longford, with Lord Castlehaven, who ordered him to proceed with a chosen detachment of horse to defend the bridge of Finea against the Scots, then bearing down on the main army with a very superior force, Myles was slain at the head of his troops, fighting bravely on the middle of the bridge. Tradition adds, that during this action he encountered the colonel of the Scots in single combat, who laid open his cheek with a blow of his sword; but Myles, whose jaws were stronger than a smith's vice, held fast

the Scotchman's sword between his teeth till he cut him down, but the main body of the Scots pressing upon him, he was left dead on the bridge.

"This Myles *the Slasher* was the father of Colonel John O'Reilly, of Ballymacadd, in the County Meath, who was elected Knight of the Shire for the County of Cavan, in the parliament held at Dublin on the 7th of May, 1689. He raised a regiment of dragoons, at his own expense, for the service of James II., and assisted at the siege of Londonderry in 1689. He had two engagements with Colonel Wolsley, the commander of the garrison of Belturbet, whom he signally defeated. He fought at the battles of the Boyne and Aughrim, and was included in the articles of capitulation of Limerick, whereby he preserved his property, and was allowed to carry arms.

"Of the eldest son of this Colonel John O'Reilly, who left issue, my friend Myles J. O'Reilly, Esq., is now the senior representative.

"From Colonel John O'Reilly's *youngest* son, Thomas O'Reilly, of Beltrasna, was descended Count Alexander O'Reilly, of Spain, who TOOK ALGIERS! immortalized by Byron. This Alexander was born near Oldcastle, in the County Meath, in the year 1722. He was Generalissimo of his Catholic Majesty's forces, and Inspector-General of the Infantry, etc., etc. In the year 1786 he employed the Chevalier Thomas O'Gorman to compile for him a history of the House of O'Reilly, for which he paid O'Gorman the sum of £1,137 10s., the original receipt for which I have in my possession.

"From this branch of the O'Reilly family was also descended the illustrious Andrew Count O'Reilly, who died at Vienna in 1832, at the age of 92. He was General of Cavalry in the Austrian service. This distinguished man filled in succession all the military grades in the Austrian service, with the exception of that of Field Marshal, and was called by Napoleon '*le respectable General O'Reilly.*'

"The eldest son of Myles J. O'Reilly, Esq., is a young gentleman of great promise and considerable fortune. His rencontre with Lord Clements (now Earl of Leitrim) has been not long since prominently before the public, and in a manner which does justice to our old party quarrels! Both are, however, worthy of their high descent; and it is to be hoped that they will soon become good friends, as they are both young, and remarkable for benevolence and love of fatherland."

As this has been considered by some persons as a historical novel, although I really never intended it as such, it may be necessary to give the reader a more distinct notion of the period in which the incidents recorded in it took place. The period then was about that of 1745, when Lord Chesterfield was Governor-General of Ireland. This nobleman, though an infidel, was a bigot, and a decided anti-Catholic; nor do I think that the temporary relaxation of the penal laws against Catholics was anything else than an apprehension on the part of England that the claims of the Pretender might be supported by the Irish Catholics, who then, so depressed and persecuted, must have naturally felt a strong interest in having a prince who professed their own religion placed upon the English throne. Strange as it may appear, however, and be the cause of it what it may, the Catholics of Ireland, as a people and as a body, took no part whatever in supporting him. Under Lord Chesterfield's administration, one of the most shocking and unnatural Acts of Parliament ever conceived passed into a law. This was the making void and null all intermarriages between Catholic and Protestant that should take place after the 1st of May, 1746. Such an Act was a renewal of the Statute of Kilkenny, and it was a fortunate circumstance to Willy Reilly and his dear *Cooleen Bawn* that he had the consolation of having been transported for seven years. Had her father even given his consent at an earlier period, the laws of the land would have rendered their marriage impossible. This cruel law, however, was overlooked; for it need hardly be said that it was met and spurned not only by human reason, but by human passion. In truth, the strong and influential of both religions treated it with contempt, and trampled on it without any dread of the consequences. By the time of his return from transportation, it was merely a dead letter, disregarded and scorned by both parties, and was no obstruction to either the marriage or the happiness of himself and his dear *Cooleen Bawn*.

I know not that there is any thing else I can add to this preface, unless the fact that I have heard several other ballads upon the subject of these celebrated lovers—all of the same tendency, and all in the highest praise of the beauty and virtues of the fair *Cooleen Bawn*. Their utter vulgarity, however, precludes them from a place in these pages. And, by the way, talking of the law which passed under the administration of Lord Chesterfield against intermarriages, it is not improbable that the elopement of Reilly and the *Cooleen Bawn*, in addition to the execution of the man to whom I have given the name of Sir Robert Whitecraft, may have introduced it in a spirit of reaction, not only

against the consequences of the elopement, but against the baronet's ignominious death. Thus, in every point from which we can view it, the fate of this celebrated couple involved not only popular feeling, but national importance.

I have not been able to trace with any accuracy or satisfaction that portion or branch of the O'Reilly family to which my hero belonged. The dreary lapse of time, and his removal from the country, have been the means of sweeping into oblivion every thing concerning him, with the exception of his love for Miss Folliard, and its strange consequences. Even tradition is silent upon that part of the subject, and I fear that any attempt to throw light upon it must end only in disappointment. I have reason to believe that the Counsellor Fox, who acted as his advocate, was never himself raised to the bench; but that that honor was reserved for his son, who was an active judge a little before the close of the last century.

W. CARLETON.

DUBLIN, December, 1856.

CHAPTER I.

An Adventure and an Escape.

SPIRIT of George Prince Regent James, Esq., forgive me this commencement! *

It was one evening at the close of a September month and a September day that two equestrians might be observed passing along one of those old and lonely Irish roads that seemed, from the nature of its construction, to have been paved by a society of antiquarians, if a person could judge from its obsolete character, and the difficulty, without risk of neck or limb, of riding a horse or driving a carriage along it. Ireland, as our English readers ought to know, has always been a country teeming with abundance—a happy land, in which want, destitution, sickness, and famine have never been felt or known, except through the mendacious misrepresentations of her enemies. The road we speak of was a proof of this; for it was evident to every observer that, in some season of superabundant food, the people, not knowing exactly how to dispose of their shilling loaves, took to paving the common roads with them, rather than they should be utterly useless. These loaves, in the course of time, underwent the process of petrifaction, but could not, nevertheless, be looked upon as wholly lost to the country. A great number of the Irish, within six of the last preceding years—that is, from '46 to '52—took a peculiar fancy for them as food, which, we presume, caused their enemies to say that we then had hard times in Ireland. Be this as it may, it enabled the sagacious epicures who lived upon them to retire, in due course, to the delightful retreats of Skull and Skibbereen,* and similar asylums, there to pass the very short remainder of their lives in health, ease, and luxury.

The evening, as we have said, was about the close of September, when the two equestrians we speak of were proceeding at a pace *necessarily slow*. One of them was a bluff, fresh-complexioned man, of about sixty summers; but although of a healthy look, and a frame that had evidently once been vigorous, yet he was a good deal stooped, had about him all the impotence of plethora, and his hair, which fell down his shoulders, was white as snow. The other, who rode pretty close to him, was much about his own age, or perhaps a few years older, if one could judge by a face that gave more undeniable evidences of those furrows and wrinkles which Time usually leaves behind him. This person did not ride exactly side by side with the first-mentioned, but a little aback, though not so far as to prevent the possibility of conversation. At this time it may be mentioned here that every man that could afford it wore a wig, with the exception of some of those eccentric individuals that are to be found in every state and period of society, and who are remarkable for that peculiar love of singularity which generally constitutes their character—a small and harmless ambition, easily gratified, and involving no injury to their fellow-creatures. The second horseman, therefore, wore a wig, but the other, although he eschewed that ornament, if it can be called so, was by no means a man of that mild and harmless character which we have attributed to the eccentric and unfashionable class of whom we have just spoken. So far from that, he was a man of an obstinate and violent temper, of strong and unreflecting prejudices both for good and evil, hot, persevering, and vindictive, though personally brave, intrepid, and

* I mean no offence whatsoever to this distinguished and multitudinous writer; but the commencement of this novel really resembled that of so many of his that I was anxious to avoid the charge of imitating him.

* Two poor-houses in the most desolate parts of the County of Cork, where famine, fever, dysentery, and cholera, rendered more destructive by the crowded state of the houses and the consequent want of ventilation, swept away the wretched inmates to the amount, if we recollect rightly, of sometimes from fifty to seventy per diem in the years '45 and '47.

often generous. Like many of his class, he never troubled his head about religion as a matter that must, and ought to have been, personally, of the chiefest interest to himself, but, at the same time, he was looked upon as one of the best and staunchest Protestants of the day. His loyalty and devotedness to the throne of England were not only unquestionable, but proverbial throughout the country; but, at the same time, he regarded no clergyman, either of his own or any other creed, as a man whose intimacy was worth preserving, unless he was able to take off his three or four bottles of claret after dinner. In fact, not to keep our readers longer in suspense, the relation which he and his companion bore to each other was that of master and servant.

The hour was now a little past twilight, and the western sky presented an unusual, if not an ominous, appearance. A sharp and melancholy breeze was abroad, and the sun, which had set among a mass of red clouds, half placid, and half angry in appearance, had for some brief space gone down. Over from the north, however, glided by imperceptible degrees a long black bar, right across the place of his disappearance, and nothing could be more striking than the wild and unnatural contrast between the dying crimson of the west and this fearful mass of impenetrable darkness that came over it. As yet there was no moon, and the portion of light or rather "darkness visible" that feebly appeared on the sky and the landscape, was singularly sombre and impressive, if not actually appalling. The scene about them was wild and desolate in the extreme; and as the faint outlines of the bleak and barren moors appeared in the dim and melancholy distance, the feelings they inspired were those of discomfort and depression. On each side of them were a variety of lonely lakes, abrupt precipices, and extensive marshes; and as our travellers went along, the hum of the snipe, the feeble but mournful cry of the plover, and the wilder and more piercing whistle of the curlew, still deepened the melancholy dreariness of their situation, and added to their anxiety to press on towards the place of their destination.

"This is a very lonely spot, your honor," said his servant, whose name was Andrew, or, as he was more familiarly called, Andy Cummiskey.

"Yes, but it's the safer, Andy," replied his master. "There is not a human habitation within miles of us."

"It doesn't follow, sir, that this place, above all others in the neighborhood, is not, especially at this hour, without some persons about it. You know *I'm* no coward, sir."

"What, you scoundrel! and do you mean to hint that *I'm* one?"

"Not at all, sir; but you see the truth is that, this being the very hour for duck and wild-fowl shootin', it's hard to say where or when a fellow might start up, and mistake me for a wild duck, and your honor for a curlew or a bittern."

He had no sooner spoken than the breeze started, as it were, into more vigorous life and ere the space of many minutes a dark impenetrable mist or fog was borne over from the solitary hills across the dreary level of country through which they passed, and they felt themselves suddenly chilled, whilst a darkness, almost palpable, nearly concealed them from each other. Now the roads which we have described, being almost without exception in remote and unfrequented parts of the country, are for the most part covered over with a thick *sole* of close grass, unless where a narrow strip in the centre shows that a pathway is kept worn, and distinctly marked by the tread of foot-passengers. Under all these circumstances, then, our readers need not feel surprised that, owing at once to the impenetrable obscurity around them, and the noiseless nature of the antique and grass-covered pavement over which they went, scarcely a distance of two hundred yards had been gained when they found, to their dismay, that they had lost their path and were in one of the wild and heathy stretches of unbounded moor by which they were surrounded.

"We have lost our way, Andy," observed his master. "We've got off that damned old path; what's to be done? where are you?"

"I'm here, sir," replied his man; "but as for what's to be done, it would take Mave Mullen, that sees the fairies and tells fortunes, to tell us that. For heaven's sake, stay where you are, sir, till I get up to you, for if we part from one another, we're both lost. Where are you, sir?"

"Curse you, sirra," replied his master angrily, "is this either a time or place to jest in? A man that would make a jest in such a situation as this would dance on his father's tombstone."

"By my soul, sir, and I'd give a five-pound note, if I had it, that you and I were dancing 'Jig Polthogue' on it this minute. But, in the mane time, the devil a one o' me sees the joke your honor speaks of."

"Why, then, do you ask me where I am, when you know I'm astray, that we're both astray, you snivelling old whelp? By the great and good King William, I'll be lost Andy!"

"Well, and even if you are, sir," replied Andy, who, guided by his voice, had now approached and joined him; "even if you are, sir, I trust you'll bear it like a Christian and a Trojan."

"Get out, you old sniveller—what do you mean by a Trojan?"

"A Trojan, sir, I was tould, is a man that lives by sellin' wild-fowl. They take an oath, sir, before they begin the trade, never to die until they can't help it."

"You mean to say, or to hint at least, that in addition to our other dangers we run the risk of coming in contact with poachers?"

"Well, then, sir, if I don't mistake they're out to-night. However, don't let us alarm one another. God forbid that I'd say a single word to frighten you; but still, you know yourself that there's many a man not a hundred miles from us that 'ud be glad to mistake you for a target, a mallard, or any other wild-fowl of that description."

"In the meantime we are both well armed," replied his master; "but what I fear most is the risk we run of falling down precipices, or walking into lakes or quagmires. What's to be done? This fog is so cursedly cold that it has chilled my very blood into ice."

"Our best plan, sir, is to dismount, and keep ourselves warm by taking a pleasant stroll across the country. The horses will take care of themselves. In the meantime keep up your spirits—we'll both want something to console us; but this I can tell you, that devil a bit of tombstone ever will go over either of us, barrin' the sky in heaven; and for our coffins, let us pray to the coffin-maker, bekaise, you see, it's the *maddhu ruah** (the foxes), and ravens, and other civilized animals that will coffin us both by instalments in their hungry guts, until our bones will be beautiful to look at—afther about six months' bleaching—and a sharp eye 'twould be that 'ud know the difference between masther and man then, I think."

We omitted to say that a piercing and most severe hoar frost had set in with the fog, and that Cummiskey's master felt the immediate necessity of dismounting, and walking about, in order to preserve some degree of animal heat in his body.

"I cannot bear this, Andy," said he, "and these two gallant animals will never recover it after the severe day's hunting they've had. Poor Fiddler and Piper," he exclaimed, "this has proved a melancholy day to you both. What is to be done, Andy? I am scarcely able to stand, and feel as if my strength had utterly left me."

"What, sir," replied his servant, who was certainly deeply attached to his master, "is it so bad with you as all that comes to? Sure I only thought to amuse you, sir. Come, take courage; I'll whistle, and maybe somebody will come to our relief."

He accordingly put his two fingers into his mouth, and uttered a loud and piercing whistle, after which both stood still for a time, but no reply was given.

"Stop, sir," proceeded Andrew; I'll give them another touch that'll make them spake, if there's any one near enough to hear us."

He once more repeated the whistle, but with two or three peculiar shakes or variations, when almost instantly one of a similar character was given in reply.

"Thank God," he exclaimed, "be they friends or foes, we have human creatures not far from us. Take courage, sir. How do you feel?"

"Frozen and chilled almost to death," replied his master; "I'll give fifty pounds to any man or party of men that will conduct us safely home."

"I hope in the Almighty," said Andrew to himself in an anxious and apprehensive tone of voice, "that it's not *Parrah Ruah* (Red Patrick), the red Rapparee, that's in it, and I'm afeered it is, for I think I know his whistle. There's not a man in the three baronies could give such a whistle as that, barring himself. If it is, the masther's a gone man, and I'll not be left behind to tell the story, God protect us!"

"What are you saying, Andy?" asked his master. "What were you muttering just now?"

"Nothing, sir, nothing; but there can be no harm, at all events, to look to our pistols. If there should be danger, let us sell our lives like men."

"And so we will, Andy. The country I know is in a disturbed and lawless state, and ever since that unfortunate affair of the priest, I know I am not popular with a great many. I hope we won't come across his Rapparee nephew."

"Whether we do or not, sir, let us look to our firearms. Show me yours till I settle the powdher in them. Why, God bless me, how you are tremblin'."

"It is not from fear, sir," replied the intrepid old man, "but from cold. If any thing should happen me, Andy, let my daughter know that my will is in the oaken cabinet; that is to say, the *last* I made. She is my heiress—but that she is by the laws of the land. However, as I had disposed of some personal property to other persons

* *Maddhu ruah*, or red dog, the Irish name for the fox.

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WHAT IS THIS, RANDAL? IS IT A DOUBLE MURDER YOU ARE ABOUT TO EXECUTE, YOU INHUMAN RUFFIAN?—p. 11.

which disposition I have revoked in the will I speak of—my last, as I said—I wish you to let her know where she may find it. Her mother's jewels are also in the same place—but they, too, are hers by right of law—her mother bequeathed them to her."

"Ah! sir, you are right to remember and think well of that daughter. She has been a guardian angel to you these five years. But why, sir, do you give me this message? Do you think I won't sell my life in defence of yours? If you do you're mistaken."

"I believe it, Andrew; I believe it, Andy," said he again, familiarizing the word; but if this red Rapparee should murder me, I don't wish you to sacrifice your life on my account. Make your escape if he should be the person who is approaching us, and convey to my daughter the message I have given you."

At this moment another whistle proceeded from a quarter of the moor much nearer them, and Andy, having handed back the pistols to his master, asked him should he return it.

"Certainly," replied the other, who during all this time was pacing to and fro, in order to keep himself from sinking; "certainly, let us see whether these persons are friends or enemies."

His servant then replied to the whistle, and in a few minutes it was answered again, whilst at the same time a strong but bitter wind arose which cleared away the mist, and showed them with considerable distinctness the position which they occupied.

Within about ten yards of them, to the left, the very direction in which they had been proceeding, was a small deep lake or tarn, utterly shoreless, and into which they unquestionably would have walked and perished, as neither of them knew how to swim. The clearing away of the mist, and the light of the stars (for the moon had not yet risen), enabled the parties to see each other, and in a few minutes Andrew and his master were joined by four men, the principal person among them being the identical individual whom they both had dreaded—the Red Rapparee.

"Master," said Cummiskey, in a whisper, on seeing them approach, "we must fight for it, I'm afeered, but let us not be rash; there may be a friend or two among them, and it is better to come off peaceably if we can."

"I agree with you," replied his master. "There is no use in shedding unnecessary blood; but, in any event, let us not permit them to disarm us, should they insist on doing so. They know I never go three yards from my hall-door without arms, and it is not improbable they may make a point of taking them from us. I, however, for one, will not trust to their promises, for I know their treachery, as I do their cowardice, when their numbers are but few, and an armed opponent or two before them, determined to give battle. Stand, therefore, by me, Andy, and, by King William, should they have recourse to violence, we shall let them see, and feel too, that we are not unprepared."

"I have but one life, sir," replied his faithful follower; "it was spent—at least its best days were—in your service, and sooner than any danger should come to you, it will be lost in your defence. If it was only for the sake of her, that is not here, the *Cooleen Bawn*, I would do it."

"Who goes there?" asked a deep and powerful voice when the parties had come within about twenty yards of each other.

"By the powers!" exclaimed Andrew in a whisper, "it's himself—the Red Rapparee!"

"We are friends," he replied, "and have lost our way."

The other party approached, and, on joining our travellers, the Rapparee started, exclaiming, "What, noble Squire, is it possible that this is you? Hut! it can't be—let me look at you closer, till I make sure of you."

"Keep your distance, sir," replied the old man with courage and dignity; "keep your distance; you see that I and my servant are both well armed, and determined to defend ourselves against violence."

An ominous and ferocious glance passed from the Rapparee to his comrades, who, however, said nothing, but seemed to be resolved to guide themselves altogether by his conduct. The Red Rapparee was a huge man of about forty, and the epithet of "Red" had been given to him in consequence of the color of his hair. In expression his countenance was by no means unhandsome, being florid and symmetrical, but hard, and with scarcely any trace of feeling. His brows were far asunder, arguing ingenuity and invention, but his eyes, which were small and treacherous, glared—whenever he became excited—with the ferocity of an enraged tiger. His shoulders were broad, his chest deep and square, his arms long and powerful, but his lower limbs were somewhat light in proportion to the great size of his upper figure. This, however, is generally the case when a man combines in his own person the united qualities of activity and strength. Even at the period we are describing, when this once celebrated character was forty years of age, it was well known that in fleetness of foot there was no man in the province able to compete with him. In athletic exercises that required strength and skill he never had a rival, but one—with whom the reader will

soon be made acquainted. He was wrapped loosely in a gray frieze big-coat, or *cothamore*, as it is called in Irish—wore a hat of two colors, and so pliant in texture that he could at any time turn it inside out. His coat was—as indeed were all his clothes—made upon the same principle, so that when hard pressed by the authorities he could in a minute or two transmute himself into the appearance of a man very different from the individual described to them. Indeed he was such a perfect Proteus that no vigilance of the Executive was ever a match for his versatility of appearance, swiftness of foot, and caution. These frequent defeats of the authorities of that day made him extremely popular with the people, who were always ready to afford him shelter and means of concealment, in return for which he assisted them with food, money, and the spoils of his predatory life. This, indeed, was the sagacious principle of the Irish Robbers and Rapparees from the beginning—*to rob from the rich and give to the poor* being their motto.

The persons who accompanied him on this occasion were three of his own gang, who usually constituted his body-guard, and acted as videttes, either for his protection or for the purpose of bringing him information of such travellers as from their known wealth or external appearance might be supposed worth attacking. They were well-made, active, and athletic men, in whom it would not be easy to recognize any particular character at variance with that of the peasantry around them. It is unnecessary to say that they were all armed. Having satisfied himself as to the identity of master and man, with a glance at his companions, the Rapparee said,

"What on earth brought you and Andy Cummiskey here, noble squire? Oh! you lost your way, Andy says. Well now," he proceeded, "you know I have been many a day and night on the lookout for you; aye, could have put daylight through you many and many a time; and what do you think prevented me?"

"Fear of God, or of the gallows, I hope," replied the intrepid old man.

"Well," returned the Rapparee, with a smile of scorn, "I'm not a man—as I suppose you may know—that ever feared either of them much—God forgive me for the one, I don't ask his forgiveness for the other. No, Squire Folliard, it was the goodness, the kindness, the generosity, and the charity of the *Cooleen Bawn*, your lovely daughter, that held my hand. You persecuted my old uncle, the priest, and you would a' hanged him too, for merely marryin' a Protestant and a Catholic together. Well, sir, your fair daughter, and her good mother—that's now in heaven, I hope—went up to Dublin to the Lord Lieutenant, and before him the *Cooleen Bawn*, went on her two knees and begged my uncle's life, and got it; for the Lord Lieutenant said that no one could deny her any thing. Now, sir, for her sake, go home in peace. Boys, get their horses."

Andy Cummiskey would have looked upon all this as manly and generous, but he could not help observing a particular and rather sinister meaning in the look which the Rapparee turned on his companions as he spoke. He had often heard, too, of his treacherous disposition and his unrelenting cruelty whenever he entertained a feeling of vengeance. In his present position, however, all he could do was to stand on his guard; and with this impression strong upon him he resolved to put no confidence in the words of the Rapparee. In a few minutes the horses were brought up, and Randy (Randal) Ruah having wiped Mr. Folliard's saddle—for such was his name—with the skirt of his *cothamore*, and removed the hoar frost or rime which had gathered on it, he brought the animal over to him, and said, with a kind of rude courtesy,

"Come, sir, trust me; I will help you to your saddle."

"You have not the reputation of being trustworthy," replied Mr. Folliard; "keep back, sir, at your peril; I will *not* trust you. My own servant will assist me."

This seemed precisely the arrangement which the Rapparee and his men had contemplated. The squire, in mounting, was obliged, as every man is, to use both his hands, as was his servant also, while assisting him. They consequently put up their pistols until they should get into the saddles, and, almost in an instant, found themselves disarmed, and prisoners in the hands of these lawless and unscrupulous men.

"Now, Squire Folliard," exclaimed the Rapparee, "see what it is not to trust an honest man; had you done so, not a hair of your head would be injured. As it is, I'll give you five minutes to do three things; remember my uncle, the priest, that you transported."

"He acted most illegally, sir," replied the old man indignantly; "and, in my opinion, I say that, in consequence of his conduct, the country had a good riddance of him. I only wish I could send you after him; perhaps I shall do so yet. I believe in Providence, sirra, and that God can protect me from your violence even here."

"In the next place," proceeded the Rapparee, "think of your daughter, that you will never see again, either in this world or the next."

"I know I am unworthy of having such an angel," replied the old man, "but unless you were a cruel and a heartless ruffian, you would not at this moment mention her, or bring the thoughts of her to my recollection."

"In the last place, continued the other, "if you have any thing to say in the shape of a prayer, say it, for in five minutes' time there will be a bullet through your heart, and in five more you will be snug and warm at the bottom of the loch there below—that's your doom."

"O'Donnel," said Andy, "think that there's a God above you. Surely you wouldn't murdher this ould man and make the sowl within your body redder—if the thing's possible—than the head that's on the top of it, though in throth I don't think it's by way of ornament it's there either. Come, come, Randal, my man, this is all *frasthalagh* (nonsense). You only want to frighten the gentleman. As for your uncle, man alive, all I can say is that he was a friend to your family, and to religion too, that sent him on his travels."

"Take off your gallowses" (braces), said the Rapparee; "take them off, a couple of you—for, by all the powers of darkness, they'll both go to the bottom of the loch together, back to back. Down you'll go, Andy."

"By my soul, then," replied the unflinching servant, "if we go down you'll *go up;* and we have those belongin' to us that will see you kiss the hangman yet. Yerra, now, above all words in the alphabet what could put a gallows into your mouth? Faith, Randal, it's about your neck it'll go, and you'll put out your tongue at the daicent people that will attend your own funeral yet —that is, if you don't let us off."

"Put them both to their knees," said the Rapparee in a voice of thunder, "to their knees with them. I'll take the masther, and, Kineely, do you take the man."

The companions of the Rapparee could not avoid laughing at the comic courage displayed by Cummiskey, and were about to intercede for him, when O'Donnel, which was his name, stamped with fury on the ground and asked them if they dared to disobey him. This sobered them at once, and in less than a minute Mr. Folliard and Andy were placed upon their knees, to await the terrific sentence which was about to be executed on them, in that wild and lonely moor, and under such appalling circumstances. When placed in the desired posture, to ask that mercy from God which they were not about to experience at the hands of man, Squire Folliard spoke:

"Red Rapparee," said he, "it is not that I am afraid of *death* as *such*, but I feel that I am not prepared to die. Suffer my servant and myself to go home without harm, and I shall engage not only to get you a pardon from the Government of the country, but I shall furnish you with money either to take you to some useful calling, or to emigrate to some foreign country, where nobody will know of your misdeeds, or the life you have led here."

"Randal, my man," added Andy, "listen to what the gentleman says, and you may escape what you know yet. As for my masther, Randal, let *him* pass, and take me in his place. I may as well die now, maybe, as another time. I was an honest, faithful servant, at all times. I have neither chick nor child to cry for me. No wife, thank God, to break my heart afther. My conscience is light and airy, like a beggarman's blanket, as they say; and, barrin' that I once got drunk wid your uncle in Moll Flanagan's sheebeen house, I don't know that I have much to trouble me. Spare *him*, then, and take *me*, if it must come to that He has the *Cooleen Bawn* to think for. Do you think of her, too; and remember that it was she who saved your uncle from the gallows."

This unlucky allusion only deepened the vengeance of the Red Rapparee, who looked to the priming of his gun, and was in the act of preparing to perpetrate this most inhuman and awful murder, when an interruption took place for which neither party was prepared.

Now, it so happened that within about eight or ten yards of where they stood there existed the walls and a portion of the arched roof of one of those old ecclesiastical ruins, which our antiquarians denominate *Cyclopean*, like *lucus a non lucendo*, because scarcely a dozen men could kneel in them. Over this sad ruin was what sportsmen term "a pass" for duck and widgeon, and, aided by the shelter of the building, any persons who stationed themselves there could certainly commit great havoc among the wild-fowl in question. The Red Rapparee then had his gun in his hand, and was in the very act of adjusting it to his shoulder, when a powerful young man sprung forward, and dashing it aside, exclaimed:

"What is this, Randal? Is it a double murder you are about to execute, you inhuman ruffian?"

The Rapparee glared at him, but with a quailing and subdued, yet sullen and vindictive, expression.

"Stand up, sir," proceeded this daring and animated young man, addressing Mr.

Folliard; "and you, Cummiskey, get to your legs. No person shall dare to injure either of you while I am here. O'Donnel—stain and disgrace to a noble name—begone, you and your ruffians. I know the cause of your enmity against this gentleman; and I tell you now, that if you were as ready to sustain your religion as you are to disgrace it by your conduct, you would not become a curse to it and the country, nor give promise of feeding a hungry gallows some day, as you and your accomplices will do."

Whilst the young stranger addressed these miscreants with such energy and determination, Mr. Folliard, who, as well as his servant, had now got to his legs, asked the latter in a whisper who he was.

"By all that's happy, sir," he replied, "it's himself, the only man living that the Red Rapparee is afraid of; it's 'Willy Reilly.'"

CHAPTER II.

The Cooleen Bawn.

The old man became very little wiser by the information of his servant, and said in reply, "I hope, Andy, he's not a Papist;" but checking the unworthy prejudice—and in him such prejudices were singularly strong in words, although often feeble in fact—he added, "it matters not—we owe our lives to him—the deepest and most important obligation that one man can owe to another. I am, however, scarcely able to stand; I feel benumbed and exhausted, and wish to get home as soon as possible."

"Mr. Reilly," said Andy, "this gentleman is very weak and ill; and as you have acted so much like a brave man and a gentleman, maybe you'd have no objection to see us safe home."

"It is my intention to do so," replied Reilly. "I could not for a moment think of leaving either him or you to the mercy of this treacherous man, who dishonors a noble name. Randal," he proceeded, addressing the Rapparee, "mark my words!—if but a single hair of this gentleman's head, or of any one belonging to him, is ever injured by you or your gang, I swear that you and they will swing, each of you, from as many gibbets, as soon as the course of the law can reach you. You know me, sir, and my influence over those who protect you. As for you, Fergus," he added, addressing one of the Rapparee's followers, "you are, thank God! the only one of my blood who has ever disgraced it by leading such a lawless and guilty life. Be advised by me—leave that man of treachery, rapine, and murder—abandon him and reform your life—and if you are disposed to become a good and an industrious member of society, go to some other country, where the disgrace you have incurred in this may not follow you. Be advised by me, and you shall not want the means of emigrating. Now begone; and think, each of you, of what I have said."

The Rapparee glanced at the noble-looking young fellow with the vindictive ferocity of an enraged bull, who feels a disposition to injure you, but is restrained by terror; or, which is quite as appropriate, a cowardly but vindictive mastiff, who eyes you askance, growls, shows his teeth, but has not the courage to attack you.

"Do not look at me so, sir," said Reilly; "you know I fear you not."

"But in the meantime," replied the Rapparee, "what's to prevent me from putting a bullet into you this moment, if I wish to do it?"

"There are ten thousand reasons against it," returned Reilly. "If you did so, in less than twenty-four hours you would find yourself in Sligo jail—or, to come nearer the truth, in less than five minutes you would find yourself in hell."

"Well, now, suppose I should make the trial," said the Rapparee. "You don't know, Mr. Reilly, how you have crossed me to-night. Suppose now I should try—and suppose, too, that not one of you three should leave the spot you stand on only as corpses—wouldn't I have the advantage of you then?"

Reilly turned towards the ruined chapel, and simply raising his right hand, about eight or ten persons made their appearance; but, restrained by signal from him, they did not advance.

"That will do," said he. "Now, Randal, I hope you understand your position. Do not provoke me again; for if you do I will surround you with toils from which you could as soon change your fierce and brutal nature as escape. Yes, and I will take you in the midst of your ruffian guards, and in the deepest of your fastnesses, if ever you provoke me as you have done on other occasions, or if you ever injure this gentleman or any individual of his family. Come, sir," he proceeded, addressing the old man, "you are now mounted—my horse is in this old ruin—and in a moment I shall be ready to accompany you."

Reilly and his companions joined our travellers, one of the former having offered the old squire a large frieze great-coat, which he gladly accepted, and having thus formed a guard of safety for him and his faithful

attendant, they regained the old road we have described, and resumed their journey.

When they had gone, the Rapparee and his companions looked after them with blank faces for some minutes.

"Well," said their leader, "Reilly has knocked up our game for this night. Only for him I'd have had a full and sweet revenge. However, never mind: it'll go hard with me, or I'll have it yet. In the mane time it won't be often that such another opportunity will come in our way."

"Well, now that it is over, what was your intention, Randal?" asked the person to whom Reilly had addressed himself.

"Why," replied the miscreant, "after the deed was done, what was to prevent us from robbing the house to-night, and taking away his daughter to the mountains. I have long had my eye on her, I can tell you, and it'll cost me a fall, or I'll have her yet."

"You had better," replied Fergus Reilly, for such was his name, "neither make nor meddle with that family afther this night. If you do, that terrible relation of mine will hang you like a dog."

"How will he hang me like a dog?" asked the Rapparee, knitting his shaggy eyebrows, and turning upon him a fierce and gloomy look.

"Why, now, Randal, you know as well as I do," replied the other, "that if he only raised his finger against you in the country, the very people that harbor both you and us would betray us, aye, seize us, and bind us hand and foot, like common thieves, and give us over to the authorities. But as for himself, I believe you have sense enough to let him alone. When you took away Mary Traynor, and nearly kilt her brother, the young priest—you know they were Reilly's tenants—I needn't tell you what happened: in four hours' time he had the country up, followed you and your party—I wasn't with you then, but you know it's truth I'm spakin'—and when he had five to one against you, didn't he make them stand aside until he and you should decide it between you? Aye, and you know he could a' brought home every man of you tied neck and heels, and would, too, only that there was a large reward offered for the takin' of you livin' or dead, and he scorned to have any hand in it on that account."

"It was by a chance blow he hit me," said the Rapparee—"by a chance blow."

"By a couple dozen chance blows," replied the other; "you know he knocked you down as fast as ever you got up—I lave it to the boys here that wor present."

"There's no use in denyin' it, Randal," they replied; "you hadn't a chance wid him."

"Well, at all events," observed the Rapparee, "if he did beat me, he's the only man in the country able to do it; but it's not over, curse him—I'll have another trial with him yet."

"If you take my advice," replied Reilly, "you'll neither make nor meddle with him. He's the head o' the Catholics in this part of the country, and you know *that;* aye, and he's their friend, and uses the friendship that the Protestants have towards him for their advantage, wherever he can. The man that would injure Willy Reilly is an enemy to our religion, as well as to every thing that's good and generous; and mark me, Randal, if ever you cross him in what he warned you against this very night, I'll hang you myself, if there wasn't another livin' man to do it, and to the back o' that again I say you must shed no blood so long as I am with you."

"That won't be long, then," replied the Rapparee, pulling out a purse; "there's twenty guineas for you, and go about your business; but take care, no treachery."

"No," replied the other, "I'll have none of your money; there's blood in it. God forgive me for ever joinin' you. When I want money I can get it; as for treachery, there's none of it in my veins; good-night, and remember my words."

Having thus spoken, he took his way along the same road by which the old squire and his party went.

"That fellow will betray us," said the Rapparee.

"No," replied his companions firmly, "there never was treachery in *his* part of the family; he is not come from any of *the Queen's* O'Reillys.* We wish you were as sure of every man you have as you may be of him."

"Well, now," observed their leader, "a thought strikes me; this ould squire will be half dead all night. At any rate he'll sleep like a top. Wouldn't it be a good opportunity to attack the house—aise him of his money, for he's as rich as a Jew—and take away the *Coolleen Bawn?* We'll call at Shane Bearna's † stables on our way and

* Catholic families who were faithful and loyal to Queen Elizabeth during her wars in Ireland were stigmatized by the nickname of the Queen's friends, to distinguish them from others of the same name who had opposed her, on behalf of their religion, in the wars which desolated Ireland during her reign; a portion of the family of which we write were on this account designated as the *Queen's* O'Reillys.

† Shane Bearna was a celebrated Rapparee, who, among his other exploits, figured principally as a horse-stealer. He kept the stolen animals concealed in remote mountain caves, where he

bring the other boys along wid us. What do you say?"

"Why, that you'll hang yourself, and every man of us."

"Nonsense, you cowardly dogs," replied their leader indignantly; "can't we lave the country?"

"Well, if you're bent on it," replied his followers, "we won't be your hindrance."

"We can break up, and be off to America," he added.

"But what will you do with the *Cooleen Bawn*, if you take her?" they asked.

"Why, lave her behind us, afther showin' the purty creature the inside of Shane Bearna's stables. She'll be able to find her way back to her father's, never fear. Come, boys, now or never. To say the truth, the sooner we get out of the country, at all events, the better."

The Rapparee and his men had moved up to the door of the old chapel already alluded to, whilst this conversation went on; and now that their dreadful project had been determined on, they took a short cut across the moors, in order to procure additional assistance for its accomplishment.

No sooner had they gone, however, than an individual, who had been concealed in the darkness within, came stealthily to the door, and peeping cautiously out, at length advanced a few steps and looked timidly about him. Perceiving that the coast was clear, he placed himself under the shadow of the old walls—for there was now sufficient light to cast a shadow from any prominent object; and from thence having observed the direction which the Rapparee and his men took, without any risk of being seen himself, he appeared satisfied. The name of this individual—who, although shrewd and cunning in many things, was nevertheless deficient in reason—or rather the name by which he generally went, was Tom Steeple, a *sobriquet* given to him on account of a predominant idea which characterized and influenced his whole conversation. The great delight of this poor creature was to be considered the tallest individual in the kingdom, and indeed nothing could be more amusing than to witness the manner in which he held up his head while he walked, or sat, or stood. In fact his walk was a complete strut, to which the pride, arising from the consciousness of, or rather the belief in, his extraordinary height gave an extremely ludicrous appearance. Poor Tom was about five feet nine in height, but imagined himself to be at least a foot higher. His whole family were certainly tall, and one of the greatest calamities of the poor fellow's life was a bitter reflection that he himself was by several inches the lowest of his race. This was the only exception he made with respect to height, but so deeply did it affect him that he could scarcely ever allude to it without shedding tears. The life he led was similar in most respects to that of his unhappy class. He wandered about through the country, stopping now at one farmer's house, and now at another's, where he always experienced a kind reception, because he was not only amusing and inoffensive, but capable of making himself useful as a messenger and drudge. He was never guilty of a dishonest act, nor ever known to commit a breach of trust; and as a quick messenger, his extraordinary speed of foot rendered him unrivalled. His great delight, however, was to attend sportsmen, to whom he was invaluable as a guide and director. Such was his wind and speed of foot that, aided by his knowledge of what is termed the *lie* of the country, he was able to keep up with any pack of hounds that ever went out. As a *soho* man he was unrivalled. The form of every hare for miles about was known to him, and if a fox or a covey of partridges were to be found at all, he was your man. In wild-fowl shooting he was infallible. No pass of duck, widgeon, barnacle, or curlew, was unknown to him. In fact, his principal delight was to attend the gentry of the country to the field, either with harrier, foxhound, or setter. No coursing match went right if Tom were not present; and as for night shooting, his eye and ear were such as, for accuracy of observation, few have ever witnessed. It is true he could subsist a long time without food, but, like the renowned Captain Dalgetty, when an abundance of it happened to be placed before him, he displayed the most indefensible ignorance as to all knowledge of the period when he ought to stop, considering it his bounden duty on all occasions to clear off whatever was set before him—a feat which he always accomplished with the most signal success.

"Aha!" exclaimed Tom, "dat Red Rapparee is tall man, but not tall as Tom; him no steeple like Tom; but him rogue and murderer, an' Tom honest; him won't carry off *Cooleen Bawn* dough, nor rob her fader

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trimmed and dyed them in such a way as made it impossible to recognize them. These caves are curiosities at the present day, and are now known as *Shane Bearna's Stables*. He was a chief in the formidable gang of the celebrated Redmond O'Hanlon. It is said of him that he was called *Bearna* because he never had any teeth; but tradition tells us that he could, notwithstanding, bite a piece out of a thin plate of iron with as much ease as if it were gingerbread

ayder. Come, Tom, Steeple Tom, out with your two legs, one afore toder, and put Rapparee's nose out o' joint. *Cooleen Bawn* dat's good to everybody, Catlicks (Catholics) an' all, an' often ordered Tom many a bully dinner. Hicko! hicko! be de bones of Peter White—off I go!"

Tom, like many other individuals of his description, was never able to get over the language of childhood—a characteristic which is often appended to the want of reason, and from which, we presume, the term "innocent" has been applied in an especial manner to those who are remarkable for the same defect.

Having uttered the words we have just recited, he started off at a gait, peculiar to fools, which is known by the name of "a sling trot," and after getting out upon the old road he turned himself in the direction which Willy Reilly and his party had taken, and there we beg to leave him for the present.

The old squire felt his animal heat much revived by the warmth of the frieze coat, and his spirits, now that the dreadful scene into which he had been so unexpectedly cast had passed away without danger, began to rise so exuberantly that his conversation became quite loquacious and mirthful, if not actually, to a certain extent, incoherent.

"Sir," said he, "you must come home with me—confound me, but you must, and you needn't say nay, now, for I shall neither take excuse nor apology. I am a hospitable man, Mr.—what's this your name is?"

"My name, sir," replied the other, "is Reilly—William Reilly, or, as I am more generally called, Willy Reilly. The name, sir, though an honorable one, is, in this instance, that of an humble man, but one who, I trust, will never disgrace it."

"You must come home with me, Mr. Reilly. Not a word now."

"Such is my intention, sir," replied Reilly. "I shall not leave you until I see that all risk of danger is past—until I place you safely under your own roof."

"Well, now," continued the old squire, "I believe a Papist can be a gentleman—a brave man—a man of honor, Mr. Reilly."

"I am not aware that there is any thing in his religion to make him either dishonorable or cowardly, sir," replied Reilly with a smile.

"No matter," continued the other, who found a good deal of difficulty in restraining his prejudices on that point, "no matter, sir, no matter, Mr.—a—a—oh, yes, Reilly, we will have nothing to do with religion—away with it—confound religion, sir, if it prevents one man from being thankful, and grateful too, to another, when that other has saved his life. What's your state and condition in society, Mr.—? confound the scoundrel! he'd have shot me. We must hang that fellow—the Red Rapparee they call him—a dreadful scourge to the country; and, another thing, Mr.—Mr. Mahon—you must come to my daughter's wedding. Not a word now—by the great Boyne, you must. Have you ever seen my daughter, sir?"

"I have never had that pleasure," replied Reilly, "but I have heard enough of her wonderful goodness and beauty."

"Well, sir, I tell you to your teeth that I deny your words—you have stated a falsehood, sir—a lie, sir."

"What do you mean, sir?" replied Reilly, somewhat indignantly. "I am not in the habit of stating a falsehood, nor of submitting tamely to such an imputation."

"Ha, ha, ha, I say it's a lie still, my friend. What did you say? Why, that you had heard *enough* of her goodness and beauty. Now, sir, by the banks of the Boyne, I say you didn't hear *half enough* of either one or t'other. Sir, you should know her, for although you are a Papist you are a brave man, and a gentleman. Still, sir, a Papist is not—curse it, this isn't handsome of me, Willy. I beg your pardon. Confound all religions if it goes to that. Still at the same time I'm bound to say as a loyal man that Protestantism is my *forte*, Mr. Reilly—there's where I'm strong, a touch of Hercules about me there, Mr. Reilly—Willy, I mean. Well, you are a thorough good fellow, Papist and all, though you—ahem!—never mind though, you shall see my daughter, and you shall hear my daughter; for, by the great Boyne, she must salute the man that saved her father's life, and prevented her from being an orphan. And yet see, Willy, I love that girl to such a degree that if heaven was open for me this moment, and that Saint Peter—hem!—I mean the Apostle Peter, said to me, 'Come, Folliard, walk in, sir,' by the great Deliverer that saved us from Pope and Popery, brass money, and—ahem! I beg your pardon—well, I say if he was to say so, I wouldn't leave her. There's affection for you; but she deserves it. No, if ever a girl was capable of keeping an old father from heaven she is."

"I understand your meaning, sir," replied Reilly with a smile, "and I believe she is loved by every one who has the pleasure of knowing her—by rich and poor."

"Troth, Mr. Reilly," observed Andy, "it's a sin for any one to let their affections, even for one of their own childer, go between them and heaven. As for the masther, he makes a god of her. To be sure if ever there was an angel in this world she is one."

"Get out, you old whelp," exclaimed his

master; "what do you know about it?—you who never had wife or child? isn't she my only child?—the apple of my eye? the love of my heart?"

"If you loved her so well you wouldn't make her unhappy then."

"What do you mean, you despicable old Papist?"

"I mean that you wouldn't marry her to a man she doesn't like, as you're goin' to do. That's a bad way to make her happy, at any rate."

"Overlook the word *Papist*, Mr. Reilly, that I applied to that old idolater—the fellow worships images; of course you know, as a Papist, he does—ahem!—but to show you that I don't hate the Papist without exception, I beg to let you know, sir, that I frequently have the Papist priest of our parish to dine with me; and if that isn't liberality the devil's in it. Isn't that true, you superstitious old *Padareen?* No, Mr. Reilly, Mr. Mahon—Willy, I mean—I'm a liberal man, and I hope we'll be all saved yet, with the exception of the Pope—ahem! yes, I hope we shall all be saved."

"Throth, sir," said Andy, addressing himself to Reilly, "he's a quare gentleman, this. He's always abusing the Papists, as he calls us, and yet for every Protestant servant undher his roof he has three Papists, as he calls us. His bark, sir, is worse than his bite, any day."

"I believe it," replied Reilly in a low voice, "and it's a pity that a good and benevolent man should suffer these idle prejudices to sway him."

"Divil a bit they sway him, sir," replied Andy; "he'll damn and abuse them and their religion, and yet he'll go any length to serve one o' them, if they want a friend, and has a good character. But here, now we're at the gate of the avenue, and you'll soon see the *Cooleen Bawn*."

"Hallo!" the squire shouted out, "what the devil! are you dead or asleep there? Brady, you Papist scoundrel, why not open the gate?"

The porter's wife came out as he uttered the words, saying, "I beg your honor's pardon. Ned is up at the Castle;" and whilst speaking she opened the gate.

"Ha, Molly!" exclaimed her master in a tone of such bland good nature as could not for a moment be mistaken; "well, Molly, how is little Mick? Is he better, poor fellow?"

"He is, thank God, and your honor."

"Hallo, Molly," said the squire, laughing, "that's Popery again. You are thanking God and me as if we were intimate acquaintances. None of that foolish Popish nonsense. When you thank God, thank him; and when you thank me, why thank me; but don't unite us, as you do him and your Popish saints, for I tell you, Molly, I'm no saint; God forbid! Tell the doctorman to pay him every attention, and to send his bill to me when the child is properly recovered; mark that—properly recovered."

A noble avenue, that swept along with two or three magnificent bends, brought them up to a fine old mansion of the castellated style, where the squire and his two equestrian attendants dismounted, and were ushered into the parlor, which they found brilliantly lighted up with a number of large wax tapers. The furniture of the room was exceedingly rich, but somewhat curious and old-fashioned. It was such, however, as to give ample proof of great wealth and comfort, and, by the heat of a large peat fire which blazed in the capacious hearth, it communicated that sense of warmth which was in complete accordance with the general aspect of the apartment. An old gray-haired butler, well-powdered, together with two or three other servants in rich livery, now entered, and the squire's first inquiry was after his daughter.

"John," said he to the butler, "how is your mistress?" but, without waiting for a reply, he added, "here are twenty pounds, which you will hand to those fine fellows at the hall-door."

"Pardon me, sir," replied Reilly, "those men are my tenants, and the sons of my tenants: they have only performed towards you a duty, which common humanity would require at their hands towards the humblest person that lives."

"They must accept it, Mr. Reilly—they must have it—they are humble men—and as it is only the reward of a kind office, I think it is justly due to them. Here, John, give them the money."

It was in vain that Reilly interposed; the old squire would not listen to him. John was, accordingly, dispatched to the hall steps, but found that they had all gone.

At this moment our friend Tom Steeple met the butler, whom he approached with a kind of wild and uncouth anxiety.

"Aha! Mista John," said he, "you tall man too, but not tall as Tom Steeple—ha, ha—you good man too, Mista John—give Tom bully dinners—Willy Reilly, Mista John, want to see Willy Reilly."

"What do you want with him, Tom? he's engaged with the master."

"Must see him, Mista John; stitch in time saves nine. Hicko! hicko! God's sake, Mista John: God's sake! Up dere;" and as he spoke he pointed towards the sky.

"Well, but what is your business, then? What have you to say to him? He's engaged, I tell you."

Tom, apprehensive that he might not get an opportunity of communicating with Reilly, bolted in, and as the parlor door stood open, he saw him standing near the large chimney-piece.

"Willy Reilly!" he exclaimed in a voice that trembled with earnestness, "Willy Reilly, dere's news for you—for de squire too—bad news—God's sake come wid Tom—you tall too, Willy Reilly, but not tall as Tom is."

"What is the matter, Tom?" asked Reilly; "you look alarmed."

"God's sake, here, Willy Reilly," replied the kind-hearted fool, "come wid Tom. Bad news."

"Hallo!" exclaimed the squire, "what is the matter? Is this Tom Steeple? Go to the kitchen, Tom, and get one of your 'bully dinners'—my poor fellow—off with you—and a pot of beer, Tom."

An expression of distress, probably heightened by his vague and unconscious sense of the squire's kindness, was depicted strongly on his countenance, and ended in a burst of tears.

"Ha!" exclaimed Reilly, "poor Tom, sir, was with us to-night on our duck-shooting excursion, and, now that I remember, remained behind us in the old ruin—and then he is in tears. What can this mean? I will go with you, Tom—excuse me, sir, for a few minutes—there can be no harm in hearing what he has to say."

He accompanied the fool, with whom he remained for about six or eight minutes, after which he re-entered the parlor with a face which strove in vain to maintain its previous expression of ease and serenity.

"Well, Willy?" said the squire—"you see, by the way, I make an old acquaintance of you—"

"You do me honor, sir," replied Reilly.

"Well, what was this mighty matter? Not a fool's message, I hope? eh?"

"No, sir," said the other, "but a matter of some importance."

"John," asked his master, as the butler entered, "did you give those worthy fellows the money?"

"No, your honor," replied the other, 'they were gone before I went out."

"Well, well," replied his master, "it can't be helped. You will excuse me, Mr.—a—a—yes—Mr. Reilly—Willy—Willy—ay, that's it—you will excuse me, Willy, for not bringing you to the drawing-room. The fact is, neither of us is in a proper trim to go there—both travel-soiled, as they say—you with duck-shooting and I with a long ride—besides, I am quite too much fatigued to change my dress—John, some Madeira. I'm better than I was—but still dreadfully exhausted—and afterwards, John, tell your mistress that her father wishes to see her here. First, the Madeira, though, till I recruit myself a little. A glass or two will do neither of us any harm, Willy, but a great deal of good. God bless me! what an escape I've had! what a dreadful fate you rescued me from, my young friend and preserver—for as such I will ever look upon you."

"Sir," replied Reilly, "I will not deny that the appearance of myself and my companions, in all probability, saved your life."

"There was no probability in it, Willy—none at all; it would have been a dead certainty in every sense. My God! here, John—put it down here—fill for that gentleman and me—thank you, John—Willy," he said as he took the glass in his trembling hand—"Willy—John, withdraw and send down my daughter—Willy"—the old man looked at him, but was too full to utter a word. At this moment his daughter entered the room, and her father, laying down the glass, opened his arms, and said in a choking voice, "Helen, my daughter—my child—come to me;" and as she threw herself into them he embraced her tenderly and wept aloud.

"Dear papa!" she exclaimed, after the first burst of his grief was over, "what has affected you so deeply? Why are you so agitated?"

"Look at that noble young man," he exclaimed, directing her attention to Reilly who was still standing. "Look at him, my life, and observe him well; there he stands who has this night saved your loving father from the deadly aim of an assassin—from being murdered by O'Donnel, the Red Rapparee, in the lonely moors."

Reilly, from the moment the far-famed *Cudeen Bawn* entered the room, heard not a syllable the old man had said. He was absorbed, entranced, struck with a sensation of wonder, surprise, agitation, joy, and confusion, all nearly at the same moment. Such a blaze of beauty, such elegance of person, such tenderness and feeling as chastened the radiance of her countenance into something that might be termed absolutely divine; such symmetry of form; such harmony of motion; such a seraphic being in the shape of woman, he had, in fact, never seen or dreamt of. She seemed as if surrounded by an atmosphere of light, of dignity, of goodness, of grace; but that which, above all, smote his heart on the moment was the spirit of tenderness and profound

sensibility which seemed to predominate in her whole being. Why did his manly and intrepid heart palpitate? Why did such a strange confusion seize upon him? Why did the few words which she uttered in her father's arms fill his ears with a melody that charmed him out of his strength? Alas! is it necessary to ask? To those who do not understand this mystery, no explanation could be of any avail; and to those who do, none is necessary.

After her father had spoken, she raised herself from his arms, and assuming her full height—and she was tall—looked for a moment with her dark, deep, and terrible eyes upon Reilly, who in the meantime felt rapt, spell-bound, and stood, whilst his looks were riveted upon these irresistible orbs, as if he had been attracted by the influence of some delightful but supernatural power, under which he felt himself helpless.

That mutual gaze and that delightful moment! alas! how many hours of misery—of sorrow—of suffering—and of madness did they not occasion!

"Papa has imposed a task upon me, sir," she said, advancing gracefully towards him, her complexion now pale, and again overspread with deep blushes. "What do I say? A *task*—a task! to thank the preserver of my father's life—I know not what I say: help me, sir, to papa—I am weak—I am—" Reilly flew to her, and caught her in his arms just in time to prevent her from falling.

"My God!" exclaimed her father, getting to his feet, "what is the matter? I was wrong to mention the circumstance so abruptly; I ought to have prepared her for it. You are strong, Reilly, you are strong, and I am too feeble—carry her to the settee. There, God bless you!—God bless you!—she will soon recover. Helen! my child! my life! What, Helen! Come, dearest love, be a woman. I am safe, as you may see, dearest. I tell you I sustained no injury in life—not a hair of my head was hurt; thanks to Mr. Reilly for it—thanks to this gentleman. Oh! that's right, bravo, Helen—bravo, my girl! See that, Reilly, isn't she a glorious creature? She recovers now, to set her old loving father's heart at ease."

The weakness, for it did not amount altogether to insensibility, was only of brief duration.

"Dear papa," said she, raising herself, and withdrawing gently and modestly from Reilly's support, "I was unprepared for the account of this dreadful affair. Excuse me, sir; surely you will admit that a murderous attack on dear papa's life could not be listened to by his only child with indifference. But do let me know how it happened, papa."

"You are not yet equal to it, darling; you are too much agitated."

"I am equal to it now, papa! Pray, let me hear it, and how this gentleman—who will be kind enough to imagine my thanks, for, indeed, no language could express them—and how this gentleman was the means of saving you."

"Perhaps, Miss Folliard," said Reilly, "it would be better to defer the explanation until you shall have gained more strength."

"Oh, no, sir," she replied; "my anxiety to hear it will occasion me greater suffering, I am sure, than the knowledge of it, especially now that papa is safe."

Reilly bowed in acquiescence, but not in consequence of her words; a glance as quick as the lightning, but full of entreaty and gratitude, and something like joy—for who does not know the many languages which the single glance of a lovely woman can speak?—such a glance, we say, accompanied her words, and at once won him to assent.

"Miss Folliard may be right, sir," he observed, "and as the shock has passed, perhaps to make her briefly acquainted with the circumstances will rather relieve her."

"Right," said her father, "so it will, Willy, so it will, especially, thank God, as there has been no harm done. Look at this now! Get away, you saucy baggage! Your poor loving father has only just escaped being shot, and now he runs the risk of being strangled."

"Dear, dear papa," she said, "who could have thought of injuring *you*—you with your angry tongue, but your generous and charitable and noble heart?" and again she wound her exquisite and lovely arms about his neck and kissed him, whilst a fresh gush of tears came to her eyes.

"Come, Helen—come, love, be quiet now, or I shall not tell you any thing more about my rescue by that gallant young fellow standing before you."

This was followed, on her part, by another glance at Reilly, and the glance was as speedily followed by a blush, and again a host of tumultuous emotions crowded around his heart.

The old man, placing her head upon his bosom, kissed and patted her, after which he related briefly, and in such a way as not, if possible, to excite her afresh, the circumstances with which the reader is already acquainted. At the close, however, when he came to the part which Reilly had borne in the matter, and dwelt at more length on his intrepidity and spirit, and the energy of character and courage with which he quelled the terrible Rapparee, he was obliged to stop for a moment, and say,

"Why, Helen, what is the matter, my

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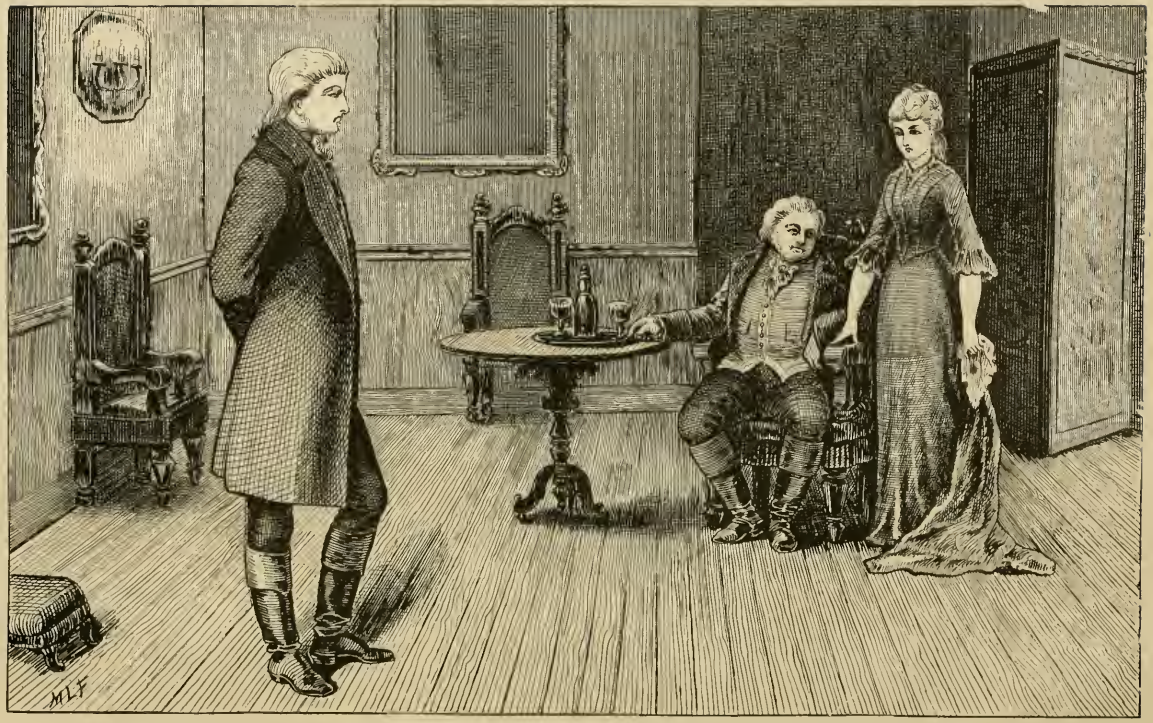

SHE RAISED HERSELF FROM HIS ARMS, AND ASSUMING HER FULL HEIGHT, LOOKED FOR A MOMENT WITH HER DARK, DEEP, AND TERRIBLE EYES UPON REILLY.—p. 18.

darling? Are you getting ill again? Your little heart is going at a gallop—bless me, how it pit-a-pats. There, now, you've heard it all—here I am, safe—and there stands the gentleman to whom, under God, we are both indebted for it. And now let us have dinner, darling, for we have not dined?"

Apologies on the part of Reilly, who really had dined, were flung to the winds by the old squire.

"What matter, Willy? what matter, man? —sit at the table, pick something—curse it, we won't eat you. Your dress? never mind your dress. I am sure Helen here will not find fault with it. Come, Helen, use your influence, love. And you, sir, Willy Reilly, give her your arm." This he added in consequence of dinner having been announced while he spoke; and so they passed into the dining-room.

CHAPTER III.

Daring Attempt of the Red Rapparee—Mysterious Disappearance of His Gang—The Avowal.

We must go back a little. When Helen sank under the dreadful intelligence of the attempt made to assassinate her father, we stated at the time that she was not absolutely insensible; and this was the fact. Reilly, already enraptured by such wonderful grace and beauty as the highest flight of his imagination could never have conceived, when called upon by her father to carry her to the sofa, could scarcely credit his senses that such a lovely and precious burden should ever be entrusted to him, much less borne in his very arms. In order to prevent her from falling, he was literally obliged to throw them around her, and, to a certain extent, to press her—for the purpose of supporting her—against his heart, the pulsations of which were going at a tremendous speed. There was, in fact, something so soft, so pitiable, so beautiful, and at the same time so exquisitely pure and fragrant, in this lovely creature, as her head lay drooping on his shoulder, her pale cheek literally lying against his, that it is not at all to be wondered at that the beatings of his heart were accelerated to an unusual degree. Now she, from her position upon his bosom, necessarily felt this rapid action of its tenant; when, therefore, her father, after her recovery, on reciting for her the fearful events of the evening, and dwelling upon Reilly's determination and courage, expressed alarm at the palpitations of *her* heart, a glance passed between them which each, once and forever, understood. She had felt the agitation of *his*, who had risked his life in defence of her father, for in this shape the old man had truly put it; and now she knew from her father's observation, as his arm lay upon her own, that the interest which his account of Reilly's chivalrous conduct throughout the whole affair had excited in it were discovered. In this case heart spoke to heart, and by the time they sat down to dinner, each felt conscious that their passion, brief as was the period of their acquaintance, had become, whether for good or evil, the uncontrollable destiny of their lives.

William Reilly was the descendant of an old and noble Irish family. His ancestors had gone through all the vicissitudes and trials, and been engaged in most of the civil broils and wars, which, in Ireland, had characterized the reign of Elizabeth. As we are not disposed to enter into a disquisition upon the history of that stormy period, unless to say that we believe in our souls both parties were equally savage and inhuman, and that there was not, literally, a toss up between them, we have only to add that Reilly's family, at least that branch of it to which he belonged, had been reduced by the ruin that resulted from the civil wars, and the confiscations peculiar to the times. His father had made a good deal of money abroad in business, but feeling that melancholy longing for his native soil, for the dark mountains and the green fields of his beloved country, he returned to it, and having taken a large farm of about a thousand acres, under a peculiar tenure, which we shall mention ere we close, he devoted himself to pasturage and agriculture. Old Reilly had been for some years dead, and his eldest son, William, was now not only the head of his immediate family, but of that great branch of it to which he belonged, although he neither claimed nor exercised the honor. In Reilly, many of those irreconcilable points of character, which scarcely ever meet in the disposition of any but an Irishman, were united. He was at once mild and impetuous; under peculiar circumstances, humble and unassuming, but in others, proud almost to a fault; a bitter foe to oppression in every sense, and to bigotry in every creed. He was highly educated, and as perfect a master of French, Spanish, and German, as he was of either English or Irish, both of which he spoke with equal fluency and purity. To his personal courage we need not make any further allusion. On many occasions it had been well tested on the Continent. He was an expert and unrivalled swordsman, and a first-rate shot, whether with the pistol or fowling-piece

At every athletic exercise he was matchless; and one great cause of his extraordinary popularity among the peasantry was the pleasure he took in promoting the exercise of such manly sports among them. In his person he combined great strength with remarkable grace and ease. The wonderful symmetry of his form took away apparently from his size; but on looking at and examining him closely, you felt surprised at the astonishing fulness of his proportions and the prodigious muscular power which lay under such deceptive elegance. As for his features, they were replete with that manly expression which changes with, and becomes a candid exponent of, every feeling that influences the heart. His mouth was fine, and his full red lips exquisitely chiselled; his chin was full of firmness; and his large dark eyes, though soft, mellow, and insinuating, had yet a sparkle in them that gave evidence of a fiery spirit when provoked, as well as of a high sense of self-respect and honor. His complexion was slightly bronzed by residence in continental climates, a circumstance that gave a warmth and mellowness to his features, which, when taken into consideration with his black, clustering locks, and the snowy whiteness of his forehead, placed him in the very highest order of handsome men.

Such was our hero, the fame of whose personal beauty, as well as that of the ever-memorable *Cooleen Bawn*, is yet a tradition in the country.

On this occasion the dinner-party consisted only of the squire, his daughter, and Reilly. The old man, on reflecting that he was now safe, felt his spirits revive apace. His habits of life were jolly and convivial, but not actually intemperate, although it must be admitted that on some occasions he got into the debatable ground. To those who did not know him, and who were acquainted through common report only with his unmitigated abuse of Popery, he was looked upon as an oppressive and overbearing tyrant, who would enforce, to the furthest possible stretch of severity, the penal enactments then in existence against Roman Catholics. And this, indeed, was true, so far as any one was concerned from whom he imagined himself to have received an injury; against such he was a vindictive tyrant, and a most implacable persecutor. By many, on the other hand, he was considered as an eccentric man, with a weak head, but a heart that often set all his anti-Catholic prejudices at complete defiance.

At dinner the squire had most of the conversation to himself, his loquacity and good-humor having been very much improved by a few glasses of his rich old Madeira. His daughter, on the other hand, seemed frequently in a state of abstraction, and, on more than one occasion, found herself incapable of answering several questions which he put to her. Ever and anon the timid, blushing glance was directed at Reilly, by whom it was returned with a significance that went directly to her heart. Both, in fact, appeared to be influenced by some secret train of thought that seemed quite at variance with the old gentleman's garrulity.

"Well," said he, "here we are, thank God, all safe; and it is to you, Willy, we owe it. Come, man, take off your wine. Isn't he a fine young fellow, Helen?"

Helen's heart, at the moment, had followed her eyes, and she did not hear him.

"Hello! what the deuce! By the banks of the Boyne, I believe the girl has lost her hearing. I say, Helen, isn't Willy Reilly here, that prevented you from being an orphan, a fine young fellow?"

A sudden rosy blush suffused her whole neck and face on hearing this blunt and inconsiderate question.

"What, darling, have you not heard me?"

"If Mr. Reilly were not present, papa, I might give an opinion on that subject; but I trust you will excuse me now."

"Well, I suppose so; there's no getting women to speak to the point. At all events, I would give more than I'll mention that Sir Robert Whitecraft was as good-looking a specimen of a man; I'll engage, if he was, you would have no objection to say *yes*, my girl."

"I look to the disposition, papa, to the moral feelings and principles, more than to the person."

"Well, Helen, that's right too—all right, darling, and on that account Sir Robert must and ought to be a favorite. He is not yet forty, and for this he is himself my authority, and forty is the prime of life; yet, with an immense fortune and strong temptations, he has never launched out into a single act of imprudence or folly. No, Helen, he never sowed a peck of wild oats in his life. He is, on the contrary, sober, grave, silent—a little too much so, by the way—cautious, prudent, and saving. No man knows the value of money better, nor can contrive to make it go further. Then, as for managing a bargain—upon my soul, I don't think he treated me well, though, in the swop of 'Hop-and-go-constant' against my precious bit of blood, 'Pat the Spanker.' He made me pay him twenty-five pounds boot for an old—But you shall see him, Reilly, you shall see him, Willy, and if ever there was a greater take in—you needn't smile, Helen, nor look at Willy. By the good King Wil-

liam that saved us from Pope, and—ahem—I beg pardon, Willy, but, upon my soul, he took me completely in. I say, I shall show you Hop-and-go-constant, and when you see him you'll admit the 'Hop,' but the devil a bit you will find of the 'Go-constant.'"

"I suppose the gentleman's personal appearance, sir," observed Reilly, glancing at Miss Folliard, "is equal to his other qualities."

"Why—a—ye—s. He's tall and thin and serious, with something about him, say, of a philosopher. Isn't that true, Helen?"

"Perfectly, papa," she replied, with a smile of arch humor, which, to Reilly, placed her character in a new light.

"Perfectly true, papa, so far as you have gone; but I trust you will finish the portrait for Mr. Reilly."

"Well, then, I will. Where was I? Oh, yes—tall, thin, and serious; like a philosopher. I'll go next to the shoulders, because Helen seems to like them—they are a little round or so. I, myself, wish to goodness they were somewhat straighter, but Helen says the curve is delightful, being what painters and glaziers call the line of beauty."

A sweet light laugh, that rang with the melody of a musical bell, broke from Helen at this part of the description, in which, to tell the truth, she was joined by Reilly. The old man himself, from sheer happiness and good-humor, joined them both, though utterly ignorant of the cause of their mirth.

"Aye, aye," he exclaimed, "you may laugh—by the great Boyne, I knew I would make you laugh. Well, I'll go on; his complexion is of a—a—no matter—of a good standing color, at all events; his nose, I grant you, is as thin, and much of the same color, as pasteboard, but as a set-off to that it's a thorough Williamite. Isn't that true, Helen?"

"Yes, papa; but I think King William's nose was the worst feature in his face, although that certainly cannot be said of Sir Robert."

"Do you hear that, Reilly? I wish Sir Robert heard it, but I'll tell him—there's a compliment, Helen—you're a good girl—thank you, Helen."

Helen's face was now radiant with mirthful enjoyment, whilst at the same time Reilly could perceive that from time to time a deep unconscious sigh would escape from her, such a sigh as induced him to infer that some hidden care was at work with her heart. This he at once imputed to her father's determination to force her into a marriage with the worthy baronet, whom in his simplicity he was so ludicrously describing.

"Proceed, papa, and finish as you have begun it."

"I will, to oblige and gratify you, Helen. He is a little close about the knees, Mr. Reilly—a little close about the knees, Willy."

"And about the heart, papa," added his daughter, who, for the life of her, could not restrain the observation.

"It's no fault to know the value of money, my dear child. However, let me go on—close about the knees, but that's a proof of strength, because they support one another: every one knows that."

"But his arms, papa?"

"You see, Reilly, you see, Willy," said the squire, nodding in the direction of his daughter, "not a bad sign that, and yet she pretends not to care about him. She is gratified, evidently. Ah, Helen, Helen! it's hard to know women."

"But his arms, papa?"

"Well, then, I wish to goodness you would allow me to skip that part of the subject—they are an awful length, Willy, I grant. I allow the fact, it cannot be denied, they are of an awful length."

"It will give him the greater advantage in over-reaching, papa."

"Well, as to his arms, upon my soul, Willy, I know no more what to do with them—"

"Than he does himself, papa."

"Just so, Helen; they hang about him like those of a skeleton on wires; but, on the other hand, he has a neck that always betokens true blood, long and thin like that of a racer. Altogether he's a devilish interesting man, steady, prudent, and sober. I never saw him drink a third glass of—"

"In the meantime, papa," observed Helen, "in the enthusiasm of your description you are neglecting Mr. Reilly."

Ah, love, love! in how many minute points can you make yourself understood!

"By the great William, and so I am. Come, Willy, help yourself"—and he pushed the bottle towards him as he spoke.

And why, gentle reader, did Reilly fill his glass on that particular occasion until it became literally a brimmer? We know—but if you are ignorant of it we simply beg you to remain so; and why, on putting the glass to his lips, did his large dark eyes rest upon her with that deep and melting glance? Why, too, was that glance returned with the quickness of thought before her lids dropped, and the conscious blush suffused her face? The solution of this we must also leave to your own ingenuity.

"Well," proceeded the squire, "steady, prudent, sober of a fine old family, and with an estate of twelve thousand a year—

what do you think of that, Willy? Isn't she a fortunate girl?"

"Taking his virtues and very agreeable person into consideration, sir, I think so," replied Reilly in a tone of slight sarcasm, which was only calculated to reach *one* of his audience.

"You hear that, Helen—you hear what Mr. Reilly—what Willy—says. The fact is, I'll call you nothing but Willy in future, Willy—you hear what he says, darling?"

"Indeed I do, papa—and understand it perfectly."

"That's my girl. Twelve thousand a year—and has money lent out at every rate of interest from six per cent. up."

"And yet I cannot consider him as interesting on that account, papa."

"You do, Helen—nonsense, my love—you do, I tell you—it's all make-believe when you speak to the contrary—don't you call the curve on his shoulders the line of beauty? Come—come—you know I only want to make you happy."

"It is time, papa, that I should withdraw," she replied, rising.

Reilly rose to open the door.

"Good-night, papa—dear, dear papa," she added, putting her snowy arms about his neck and kissing him tenderly. "I know," she added, "that the great object of your life is to make your *Cooleen Bawn* happy—and in doing so, dear papa—there now is another kiss for you—a little bribe, papa—in doing so, consult *her* heart as well as your own. Good-night."

"Good-night, my treasure."

During this little scene of affectionate tenderness Reilly stood holding the door open, and as she was going out, as if recollecting herself, she turned to him and said, "Pardon me, Mr. Reilly, I fear you must think me ungrateful; I have not yet thanked you for the service—a service indeed so important that no language could find expression for it—which you have rendered to dear papa, and to me. But, Mr. Reilly, I pray you do not think me ungrateful, or insensible, for, indeed, I am neither. Suffer me to feel what I owe you, and do not blame me if I cannot express it."

"If it were not for the value of the life which it is probable I have saved, and if it were not that your happiness was so deeply involved in it," replied Reilly, "I would say that you overrate what I have done this evening. But I confess I am myself now forced to see the value of my services, and I thank heaven for having made me the humble instrument of saving your father's life, not only for his own sake, Miss Folliard, but for yours. I now feel a *double* debt of gratitude to heaven for it."

The *Cooleen Bawn* did not speak, but the tears ran down her cheeks. "Good-night, sir," she said. "I am utterly incapable of thanking you as you deserve, and as I ought to thank you. Good-night!"

She extended her small snowy hand to him as she spoke. Reilly took it in his, and by some voluntary impulse he could not avoid giving it a certain degree of pressure. The fact is, it was such a hand—so white—so small—so soft—so warm—so provocative of a squeeze—that he felt his own pressing it, he knew not how nor wherefore, at least he thought so at the time; that is to say, if he were capable of thinking distinctly of any thing. But heaven and earth! Was it true! No delusion? No dream? The pressure returned! the slightest, the most gentle, the most delicate pressure—the barely perceptible pressure! Yes! it was beyond all doubt; for although the act itself was light as delicacy and modesty could make it, yet the spirit—the lightening spirit—which it shot into his bounding and enraptured heart could not be for a moment mistaken.

As she was running up the stairs she returned, however, and again approaching her father, said—whilst Reilly could observe that her cheek was flushed with a feeling that seemed to resemble ecstasy—"Papa," said she, "what a stupid girl I am! I scarcely know what I am saying or doing."

"By the great Boyne," replied her father, "I'll describe him to you every night in the week. I knew the curve—the line of beauty—would get into your head; but what is it, darling?"

"Will you and Mr. Reilly have tea in the drawing-room, or shall I send it down to you?"

"I am too comfortable in my easy chair, dear Helen: no, send it down."

"After the shock you have received, papa, perhaps you might wish to have it from the hand of your own *Cooleen Bawn?*"

As the old man turned his eyes upon her they literally danced with delight. "Ah, Willy!" said he, "is it any wonder I should love her?"

"I have often heard," replied Reilly, "that it is impossible to know her, and *not* to love her. I now believe it."

"Thank you, Reilly; thank you, Willy, shake hands. Come, Helen, shake hands with him. That's a compliment. Shake hands with him, darling. There, now, that's all right. Yes, my love, by all means, come down and give us tea here."

Innocent old man—the die is now irrevocably cast! That mutual pressure, and that mutual glance. Alas! alas! how strange and incomprehensible is human destiny!

After she had gone upstairs the old man said, "You see, Willy, how my heart and soul are in that angelic creature. The great object, the great delight of her life, is to anticipate all my wants, to study whatever is agreeable to me—in fact, to make me happy. And she succeeds. Every thing she does pleases me. By the grave of Schomberg, she's beyond all price. It is true we never had a baronet in the family, and it would gratify me to hear her called Lady Whitecraft; still, I say, I don't care for rank or ambition; nor would I sacrifice my child's happiness to either. And, between you and me, if she declines to have him, she shan't, that's all that's to be said about it. He's quite round in the shoulders; and yet so inconsistent are women that she calls a protuberance that resembles the letter C the line of beauty. Then again he *bit* me in 'Hop-and-go-constant;' and you know yourself, Willy, that no person likes to be bit, especially by the man he intends for his son-in-law. If he gives me the *bite* before marriage, what would he not do after it?"

"This, sir, is a subject," replied Reilly, "on which I must decline to give an opinion; but I think that no father should sacrifice the happiness of his daughter to his own inclinations. However, setting this matter aside, I have something of deep importance to mention to you."

"To me! Good heavens! What is it?"

"The Red Rapparee, sir, has formed a plan to rob, possibly to murder, you, and what is worse—"

"Worse! Why, what the deuce—worse! Why, what *could* be worse?"

"The dishonor of your daughter. It is his intention to carry her off to the mountains; but pardon me, I cannot bear to dwell upon the diabolical project."

The old man fell back, pale, and almost insensible, in his chair.

"Do not be alarmed, sir," proceeded Reilly, "he will be disappointed. I have taken care of that."

"But, Mr. Reilly, what—how—for heaven's sake tell me what you know about it. Are you sure of this? How did you come to hear of it? Tell me—tell me every thing about it! We must prepare to receive the villains—we must instantly get assistance. My child—my life—my Helen, to fall into the hands of this monster!"

"Hear me, sir," said Reilly, "hear me, and you will perceive I have taken measures to frustrate all his designs, and to have him a prisoner before to-morrow's sun arises."

He then related to him the plan laid by the Red Rapparee, as overheard by Tom Steeple, and as it was communicated to himself by the same individual subsequently, after which he proceeded:

"The fact is, sir, I have sent the poor fool, who is both faithful and trustworthy, to summon here forty or fifty of my laborers and tenants. They must be placed in the out-houses, and whatever arms and ammunition you can spare, in addition to the weapons which they shall bring along with them, must be made available. I sent orders that they should be here about nine o'clock. I, myself, will remain in this house, and you may rest assured that your life, your property, and your child shall be all safe. I know the strength of the ruffian's band; it only consists of about twelve men, or rather twelve devils, but he and they will find themselves mistaken."

Before Miss Folliard came down to make tea, Reilly had summoned the servants, and given them instructions as to their conduct during the expected attack. Having arranged this, he went to the yard, and found a large body of his tenants armed with such rude weapons as they could procure; for, at this period, it was a felony for a Roman Catholic to have or carry arms at all. The old squire, however, was well provided in that respect, and, accordingly, such as could be spared from the house were distributed among them. Mr. Folliard himself felt his spirit animated by a sense of the danger, and bustled about with uncommon energy and activity, considering what he had suffered in the course of the evening. At all events, they both resolved to conceal the matter from Helen till the last moment, in order to spare her the terror and alarm which she must necessarily feel on hearing of the contemplated violence. At tea, however, she could not avoid observing that something had disturbed her father, who, from his naturally impetuous character, ejaculated, from time to time, "The bloodthirsty scoundrel!—murdering ruffian! We shall hang him, though; we can hang him for the conspiracy. Would the fool's, Tom Steeples', evidence be taken, do you think?"

"I fear not, sir," replied Reilly. "In the meantime, don't think of it, don't further distress yourself about it."

"To think of attacking my house, though; and if it were only I myself that—however, we are prepared, that's one comfort; we are prepared, and let them—hem! Helen, my darling, now that we've had our tea, will you retire to your own room. I wish to talk to Mr. Reilly here, on a particular and important subject, in which you yourself are deeply concerned. Withdraw, my love, but don't go to bed until I see you again."

Helen went upstairs with a light foot and

a bounding heart. A certain hope, like a dream of far-off and unexpected happiness, rushed into and filled her bosom with a crowd of sensations so delicious that, on reaching her own room, she felt completely overpowered by them, and was only relieved by a burst of tears. There was now but one image before her imagination, but one image impressed upon her pure and fervent heart; that image was the first that love had ever stamped there, and the last that suffering, sorrow, madness, and death were ever able to tear from it.

When the night had advanced to the usual hour for retiring to rest, it was deemed necessary to make Helen acquainted with the meditated outrage, in order to prevent the consequences of a nocturnal alarm for which she might be altogether unprepared. This was accordingly done, and her natural terrors were soothed and combated by Reilly and her father, who succeeded in reviving her courage, and in enabling her to contemplate what was to happen with tolerable composure.

Until about the hour of two o'clock every thing remained silent. Nobody went to bed—the male servants were all prepared—the females, some in tears, and others sustaining and comforting those who were more feeble-hearted. Miss Folliard was in her own room, dressed. At about half past two she heard a stealthy foot, and having extinguished the light in her apartment, with great presence of mind she rang the bell, whilst at the same moment her door was broken in, and a man, as she knew by his step, entered. In the meantime the house was alarmed; the man having hastily projected his arms about in several directions, as if searching for her, instantly retreated, a scuffle was heard outside on the lobby, and when lights and assistance appeared, there were found eight or ten men variously armed, all of whom proved to be a portion of the guard selected by Reilly to protect the house and family. These men maintained that they had seen the Red Rapparee on the roof of the house, through which he had descended, and that having procured a ladder from the farmyard, they entered a back window, at a distance of about forty feet from the ground, in hope of securing his person—that they came in contact with some powerful man in the dark, who disappeared from among them—but by what means he had contrived to escape they could not guess. This was the substance of all they knew or understood upon the subject.

The whole house was immediately and thoroughly searched, and no trace of him could be found until they came to the skylight, which was discovered to be opened—wrenched off the hinges—and lying on the roof at a distance of two or three yards from its place.

It soon became evident that the Rapparee and his party had taken the alarm. In an instant those who were outside awaiting to pounce upon them in the moment of attack got orders to scour the neighborhood, and if possible to secure the Rapparee at every risk; and as an inducement the squire himself offered to pay the sum of five hundred pounds to any one who should bring him to Corbo Castle,* which was the name of his residence. This was accordingly attempted, the country far and wide was searched, pursuit given in every direction, but all to no purpose. Not only was the failure complete, but, what was still more unaccountable and mysterious, no single mark or trace of them could be found. This escape, however, did not much surprise the inhabitants of the country at large, as it was only in keeping with many of a far more difficult character which the Rapparee had often effected. The only cause to which it could be ascribed was the supposed fact of his having taken such admirable precautions against surprise as enabled his gang to disappear upon a preconcerted plan the moment the friendly guards were discovered, whilst he himself daringly attempted to secure the squire's cash and his daughter.

Whether the supposition was right or wrong will appear subsequently; but, in the meantime, we may add here, that the event in question, and the disappearance of the burglars, was fatal to the happiness of our lovers, for such they were in the tenderest and most devoted sense of that strange and ungovernable passion.

Early the next morning the squire was so completely exhausted by the consequences of watching, anxiety, and want of rest, that he felt himself overcome by sleep, and was obliged to go to bed. Before he went, however, he made Reilly promise that he would not go until he had breakfasted, then shook him cordially by the hand, thanked him again and again for the deep and important obligations he had imposed upon him and his child, and concluded by giving him a general invitation to his house, the doors of which, he said, as well as the heart of its owner, should be ever ready to receive him.

"As for Helen, here," said he, "I leave her to thank you herself, which I am sure she will do in a manner becoming the services you have rendered her, before you go."

* This name is fictitious.

She then kissed him tenderly and he retired to rest.

At breakfast, Reilly and Miss Folliard were, of course, alone, if we may say so. Want of rest and apprehension had given a cast of paleness to her features that, so far from diminishing, only added a new and tender character to her beauty. Reilly observed the exquisite loveliness of her hand as she poured out the tea; and when he remembered the gentle but significant pressure which it had given to his, more than once or twice, on the preceding night, he felt as if he experienced a personal interest in her fate—as if their destinies were to be united—as if his growing spirit could enfold hers, and mingle with it forever. The love he felt for her pervaded and softened his whole being with such a feeling of tenderness, timidity, and ecstasy, that his voice, always manly and firm, now became tremulous in its tones; such, in truth, as is always occasioned by a full and overflowing heart when it trembles at the very opportunity of pouring forth the first avowal of its affection.

"Miss Folliard," said he, after a pause, and with some confusion, "do you believe in Fate?"

The question appeared to take her somewhat by surprise, if one could judge by the look she bestowed upon him with her dark, flashing eyes.

"In Fate, Mr. Reilly? that is a subject, I fear, too deep for a girl like me. I believe in Providence."

"All this morning I have been thinking of the subject. Should it be Fate that brought me to the rescue of your father last night, I cannot but feel glad of it; but though it be a Fate that has preserved him—and I thank Almighty God for it—yet it is one that I fear has destroyed my happiness."

"Destroyed your happiness, Mr. Reilly! why, how could the service you rendered papa last night have such an effect?"

"I will be candid, and tell you, Miss Folliard. I know that what I am about to say will offend you—it was by making me acquainted with his daughter, and by bringing me under the influence of beauty which has unmanned—distracted me—beauty which I could not resist—which has overcome me—subdued me—and which, because it is beyond my reach and my deserts, will occasion me an unhappy life—how long soever that life may last."

"Mr. Reilly," exclaimed the *Cooleen Bawn*, "this—this—is—I am quite unprepared for—I mean—to hear that such noble and generous conduct to my father should end in this. But it cannot be. Nay, I will not pretend to misunderstand you. After the service you have rendered to him and to myself, it would be uncandid in me and unworthy of you to conceal the distress which your words have caused me."

"I am scarcely in a condition to speak reasonably and calmly," replied Reilly, "but I cannot regret that I have unconsciously sacrificed my happiness, when that sacrifice has saved you from distress and grief and sorrow. Now that I know you, I would offer—lay down—my life, if the sacrifice could save yours from one moment's care. I have often *heard* of what love—love in its highest and noblest sense—is able to do and to suffer for the good and happiness of its object, but now I know it."

She spoke not, or rather she was unable to speak; but as she pulled out her snow-white handkerchief, Reilly could observe the extraordinary tremor of her hands; the face, too, was deadly pale.

"I am not making love to you, Miss Folliard," he added. "No, my religion, my position in life, a sense of my own unworthiness, would prevent that; but I could not rest unless you knew that there is one heart which, in the midst of unhappiness and despair, can understand, appreciate, and love you. I urge no claim. I am without hope."

The fair girl (*Cooleen Bawn*) could not restrain her tears; but wept—yes, she wept. "I was not prepared for this," she replied. "I did not think that so short an acquaintance could have—Oh, I know not what to say—nor how to act. My father's prejudices. You are a Catholic."

"And will die one, Miss Folliard."

"But why should you be unhappy? You do not deserve to be so."

"That is precisely what made me ask you just now if you believed in *fate*."

"Oh, I know not. I cannot answer such a question; but why should you be unhappy, with your brave, generous, and noble heart? Surely, surely, you do not deserve it."

"I said before that I have no hope, Miss Folliard. I shall carry with me my love of you through life; it is my first, and I feel it will be my last—it will be the melancholy light that will burn in the sepulchre of my heart to show your image there. And now, Miss Folliard, I will bid you farewell. Your father has proffered me hospitality, but I have not strength nor resolution to accept it. You now know my secret—a hopeless passion."

"Reilly," she replied, weeping bitterly, "our acquaintance has been short—we have not seen much of each other, yet I will not deny that I believe you to be all that any female heart could—pardon me, I am without

experience—I know not much of the world. You have travelled, papa told me last night; I do not wish that you should be unhappy, and, least of all, that I, who owe you so much, should be the occasion of it. No, you talk of a hopeless passion. I know not what I ought to say—but to the preserver of my father's life, and, probably my own honor, I will say, be not—but why should love be separated from truth?" she said—"No, Reilly, be *not* hopeless."

"Oh," replied Reilly, who had gone over near her, "but my soul will not be satisfied without a stronger affirmation. This moment is the great crisis or my life and happiness. I love you beyond all the power of language or expression. You tremble, dear Miss Folliard, and you weep; let me wipe those precious tears away. Oh, would to God that you loved me!"

He caught her hand—it was not withdrawn—he pressed it as he had done the evening before. The pressure was returned—his voice melted into tenderness that was contagious and irresistible: "Say, dearest Helen, star of my life and of my fate, oh, only say that I am not indifferent to you."

They were both standing near the chimney-piece as he spoke—"only say," he repeated, "that I am not indifferent to you."

"Well, then," she replied, "you are not indifferent to me."

"One admission more, my dearest life, and I am happy forever. You love me? say it, dearest, say it—or, stay, whisper it, whisper it—you love me!"

"I do," she whispered in a burst of tears.

CHAPTER IV.

A Sapient Project for our Hero's Conversion—His Rival makes his Appearance, and its Consequences.

We will not attempt to describe the tumult of delight which agitated Reilly's heart on his way home, after this tender interview with the most celebrated Irish beauty of that period. The term *Cooleen Bawn*, in native Irish, has two meanings, both of which were justly applied to her, and met in her person. It signifies *fair locks*, or, as it may be pronounced *fair girl;* and in either sense is peculiarly applicable to a *blonde* beauty, which she was. The name of *Cooleen Bawn* was applied to her by the populace, whose talent for finding out and bestowing epithets indicative either of personal beauty or deformity, or of the qualities of the mind or character, be they good or evil, is, in Ireland, singularly felicitous. In the higher ranks, however, she was known as "The Lily of the Plains of Boyne," and as such she was toasted by all parties, not only in her own native county, but throughout Ireland, and at the vice-regal entertainments in the Castle of Dublin. At the time of which we write, the penal laws were in operation against the Roman Catholic population of the country, and her father, a good-hearted man by nature, was wordy and violent by prejudice, and yet secretly kind and friendly to many of that unhappy creed, though by no means to all. It was well known, however, that in every thing that was generous and good in his character, or in the discharge of his public duties as a magistrate, he was chiefly influenced by the benevolent and liberal principles of his daughter, who was a general advocate for the oppressed, and to whom, moreover, he could deny nothing. This accounted for her popularity, as it does for the extraordinary veneration and affection with which her name and misfortunes are mentioned down to the present day. The worst point in her father's character was that he never could be prevailed on to forgive an injury, or, at least, any act that he conceived to be such, a weakness or a vice which was the means of all his angelic and lovely daughter's calamities.

Reilly, though full of fervor and enthusiasm, was yet by no means deficient in strong sense. On his way home he began to ask himself in what this overwhelming passion for *Cooleen Bawn* must end. His religion, he was well aware, placed an impassable gulf between them. Was it then generous or honorable in him to abuse the confidence and hospitality of her father, by engaging the affections of a daughter, on whose welfare his whole happiness was placed, and to whom, moreover, he could not, without committing an act of apostasy that he abhorred, ever be united as a husband? Reason and prudence, moveover, suggested to him the danger of his position, as well as the ungenerous nature of his conduct to the grateful and trusting father. But, away with reason and prudence—away with everything but love. The rapture of his heart triumphed over every argument; and, come weal or woe, he resolved to win the far-famed "Star of Connaught," another epithet which she derived from her wonderful and extraordinary beauty.

On approaching his own house he met a woman named Mary Mahon, whose character of a fortune-teller was extraordinary in the country, and whose predictions, come from what source they might, had gained her a reputation which filled the common mind with awe and fear.

"Well, Mary," said he, "what news from futurity? And, by the way, where *is* futurity? Because if you don't know," he proceeded, laughing, "I think I could tell you."

"Well," replied Mary, "let me hear it. Where is it, Mr. Reilly?"

"Why," he replied, "just at the point of your own nose, Mary, and you must admit it is not a very long one; pure Milesian, Mary; a good deal of the saddle in its shape."

The woman stood and looked at him for a few moments.

"My nose may be short," she replied, "but shorter will be the course of your happiness."

"Well, Mary," he said, "I think as regards my happiness that you know as little of it as I do myself. If you tell me any thing that *has* passed, I may give you some credit for the future, but not otherwise."

"Do you wish to have your fortune tould, then," she asked, "upon them terms?"

"Come, then, I don't care if I do. What has happened me, for instance, within the last forty-eight hours?"

"That has happened you within the last forty-eight hours that will make her you love the pity of the world before her time. I see how it will happen, for the complaint I speak of is in the family. A living death she will have, and you yourself during the same time will have little less."

"But what *has* happened me, Mary?"

"I needn't tell you—you know it. A proud heart, and a joyful heart, and a lovin' heart, you carry now, but it will be a broken heart before long."

"Why, Mary, this is an evil prophecy; have you nothing good to foretell?"

"If it's a satisfaction to you to know, I will tell you: her love for you is as strong, and stronger, than death itself; and it is *the suffering* of what is worse than death, Willy Reilly, that will unite you both at last."

Reilly started, and after a pause, in which he took it for granted that Mary spoke merely from one of those shrewd conjectures which practised impostors are so frequently in the habit of hazarding, replied, "That won't do, Mary; you have told me nothing yet that has happened within the last forty-eight hours. I deny the truth of what you say."

"It won't be long so, then, Mr. Reilly; you saved the life of the old half-mad squire of Corbo. Yes, you saved his life, and you have taken his daughter's! for indeed it would be better for her to die at wanst than to suffer what will happen to you and her."

"Why, what is to happen?"

"You'll know it too soon," she replied, "and there's no use in making you unhappy. Good-by, Mr. Reilly; if you take a friend's advice you'll give her up; think no more of her. It may cost you an aching heart to do so, but by doin' it you may save her from a great deal of sorrow, and both of you from a long and heavy term of suffering."

Reilly, though a young man of strong reason in the ordinary affairs of life, and of a highly cultivated intellect besides, yet felt himself influenced by the gloomy forebodings of this notorious woman. It is true he saw, by the force of his own sagacity, that she had uttered nothing which any person acquainted with the relative position of himself and *Cooleen Bawn*, and the political circumstances of the country, might not have inferred as a natural and probable consequence. In fact he had, on his way home, arrived at nearly the same conclusion. Marriage, as the laws of the country then stood, was out of the question, and could not be legitimately effected. What, then, must the consequence of this irresistible but ill-fated passion be? An elopement to the Continent would not only be difficult but dangerous, if not altogether impossible. It was obviously evident that Mary Mahon had drawn her predictions from the same circumstances which led himself to similar conclusions; yet, notwithstanding all this, he felt that her words had thrown a foreshadowing of calamity and sorrow over his spirit, and he passed up to his own house in deep gloom and heaviness of heart. It is true he remembered that this same Mary Mahon belonged to a family that had been inimical to his house. She was a woman who had, in her early life, been degraded by crime, the remembrance of which had been by no means forgotten. She was, besides, a paramour to the Red Rapparee, and he attributed much of her dark and ill-boding prophecy to a hostile and malignant spirit.

On the evening of the same day, probably about the same hour, the old squire having recruited himself by sleep, and felt refreshed and invigorated, sent for his daughter to sit with him as was her wont; for indeed, as the reader may now fully understand, his happiness altogether depended upon her society, and those tender attentions to him which constituted the chief solace of his life.

"Well, my girl," said he, when she entered the dining-room, for he seldom left it unless when they had company, "Well, darling, what do you think of this Mr. Mahon—pooh!—no—oh, Reilly—he who saved my life, and, probably, was the means of rescuing you from worse than death? Isn't he a fine—a noble young fellow?"

"Indeed, I think so, papa; he appears to be a perfect gentleman."

"Hang perfect gentlemen, Helen! they are, some of them, the most contemptible whelps upon earth. Hang me, but any fellow with a long-bodied coat, tight-kneed breeches, or stockings and pantaloons, with a watch in each fob, and a frizzled wig, is considered a perfect gentleman—a perfect puppy, Helen, an accomplished trifle. Reilly, however, is none of these, for he is not only a perfect gentleman, but a brave man, who would not hesitate to risk his life in order to save that of a fellow-creature, even although he is a Papist, and that fellow-creature a Protestant."

"Well, then, papa, I grant you," she replied with a smile, which our readers will understand, "I grant you that he is a—ahem!—all you say."

"What a pity, Helen, that he is a Papist."

"Why so, papa?".

"Because, if he was a staunch Protestant, by the great Deliverer that saved us from brass money, wooden shoes, and so forth, I'd marry you and him together. I'll tell you what, Helen, by the memory of Schomberg, I have a project, and it is you that must work it out."

"Well, papa," asked his daughter, putting the question with a smile and a blush, "pray what is this speculation?"

"Why, the fact is, I'll put him into your hands to convert him—make him a staunch Protestant, and take him for your pains. Accomplish this, and let long-legged, knock-kneed Whitecraft, and his twelve thousand a year, go and bite some other fool as he bit me in 'Hop-and-go-constant.'"

"What are twelve thousand a year, papa, when you know that they could not secure me happiness with such a wretch? Such a union, sir, could not be—cannot be—must not be, and I will add, whilst I am in the possession of will and reason, *shall* not be."

"Well, Helen," said her father, "if you are obstinate, so am I; but I trust we shall never have to fight for it. We must have Reilly here, and you must endeavor to convert him from Popery. If you succeed, I'll give long-shanks his *nunc dimittis*, and send him home on a trot."

"Papa," she replied, "this will be useless—it will be ruin—I know Reilly."

"The devil you do! When, may I ask, did you become acquainted?"

"I mean," she replied, blushing, "that I have seen enough of him during his short stay here to feel satisfied that no earthly persuasion, no argument, could induce him, at this moment especially, to change his religion. And, sir, I will add myself—yes, I will say for myself, dear papa, and for Reilly too, that if from any unbecoming motive—if for the sake of love itself, I felt satisfied that he could give up and abandon his religion, I would despise him. I should feel at once that his heart was hollow, and that he was unworthy either of my love or my respect."

"Well, by the great Boyne, Helen, you have knocked my intellects up. I hope in God you have no Papist predilections, girl. However, it's only fair to give Reilly a trial; long-legs is to dine with us the day after to-morrow—now, I will ask Reilly to meet him here—perhaps, if I get an opportunity, I will sound him on the point myself—or, perhaps, you will. Will you promise to make the attempt? I'll take care that you and he shall have an opportunity."

"Indeed, papa, I shall certainly mention the subject to him."

"By the soul of Schomberg, Helen, if you do you'll convert him."

Helen was about to make some good-natured reply, when the noise of carriage wheels was heard at the hall-door, and her father, going to the window, asked, "What noise is that? A carriage!—who can it be? Whitecraft, by the Boyne! Well, it can't be helped."

"I will leave you, papa," she said; "I do not wish to see this unfeeling and repulsive man, unless when it is unavoidable, and in your presence."

She then withdrew.

Before we introduce Sir Robert Whitecraft, we must beg our readers to accompany us to the residence of that worthy gentleman, which was not more than three miles from that of Reilly. Sir Robert had large estates and a sumptuous residence in Ireland, as well as in England, and had made the former principally his place of abode since he became enamored of the celebrated *Cooleen Bawn*. On the occasion in question he was walking about through his grounds when a female approached him, whom we beg the reader to recognize as Mary Mahon. This mischievous woman, implacable and without principle, had, with the utmost secrecy, served Sir Robert, and many others, in a capacity discreditable alike to virtue and her sex, by luring the weak or the innocent within their toils.

"Well, Mary," said he, "what news in the country? You, who are always on the move, should know."

"No very good news for you, Sir Robert," she replied.

"How is that, Mary?"

"Why, sir, Willy Reilly—the famous Willy Reilly—has got a footing in the house of old Squire Folliard."

"And how can that be bad news to *me*, Mary?"

"Well, I don't know," said she, with a cunning leer; "but this I know, that they had a love scene together this very morning, and that he kissed her very sweetly near the chimney-piece."

Sir Robert Whitecraft did not get into a rage; he neither cursed nor swore, nor even looked angrily, but he gave a peculiar smile, which should be seen in order to be understood. "Where is your—ahem—your friend now?" he asked; and as he did so he began to whistle.

"Have you another job for him?" she inquired, in her turn, with a peculiar meaning. "Whenever I fail by fair play, he tries it by foul."

"Well, and have not I often saved his neck, as well by my influence as by allowing him to take shelter under my roof whenever he was hard pressed?"

"I know that, your honor; and hasn't he and I often sarved you, on the other hand?"

"I grant it, Molly; but that is a matter known only to ourselves. You know I have the reputation of being very correct and virtuous."

"I know you have," said Molly, "with most people, but not with all."

"Well, Molly, you know, as far as we are concerned, one good turn deserves another. Where is your friend now, I ask again?"

"Why, then, to tell you the truth, it's more than I know at the present speaking."

"Follow me, then," replied the wily baronet; "I wish you to see him; he is now concealed in my house; but first, mark me, I don't believe a word of what you have just repeated."

"It's as true as Gospel for all that," she replied; "and if you wish to hear how I found it out I'll tell you."

"Well," said the baronet calmly, "let us hear it."

"You must know," she proceeded, "that I have a cousin, one Betty Beatty, who is a housemaid in the squire's. Now, this same Betty Beatty was in the front parlor—for the squire always dines in the back—and, from a kind of natural curiosity she's afflicted with, she puts her ear to the keyhole, and afterwards her eye. I happened to be at the squire's at the time, and, as blood is thicker that wather, and as she knew I was a friend of yours, she tould me what she had both heard and seen, what they said, and how he kissed her."

Sir Robert seemed very calm, and merely said, "Follow me into the house," which she accordingly did, and remained in consultation with him and the Red Rapparee for nearly an hour, after which Sir Robert ordered his carriage, and went to pay a visit, as we have seen, at Corbo Castle.

Sir Robert Whitecraft, on entering the parlor, shook hands as a matter of course with the squire. At this particular crisis the vehement but whimsical old man, whose mind was now full of another project with reference to his daughter, experienced no great gratification from this visit, and, as the baronet shook hands with him, he exclaimed somewhat testily.

"Hang it, Sir Robert, why don't you shake hands like a man? You put that long yellow paw of yours, all skin and bones, into a man's hand, and there you let it lie. But, no matter, every one to his nature. Be seated, and tell me what news. Are the Papists quiet?"

"There is little news stirring, sir; at least if there be, it does not come my way, with the exception of this report about yourself, which I hope is not true; that there was an attempt made on your life yesterday evening?" Whilst Sir Robert spoke he approached a looking-glass, before which he presented himself, and commenced adjusting his dress, especially his wig, a piece of vanity which nettled the quick and irritable feelings of the squire exceedingly. The inference he drew was, that this wealthy suitor of his daughter felt more about his own personal appearance before her than about the dreadful fate which he himself had so narrowly escaped.

"What signifies that, my dear fellow, when your wig is out of balance? it's a little to the one side, like the ear of an empty jug, as they say."

"Why, sir," replied the baronet, "the fact is, that I felt—hum!—hum—so much—so much—a—anxiety—hum!—to see you and—a—a—to know all about it—that—a—I didn't take time to—a—look to my dress. And besides, as I—hum!—expect to have—a—the pleasure of an interview with Miss Folliard—a—hum!—now that I'm here—I feel anxious to appear to the best advantage—a—hum!"

While speaking he proceeded with the readjustment of his toilet at the large mirror, an operation which appeared to constitute the great object on which his mind was engaged, the affair of the squire's life or death coming in only parenthetically, or as a consideration of minor importance.

In height Sir Robert Whitecraft was fully six feet two; but being extremely thin and lank, and to all appearance utterly devoid of substance, and of every thing like proportion, he appeared much taller than even nature had made him. His forehead was low, and his whole character felonious; his eyes were

small, deep set, and cunning; his nose was hooked, his mouth was wide, but his lips thin to a miracle, and such as always are to be found under the nose of a miser; as for a chin, we could not conscientiously allow him any; his under-lip sloped off until it met the throat with a curve not larger than that of an oyster-shell, which when open to the tide, his mouth very much resembled. As for his neck, it was so long that no portion of dress at that time discovered was capable of covering more than one third of it; so that there were always two parts out of three left stark naked, and helplessly exposed to the elements. Whenever he smiled he looked as if he was about to weep. As the squire said, he was dreadfully round-shouldered—had dangling arms, that kept flapping about him as if they were moved by some machinery that had gone out of order—was close-kneed—had the true telescopic leg—and feet that brought a very large portion of him into the closest possible contact with the earth.

"Are you succeeding, Sir Robert?" inquired the old man sarcastically, "because, if you are, I swear you're achieving wonders, considering the slight materials you have to work upon."

"Ah! sir," replied the baronet, "I perceive you are in one of your biting humors to-day."

"Biting!" exclaimed the other. "Egad, it's very well for most of your sporting acquaintances that you're free from hydrophobia; if you were not, I'd have died pleasantly between two feather beds, leaving my child an orphan long before this. Egad, you *bit* me to some purpose."

"Oh, ay, you allude to the affair of 'Hop-and-go-constant' and 'Pat the Spanker;' but you know, my dear sir, I gave you heavy boot;" and as he spoke, he pulled up the lapels of his coat, and glanced complacently at the profile of his face and person in the glass.

"Pray, is Miss Folliard at home, sir?"

"Again I'm forgotten," thought the squire. "Ah, what an affectionate son-in-law he'd make! What a tender husband for Helen! Why, hang the fellow, he has a heart for nobody but himself. She *is* at home, Sir Robert, but the truth is, I don't think it would become me, as a father anxious for the happiness of his child, and that child an only one, to sacrifice her happiness—the happiness of her whole life—to wealth or ambition. You know she herself entertains a strong prejudice—no, that's not the word—"

"I beg your pardon, sir; that *is* the word; her distaste to me is a prejudice, and nothing else."

"No, Sir Robert; it is *not* the word. Antipathy is the word. Now I tell you, once for all, that I will not force my child."

"This change, Mr. Folliard," observed the baronet, "is somewhat of the suddenest. Has any thing occurred on my part to occasion it?"

"Perhaps I may have other views for her, Sir Robert."

"That may be; but is such conduct either fair or honorable towards me, Mr. Folliard? Have I got a rival, and if so, who is he?"

"Oh, I wouldn't tell you that for the world."

"And why not, pray?"

"Because," replied the squire, "if you found out who he was, you'd be hanged for cannibalism."

"I really don't understand you, Mr. Folliard. Excuse me, but it would seem to me that something has put you into no very agreeable humor to-day."

"You don't understand me! Why, Sir Robert," replied the other, "I know you so well that if you heard the name of your rival you would first kill him, then powder him, and, lastly, eat him. You are such a terrible fellow that you care about no man's life, not even about mine."

Now it was to this very point that the calculating baronet wished to bring him. The old man, he knew, was whimsical, capricious, and in the habit of taking all his strongest and most enduring resolutions from sudden contrasts produced by some mistake of his own, or from some discovery made to him on the part of others.

"As to your life, Mr. Folliard, let me assure you," replied Sir Robert, "that there is no man living prizes it, and, let me add, you character too, more highly than I do; but, my dear sir, your life was never in danger."

"Never in danger! what do you mean, Sir Robert? I tell you, sir, that the murdering miscreant, the Red Rapparee, had a loaded gun levelled at me last evening, after dark."

"I know it," replied the other; "I am well aware of it, and you were rescued just in the nick of time."

"True enough," said the squire, "just in the nick of time; by that glorious young fellow—a—a—yes—Reilly—Willy Reilly."

"This Willy Reilly, sir, is a very accomplished person, I think."

"A gentleman, Sir Robert, every inch of him, and as handsome and fine-looking a young fellow as ever I laid my eyes upon."

"He was educated on the Continent by the Jesuits."

"No!" replied the squire, dreadfully alarm-

ed at this piece of information, "he was not; by the great Boyne, he wasn't."

This mighty asseveration, however, was exceedingly feeble in moral strength and energy, for, in point of fact, it came out of the squire's lips more in the shape of a question than an oath.

"It is unquestionably true, sir," said the baronet; "ask himself, and he will admit it."

"Well, and granting that he was," replied the squire, "what else could he do, when the laws would not permit of his being educated here? I speak not against the laws, God forbid, but of his individual case."

"We are travelling from the point, sir," returned the baronet. "I was observing that Reilly is an accomplished person, as indeed every Jesuit is. Be that as it may, I again beg to assure you that your life stood in no risk."

"I don't understand you, Sir Robert. You're a perfect oracle; by the great Deliverer from Pope and Popery, wooden shoes, and so forth, only that Reilly made his appearance at that moment I was a dead man."

"Not the slightest danger, Mr. Folliard. I am aware of that, and of the whole Jesuitical plot from the beginning, base, ingenious, but diabolical as it was."

The squire rose up and looked at him for a minute, without speaking, then sat down again, and, a second time, was partially up, but resumed his seat.

"A plot!" he exclaimed; "a plot, Sir Robert! What plot?"

"A plot, Mr. Folliard, for the purpose of creating an opportunity to make your acquaintance, and of ingratiating himself into the good graces and affections of your lovely daughter; a plot for the purpose of marrying her."

The Squire seemed for a moment thunderstruck, but in a little time he recovered. "Marrying her!" he exclaimed; "that, you know, could not be done, unless he turned Protestant."

It was now time for the baronet to feel thunderstricken.

"*He* turn Protestant! I don't understand you, Mr. Folliard. Could *any* change on Reilly's part involve such a probability as a marriage between him and your daughter?"

"I can't believe it was a plot, Sir Robert," said the squire, shifting the question, "nor I won't believe it. There was too much truth and sincerity in his conduct. And, what is more, my house would have been attacked last night; I myself robbed and murdered, and my daughter—my child, carried off, only for him. Nay, indeed, it was partially attacked, but when the villains found us prepared they decamped; but, as for marriage, he could not marry my daughter, I say again, so long as he remains a Papist."

"Unless he might prevail on her to turn Papist."

"By the life of my body, Sir Robert, I won't stand this. Did you come here, sir, to insult me and to drive me into madness? What devil could have put it into your head that my daughter, sir, or any one with a drop of my blood in their veins, to the tenth generation, could ever, for a single moment, think of turning Papist? Sir, I hoped that you would have respected the name both of my daughter and myself, and have forborne to add this double insult both to her and me. The insolence even to dream of imputing such an act to her I cannot overlook. You yourself, if you could gain a point or feather your nest by it, are a thousand times much more likely to turn Papist than either of us. Apologize instantly, sir, or leave my house."

"I can certainly apologize, Mr. Folliard," replied the baronet, "and with a good conscience, inasmuch as I had not the most remote intention of offending you, much less Miss Folliard—I accordingly do so promptly and at once; but as for my allegations against Reilly, I am in a position to establish their truth in the clearest manner, and to prove to you that there wasn't a single robber, nor Rapparee either, at or about your house last night, with the exception of Reilly and his gang. If there were, why were they neither heard nor seen?"

"One of them was—the Red Rapparee himself."

"Do not be deceived, Mr. Folliard; did you yourself, or any of your family or household, see him?"

"Why, no, certainly, we did not; I admit that."

"Yes, and you will admit more soon. I shall prove the whole conspiracy."

"Well, why don't you then?"

"Simply because the matter must be brought about with great caution. You must allow me a few days, say three or four, and the proofs shall be given."

"Very well. Sir Robert, but in the meantime I shall not throw Reilly overboard."

"Could I not be permitted to pay my respects to Miss Folliard before I go, sir?" asked Sir Robert.

"Don't insist upon it," replied her father; "you know perfectly well that she—that you are no favorite with her."

"Nothing on earth, sir, grieves me so much," said the baronet, affecting a melancholy expression of countenance, which was ludicrous to look at.

"Well, well," said the old man, "as you can't see her now, come and meet Reilly here at dinner the day after to-morrow, and you shall have that pleasure."

"It will be with pain, sir, that I shall force myself into that person's society; however, to oblige you, I shall do it."

"Consider, pray consider, Sir Robert," replied the old squire, all his pride of family glowing strong within him, "just consider that my table, sir, and my countenance, sir, and my sense of gratitude, sir, are a sufficient guarantee to the worth and respectability of any one whom I may ask to my house. And, Sir Robert, in addition to that, just reflect that I ask him to meet my daughter, and, if I don't mistake, I think I love, honor, and respect her *nearly* as much as I do you. Will you come then, or will you not?"

"Unquestionably, sir, I shall do myself the honor."

"Very well," replied the old squire, clearing up at once—undergoing, in fact, one of those rapid and unaccountable changes which constituted so prominent a portion of his character. "Very well, Bobby; good-by, my boy; I am not angry with you; shake hands, and curse Popery."

Until the morning of the day on which the two rivals were to meet, Miss Folliard began to entertain a dreadful apprehension that the fright into which the Red Rapparee had thrown her father was likely to terminate, ere long, in insanity. The man at best was eccentric, and full of the most unaccountable changes of temper and purpose, hot, passionate, vindictive, generous, implacable, and benevolent. What he had seldom been accustomed to do, he commenced soliloquizing aloud, and talking to himself in such broken hints and dark mysterious allusions, drawing from unknown premises such odd and ludicrous inferences; at one time brushing himself up in Scripture; at another moment questioning his daughter about her opinion on Popery—sometimes dealing about political and religious allusions with great sarcasm, in which he was a master when he wished, and sometimes with considerable humor of illustration, so far, at least, as he could be understood.

"Confound these Jesuits," said he; "I wish they were scourged out of Europe. Every man of them is sure to put his finger in the pie and then into his mouth to taste what it's like; not so the parsons—Hallo! where am I? Take care, old Folliard; take care, you old dog; what have you to say in favor of these same parsons—lazy, negligent fellows, who snore and slumber, feed well, clothe well, and think first of number one? Egad, I'm in a mess between them. One makes a slave of you, and the other allows you to play the tyrant. A plague, as I heard a fellow say in a play once, a plague o' both your houses: if you paid more attention to your duties, and scrambled less for wealth and power, and this world's honors, you would not turn it upside down as you do. Helen!"

"Well, papa."

"I have doubts whether I shall allow you to sound Reilly on Popery."

"I would rather decline it, sir."

"I'll tell you what; I'll see Andy Cummiskey—Andy's opinion is good on any thing." And accordingly he proceeded to see his confidential old servant. With this purpose, and in his own original manner, he went about consulting every servant under his roof upon their respective notions of Popery, as he called it, and striving to allure them, at one time by kindness, and at another by threatening them, into an avowal of its idolatrous tendency. Those to whom he spoke, however, knew very little about it, and, like those of all creeds in a similar predicament, he found that, in proportion to their ignorance of its doctrines, arose the vehemence and sincerity of their defence of it. This, however, is human nature, and we do not see how the learned can condemn it. Upon the day appointed for dinner only four sat down to it—that is to say, the squire, his daughter, Sir Robert Whitecraft, and Reilly. They had met in the drawing-room some time before its announcement, and as the old man introduced the two latter, Reilly's bow was courteous and gentlemanly, whilst that of the baronet, who not only detested Reilly with the hatred of a demon, but resolved to make him feel the superiority of rank and wealth, was frigid, supercilious, and offensive. Reilly at once saw this, and, as he knew not that the baronet was in possession of his secret, he felt his ill-bred insolence the more deeply. He was too much of a gentleman, however, and too well acquainted with the principles and forms of good breeding, to seem to notice it in the slightest degree. The old squire at this time had not at all given Reilly up, but still his confidence in him was considerably shaken. He saw, moreover, that, notwithstanding what had occurred at their last interview, the baronet had forgotten the respect due both to himself and his daughter; and, as he had, amidst all his eccentricities, many strong touches of the old Irish gentleman about him, he resolved to punish him for his ungentlemanly deportment. Accordingly, when dinner was announced, he said:

"Mr. Reilly, you will give Miss Folliard your arm."

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WHILE SPEAKING HE PROCEEDED WITH THE READJUSTMENT OF HIS TOILET, AT THE LARGE MIRROR.—p. 29.

We do not say that the worthy baronet squinted, but there was a bad, vindictive look in his small, cunning eyes, which, as they turned upon Reilly, was ten times more repulsive than the worst squint that ever disfigured a human countenance. To add to his chagrin, too, the squire came out with a bit of his usual sarcasm.

"Come, baronet," said he, "here's my arm. I am the old man, and you are the old lady; and now for dinner."

In the meantime Reilly and the *Cooleen Bawn* had gone far enough in advance to be in a condition to speak without being heard.

"That," said she, "is the husband my father intends for me, or, rather, did intend; for, do you know, that you have found such favor in his sight that—that—" she hesitated, and Reilly, looking into her face, saw that she blushed deeply, and he felt by her arm that her whole frame trembled with emotion.

"Proceed, dearest love," said he; "what is it?"

"I have not time to tell you now," she replied, "but he mentioned a project to me which, if it could be accomplished, would seal both your happiness and mine forever. Your religion is the only obstacle."

"And that, my love," he replied, "is an insurmountable one."

"Alas! I feared as much," she replied, sighing bitterly as she spoke.

The old squire took the head of the table, and requested Sir Robert to take the foot; his daughter was at his right hand, and Reilly opposite her, by which means, although denied any confidential use of the tongue, their eyes enjoyed very gratifying advantages, and there passed between them occasionally some of those rapid glances which, especially when lovers are under *surveillance*, concentrate in their lightning flash more significance, more hope, more joy, and more love, than ever was conveyed by the longest and tenderest gaze of affection under other circumstances.

"Mr. Reilly," said the squire, "I'm told that you are a very well educated man; indeed, the thing is evident. What, let me ask, is your opinion of education in general?"

"Why, sir," replied Reilly, "I think there can be but one opinion about it. Without education a people can never be moral, prosperous, or happy. Without it, how are they to learn the duties of this life, or those still more important ones that prepare them for a better?"

"You would entrust the conduct and control of it, I presume, sir, to the clergy?" asked Sir Robert insidiously.

"I would give the priest such control in education as becomes his position, which is not only to educate the youth, but to instruct the man, in all the duties enjoined by religion."

The squire now gave a triumphant look at the baronet, and a very kind and gracious one at Reilly.

"Pray, sir," continued the baronet, in his cold, supercilious manner, "from the peculiarity of your views, I feel anxious, if you will pardon me, to ask where you yourself have received your very accomplished education."

"Whether my education, sir, has been an accomplished one or otherwise," replied Reilly, "is a point, I apprehend, beyond the reach of any opportunity you ever had to know. I received my education, sir, such as it is, and if it be not better the fault is n own, in a Jesuit seminary on the Continent.

It was now the baronet's time to triumph; and indeed the bitter glancing look he gave at the squire, although it was intended for Reilly, resembled that which one of the more cunning and ferocious beasts of prey makes previous to its death-spring upon its victim. The old man's countenance instantly fell. He looked with surprise, not unmingled with sorrow and distrust, at Reilly, a circumstance which did not escape his daughter, who could not, for the life of her, avoid fixing her eyes, lovelier even in the disdain they expressed, with an indignant look at the baronet.

The latter, however, felt resolved to bring his rival still further within the toils he was preparing for him, an object which Reilly's candor very much facilitated.

"Mr. Reilly," said the squire, "I was not prepared to hear—a—a—hem!—God bless me, it is very odd, very deplorable, very much to be regretted indeed!"

"What is, sir?" asked Reilly.

"Why, that you should be a Jesuit. I must confess I was not—ahem!—God bless me. I can't doubt your own word, certainly."

"Not on this subject," observed the baronet coolly.

"On so subject, sir," replied Reilly, looking him sternly, and with an indignation that was kept within bounds only by his respect for the other parties, and the roof that covered him; "on no subject, Sir Robert Whitecraft, is my word to be doubted."

"I beg your pardon, sir," replied the other, "I did not say so."

"I will neither have it said, sir, nor insinuated," rejoined Reilly. "I received my education on the Continent because the laws of this country prevented me from receiving it here. I was placed in a Jesuit seminary,

not by my own choice, but by that of my father, to whom I owed obedience. Your oppressive laws, sir, first keep us ignorant, and then punish us for the crimes which that ignorance produces."

"Do you call the laws of the country oppressive?" asked the baronet, with as much of a sneer as cowardice would permit him to indulge in.

"I do, sir, and ever will consider them so, at least so long as they deprive myself and my Catholic fellow-countrymen of their civil and religious rights."

"That is strong language, though," observed the other, "at this time of day."

"Mr. Reilly," said the squire, "you seem to be very much attached to your religion."

"Just as much as I am to my life, sir, and would as soon give up the one as the other."

The squire's countenance literally became pale, his last hope was gone, and so great was his agitation that, in bringing a glass of wine to his lips, his hand trembled to such a degree that he spilled a part of it. This, however, was not all. A settled gloom—a morose, dissatisfied expression—soon overshadowed his features, from which disappeared all trace of that benignant, open, and friendly hospitality towards Reilly that had hitherto beamed from them. He and the baronet exchanged glances of whose import, if Reilly was ignorant, not so his beloved *Cooleen Bawn*. For the remainder of the evening the squire treated Reilly with great coolness, always addressing him as Mister, and evidently contemplating him in a spirit which partook of the feeling that animated Sir Robert Whitecraft.

Helen rose to withdraw, and contrived, by a sudden glance at the door, and another as quick in the direction of the drawing-room, to let her lover know that she wished him to follow her soon. The hint was not lost, for in less than half an hour Reilly, who was of very temperate habits, joined her as she had hinted.

"Reilly," said she, as she ran to him, "dearest Reilly! there is little time to be lost. I perceive that a secret understanding respecting you exists between papa and that detestable baronet. Be on your guard, especially against the latter, who has evidently, ever since we sat down to dinner, contrived to bring papa round to his own way of thinking, as he will ultimately, perhaps, to worse designs and darker purposes. Above all things, speak nothing that can be construed against the existing laws. I find that danger, if not positive injury, awaits you. I shall, at any risk, give you warning."

"At no risk, beloved!"

"At every risk—at all risks, dearest Reilly! Nay, more—whatever danger may encompass you shall be shared by me, even at the risk of my life, or I shall extricate you out of it. But perhaps you will not be faithful to me. If so, I shudder to think what might happen."

"Listen," said Reilly, taking her by the hand, "*In the presence of heaven, I am yours, and yours only, until death!*"

She repeated his words, after which they had scarcely taken their seats when the squire and Sir Robert entered the drawing-room.

CHAPTER V.

The Plot and the Victims.

Sir Robert, on entering the room along with the squire, found the *Cooleen Bawn* at the spinnet. Taking his place at the end of it, so as that he could gain a full view of her countenance, he thought he could observe her complexion considerably heightened in color, and from her his glance was directed to Reilly. The squire, on the other hand, sat dull, silent, and unsociable, unless when addressing himself to the baronet, and immediately his genial manner returned to him.

With his usual impetuosity, however, when laboring under what he supposed to be a sense of injury, he soon brought matters to a crisis.

"Sir Robert," said he, "are the Papists quiet now?"

"They are quiet, sir," replied the other, "because they dare not be otherwise."

"By the great Deliverer, that saved us from Pope and Popery, brass money and wooden shoes, I think the country will never be quiet till they are banished out of it."

"Indeed, Mr. Folliard, I agree with you."

"And so do I, Sir Robert," said Reilly. "I wish from my soul there was not a Papist, as you call them, in this unfortunate country! In any other country beyond the bounds of the British dominions they could enjoy freedom. But I wish it for another reason, gentlemen; if they were gone, you would then be taught to your cost the value of your estates and the source of your incomes. And now, Mr. Folliard, I am not conscious of having given you any earthly offence, but I cannot possibly pretend to misunderstand the object of your altered conduct and language. I am your guest, at your own express invitation. You know I am a Roman Catholic—Papist, if you will—yet, with the knowledge of this, you have not only insulted me personally, but also in

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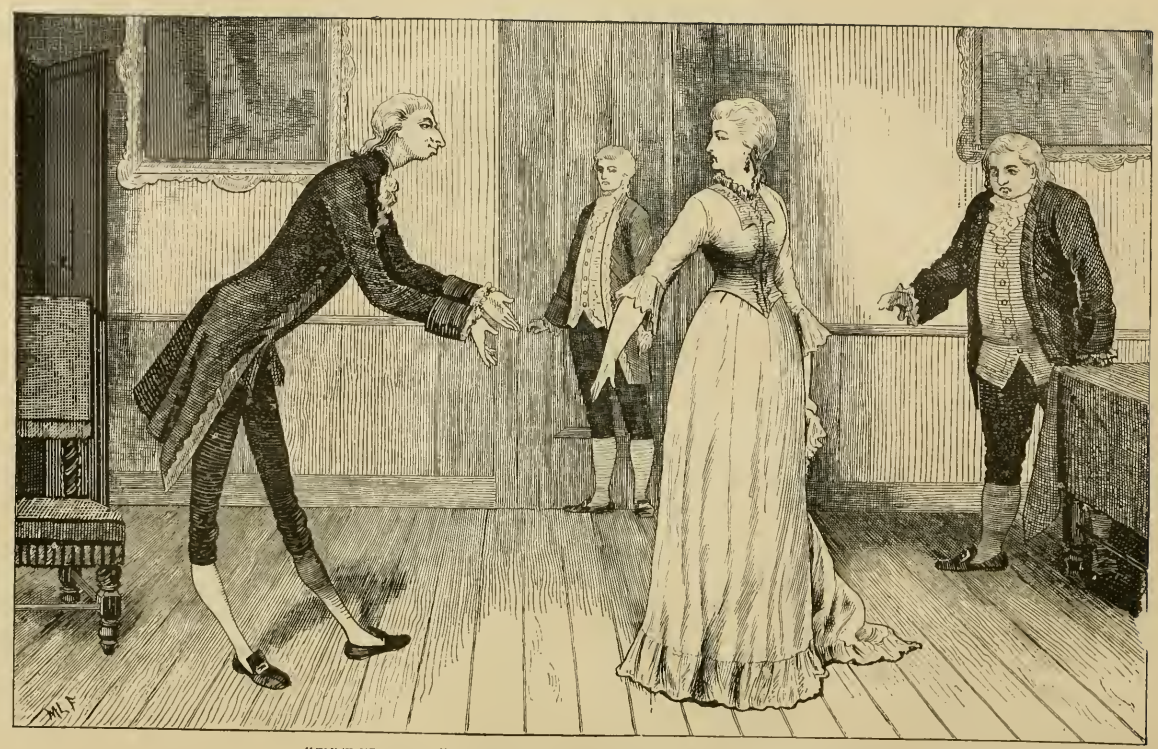

"TOUCH ME NOT, SIR," SHE REPLIED, HER GLORIOUS EYE FLASHING WITH INDIGNATION.—p. 35.

the creed to which I belong. As for that gentleman, I can only say that this roof and the presence of those who are under it constitute his protection. But I envy not the man who could avail himself of such a position, for the purpose of insinuating an insult which he dare not offer under other circumstances. I will not apologize for taking my departure, for I feel that I have been too long here."

Cooleen Bawn arose in deep agitation. "Dear papa, what is this?" she exclaimed. "What can be the cause of it? Why forget the laws of hospitality? Why, above all things, deliberately insult the man to whom you and I both owe so much? Oh, I cannot understand it. Some demon, equally cowardly and malignant, must have poisoned your own naturally generous mind. Some villain, equally profligate and hypocritical, has, for some dark purpose, given this unworthy bias to your mind."

"You know nothing of it, Helen. You're altogether in the dark, girl; but in a day or two it will all be made clear to you."

"Do not be discomposed, my dear Miss Folliard," said Sir Robert, striding over to her. "Allow me to prevail upon you to suspend your judgment for a little, and to return to the beautiful air you were enchanting us with."

As he spoke he attempted to take her hand. Reilly, in the meantime, was waiting for an opportunity to bid his love good-night.

"Touch me not, sir," she replied, her glorious eyes flashing with indignation. "I charge you as the base cause of drawing down the disgrace of shame, the sin of ingratitude, on my father's head. But here that father stands, and there you, sir, stand; and sooner than become the wife of Sir Robert Whitecraft I would dash myself from the battlements of this castle. William Reilly, brave and generous young man, good-night! It matters not who may forget the debt of gratitude which this family owe you —*I will not.* No cowardly slanderer shall instil his poisonous calumnies against you into *my* ear. My opinion of you is unchanged and unchangeable. Farewell! William Reilly!"

We shall not attempt to describe the commotions of love, of happiness, of rapture, which filled Reilly's bosom as he took his departure. As for *Cooleen Bawn*, she had now passed the Rubicon, and there remained nothing for her but constancy to the truth of her affection, be the result what it might. She had, indeed, much of the vehemence of her father's character in her; much of his unchangeable purpose, when she felt or thought she was right; but not one of his unfounded whims or prejudices; for she was too noble-minded and sensible to be influenced by unbecoming or inadequate motives. With an indignant but beautiful scorn, that gave grace to resentment, she bowed to the baronet, then kissed her father affectionately and retired.

The old man, after she had gone, sat for a considerable time silent. In fact, the superior force of his daughter's character had not only surprised, but overpowered him for the moment. The baronet attempted to resume the conversation, but he found not his his intended father-in-law in the mood for it. The light of truth, as it flashed from the spirit of his daughter, seemed to dispel the darkness of his recent suspicions; he dwelt upon the possibility of ingratitude with a temporary remorse.

"I cannot speak to you, Sir Robert," he said; "I am confused, disturbed, distressed. If I have treated that young man ungratefully, God may forgive me, but I will never forgive myself."

"Take care, sir," said the baronet, "that you are not under the spell of the Jesuit and your daughter too. Perhaps you will find, when it is too late, that she is the more spellbound of the two. If I don't mistake, the spell begins to work already. In the meantime, as Miss Folliard will have it, I withdraw all claims upon her hand and affections. Good-night, sir;" and as he spoke he took his departure.

For a long time the old man sat looking into the fire, where he began gradually to picture to himself strange forms and objects in the glowing embers, one of whom he thought resembled the Red Rapparee about to shoot him; another, Willy Reilly making love to his daughter; and behind all, a high gallows, on which he beheld the said Willy hanging for his crime.

In about an hour afterwards Miss Folliard returned to the drawing-room, where she found her father asleep in his arm-chair. Having awakened him gently from what appeared a disturbed dream, he looked about him, and, forgetting for a moment all that had happened, inquired in his usual eager manner where Reilly and Whitecraft were, and if they had gone. In a few moments, however, he recollected the circumstances that had taken place, and after heaving a deep sigh, he opened his arms for his daughter, and as he embraced her burst into tears.

"Helen," said he, "I am unhappy; I am distressed; I know not what to do!—may God forgive me if I have treated this young man with ingratitude. But, at all events, a few days will clear it all up."

His daughter was melted by the depth of his sorrow, and the more so as it was seldom she had seen him shed tears before.

"I would do every thing—any thing to make you happy, my dear treasure," said he, "if I only knew how."

"Dear papa," she replied, "of that I am conscious; and as a proof that the heart of your daughter is incapable of veiling a single thought that passes in it from a parent who loves her so well, I will place its most cherished secret in your own keeping. I shall not be outdone even by you, dear papa, in generosity, in confidence, in affection. Papa," she added, placing her head upon his bosom, whilst the tears flowed fast down her cheeks, "papa, I love William Reilly—love him with a pure and disinterested passion!—with a passion which I feel constitutes my destiny in this life—either for happiness or misery. That passion is irrevocable. It is useless to ask me to control or suppress it, for I feel that the task is beyond my power. My love, however, is not base nor selfish, papa, but founded on virtue and honor. It may seem strange that I should make such a confession to you, for I know it is unusual in young persons like me to do so; but remember, dear papa, that except yourself I have no friend. If I had a mother, or a sister, or a cousin of my own sex, to whom I might confide and unburden my feelings, then indeed it is not probable I would make to you the confession which I have made; but we are alone, and you are the only being left me on whom can rest my sorrow—for indeed my heart is full of sorrow."

"Well, well, I know not what to say. You are a true girl, Helen, and the very error, if it be one, is diminished by the magnanimity and truth which prompted you to disclose it to me. I will go to bed, dearest, and sleep if I can. I trust in God there is no calamity about to overshadow our house or destroy our happiness."

He then sought his own chamber; and *Cooleen Bawn*, after attending him thither, left him to the care of his attendant and retired herself to her apartment.

On reaching home Reilly found Fergus, one of his own relatives, as we have said, the same who, warned by his remonstrances, had abandoned the gang of the Red Rapparee, waiting to see him.

"Well, Fergus," said he, "I am glad that you have followed my advice. You have left the lawless employment of that blood-stained man?"

"I have," replied the other, "and I'm here to tell you that you can now secure him if you like. I don't look upon sayin' this as treachery to him, nor would I mention it only that Paudeen, the smith, who shoes and doctors his horses, tould me something that you ought to know."

"Well, Fergus, what is it?"

"There's a plot laid, sir, to send you out o' the country, and the Red Rapparee has a hand in it. He is promised a pardon from government, and some kind of a place as thief-taker, if he'll engage in it against you. Now, you know, there's a price upon his head, and, if you like, you can have it, and get an enemy put out of your way at the same time."

"No, Fergus," replied Reilly; "in a moment of indignation I threatened him in order to save the life of a fellow-creature. But let the laws deal with him. As for me, you know what he deserves at my hands, but I shall never become the hound of a government which oppresses me unjustly. No, no, it is precisely because a price *is* laid upon the unfortunate miscreant's head that *I* would not betray him."

"He will betray you, then."

"And let him. I have never violated any law, and even though he should *betray* me, Fergus, he cannot *make* me *guilty*. To the laws, to God, and his own conscience, I leave him. No, Fergus, all sympathy between me and the laws that oppress us is gone. Let them vindicate themselves against thieves and robbers and murderers, with as much vigilance and energy as they do against the harmless forms of religion and the rights of conscience, and the country will soon be free from such licentious pests as the Red Rapparee and his gang."

"You speak warmly, Mr. Reilly."

"Yes," replied Reilly, "I am warm, I am indignant at my degradation. Fergus, Fergus, I never felt that degradation and its consequences so deeply as I do this unhappy night."

"Well, will you listen to me?"

"I will strive to do so; but you know not the—you know not—alas! I have no language to express what I feel. Proceed, however," he added, attempting to calm the tumult that agitated his heart; "what about this plot or plan for putting me out of the country?"

"Well, sir, it's determined on to send you, by the means of the same laws you speak of, out of the country. The red villain is to come in with a charge against you and surrender himself to government as a penitent man, and the person who is to protect him is Sir Robert Whitecraft."

"It's all true, Fergus," said Reilly; "I see it at a glance, and understand it a great deal better than you do. They may, however, be disappointed. Fergus, I have a friend—a

friend—oh, such a friend! and it will go hard with that friend, or I shall hear of their proceedings. In the meantime, what do *you* intend to do?"

"I scarcely know," replied the other. "I must lie quiet for a while, at any rate."

"Do so," said Reilly; "and listen, Fergus. See Paudeen, the smith, from time to time, and get whatever he knows out of him. His father was a tenant of ours, and he ought to remember our kindness to him and his."

"Ay," said Fergus, "and he does too."

"Well, it is clear he does. Get from him all the information you can, and let me hear it. I would give you shelter in my house, but that *now* would be dangerous both to you and me. Do you want money to support you?"

"Well, indeed, Mr. Reilly, I do and I do not. I can—"

"That's enough," said Reilly; "you want it. Here, take this. I would recommend you, as I did before, to leave this unhappy country; but as circumstances have turned out, you may for some time yet be useful to me. Good-night, then, Fergus. Serve me in this matter as far as you can, for I stand in need of it."

As nothing like an organized police existed in Ireland at the period of which we speak, an outlaw or Rapparee might have a price laid upon his head for months—nay, for years—and yet continue his outrages and defy the executive. Sometimes it happened that the authorities, feeling the weakness of their resources and the inadequacy of their power, did not hesitate to propose terms to the leaders of these banditti, and, by affording them personal protection, succeeded in inducing them to betray their former associates. Now Reilly was well aware of this, and our readers need not be surprised that the communication made to him by his kinsman filled him not only with anxiety but alarm. A very slight charge indeed brought forward by a man of rank and property—such a charge, for instance, as the possession of firearms—was quite sufficient to get a Roman Catholic banished the country.

On the third evening after this our friend Tom Steeple was met by its proprietor in the avenue leading to Corbo Castle.

"Well, Tom," said the squire, "are you for the Big House?" for such is the general term applied to all the ancestral mansions of the country.

Tom stopped and looked at him—for we need scarcely observe here that with poor Tom there was no respect of persons; he then shook his head and replied, "Me don't know whether you tall or not. Tom tall—will Tom go to Big House—get bully dinner—and Tom sleep under the stairs—eh? Say ay, an' you be tall too."

"To be sure, Tom; go into the house, and your cousin Larry Lanigan, the cook, will give you a bully dinner; and sleep where you like."

The squire walked up and down the avenue in a thoughtful mood for some moments until another of our characters met him on his way towards the entrance gate. This person was no other than Molly Mahon.

"Ha!" said he, "here is another of them—well, poor devils, they must live. This, though, is the great fortune-teller. I will try her."

"God save your honor," said Molly, as she approached him and dropped a courtesy.

"Ah, Molly," said he, "you can see into the future, they say. Well, come now, tell me my fortune; but they say one must cross your palm with silver before you can manage the fates; here's a shilling for you, and let us hear what you have to say."

"No, sir," replied Molly, putting back his hand, "imposthors may do that, because they secure themselves first and tell you nothing worth knowin' afterwards. I take no money till I first tell the fortune."

"Well, Molly, that's honest at all events; let me hear what you have to tell me."

"Show me your hand, sir," said she, and taking it, she looked into it with a solemn aspect. "There, sir," she said, "that will do. I am sorry I met you this evening."

"Why so, Molly?"

"Because I read in your hand a great deal of sorrow."

"Pooh, you foolish woman—nonsense!"

"There's a misfortune likely to happen to one of your family; but I think it may be prevented."

"How will it be prevented?"

"By a gentleman that has a title and great wealth, and that loves the member of your family that the misfortune is likely to happen to."

The squire paused and looked at the woman, who seemed to speak seriously, and even with pain.

"I don't believe a word of it, Molly; but granting that it be true, how do you know it?"

"That's more than I can tell myself, sir," she replied. "A feelin' comes over me, and I can't help speakin' the words as they rise to my lips."

"Well, Molly, here's a shilling for you now; but I want you to see my daughter's hand till I hear what you have to say for her. Are you a Papist, Molly?"

"No, your honor, I was one wanst; but the moment we take to this way of life we mustn't belong to any religion, otherwise we couldn't tell the future."

"Sell yourself to the devil, eh?"

"Oh, no, sir; but—"

"But what? Out with it."

"I can't, sir; if I did, I never could tell a fortune agin."

"Well—well; come up; I have taken a fancy that you shall tell my daughter's for all that."

"Surely there can be nothing but happiness before her, sir; she that is so good to the poor and distressed; she that has all the world admirin' her wonderful beauty. Sure, they say, her health was drunk in the Lord Lieutenant's house in the great Castle of Dublin, as the Lily of the Plains of Boyle and the Star of Ireland."

"And so it was, Molly, and so it was; there's another shilling for you. Come now, come up to the house, and tell *her* fortune; and mark me, Molly, no flattery now—nothing but the truth, if you know it."

"Did I flatter *you*, sir?"

"Upon my honor, any thing but that, Molly; and all I ask is that you won't flatter *her*. Speak the truth, as I said before, if you know it."

Miss Folliard, on being called down by her father to have her fortune told, on seeing Molly, drew back and said,

"Do not ask me to come in direct contact with this woman, papa. How can you, for one moment, imagine that a person of her life and habits could be gifted with that which has never yet been communicated to mortal (the holy prophets excepted)—a knowledge of futurity?"

"No matter, my darling, no matter; give her your hand; you will oblige and gratify me."

"Here, then, dear papa, to please you—certainly."

Molly took her lovely hand, and having looked into it, said, turning to the squire, "It's very odd, sir, but here's nearly the same thing that I tould to you awhile ago."

"Well, Molly," said he, "let us hear it."

Miss Folliard stood with her snowy hand in that of the fortune-teller, perfectly indifferent to her art, but not without strong feelings of disgust at the ordeal to which she submitted.

"Now, Molly," said the squire, "what have you to say?"

"Here's love," she replied, "love in the wrong direction—a false step is made that will end in misery—and—and—and—"

"And what, woman?" asked Miss Folliard, with an indignant glance at the fortune-teller.

"What have you to add?"

"No!" said she, "I needn't speak it, for it won't come to pass. I see a man of wealth and title who will just come in in time to save you from shame and destruction, and with him you will be happy."

"I could prove to you," replied the *Cooleen Bawn*, her face mantling with blushes of indignation, "that I am a better prophetess than you are. Ask her, papa, where she last came from."

"Where did you come from last, Molly?" he asked.

"Why, then," she replied, "from Jemmy Hamilton's at the foot of Cullamore."

"False prophetess," replied the *Cooleen Bawn*, "you have told an untruth. I know where you came from last."

"Then where did I come from, Miss Folliard?" said the woman, with unexpected effrontery.

"From Sir Robert Whitecraft," replied Miss Folliard, "and the wages of your dishonesty and his corruption are the sources of your inspiration. Take the woman away, papa."

"That will do, Molly—that will do," exclaimed the squire, "there is something additional for you. What you have told us is very odd—very odd, indeed. Go and get your dinner in the kitchen."

Miss Folliard then withdrew to her own room.

Between eleven and twelve o'clock that night a carriage drew up at the grand entrance of Corbo Castle, out of which stepped Sir Robert Whitecraft and no less a personage than the Red Rapparee. They approached the hall door, and after giving a single knock, it was opened to them by the squire himself, who it would seem had been waiting to receive them privately. They followed him in silence to his study.

Mr. Folliard, though a healthy-looking man, was, in point of fact, by no means so. Of a nervous and plethoric habit, though brave, and even intrepid, yet he was easily affected by anything or any person that was disagreeable to him. On seeing the man whose hand had been raised against his life, and what was still more atrocious, whose criminal designs upon the honor of his daughter had been proved by his violent irruption into her chamber, he felt a suffocating sensation of rage and horror that nearly overcame him.

"Sir Robert," he said, "excuse me; the sight of this man has sickened me. I got your note, and in your society and at your request I have suffered him to come here; under your protection, too. May God for-

give me for it! The room is too close—I feel unwell—pray open the door."

"Will there be no risk, sir, in leaving the door open?" said the baronet.

"None in the world! I have sent the servants all to bed nearly an hour ago. Indeed, the fact is, they are seldom up so late, unless when I have company."

Sir Robert then opened the door—that is to say, he left it a little more than ajar, and returning again took his seat.

"Don't let the sight of me frighten you, sir," said the Rapparee. "I never was your enemy nor intended you harm."

"Frighten *me!*" replied the courageous old squire; "no, sir, I am not a man very easily frightened; but I will confess that the sight of you has sickened me and filled me with horror."

"Well, now, Mr. Folliard," said the baronet, "let this matter, this misunderstanding, this mistake, or rather this deep and diabolical plot on the part of the Jesuit, Reilly, be at once cleared up. We wish, that is to say I wish, to prevent your good nature from being played upon by a designing villain. Now, O'Donnel, relate, or rather disclose, candidly and truly, all that took place with respect to this damnable plot between you and Reilly."

"Why, the thing, sir," said the Rapparee, addressing himself to the squire, "is very plain and simple; but, Sir Robert, it was not a plot between me and Reilly—the plot was his own. It appears that he saw your daughter and fell desperately in love with her, and knowin' your strong feeling against Catholics, he gave up all hopes of being made acquainted with Miss Folliard, or of getting into her company. Well, sir, aware that you were often in the habit of goin' to the town of Boyle, he comes to me and says in the early part of the day, 'Randal, I will give you fifty goolden guineas if you help me in a plan I have in my head.' Now, fifty goolden guineas isn't easily earned; so I, not knowing what the plan was at the time, tould him I could not say nothing till I heard it. He then tould me that he was over head and ears in love with your daughter, and that have her he should if it cost him his life. 'Well,' says I, 'and how can I help you?' 'Why,' said he, 'I'll show you that: her ould persecuting scoundrel of a father'—excuse me, sir—I'm givin' his own words—"

"I believe it, Mr. Folliard," said the baronet, "for these are the identical terms in which he told me the story before; proceed, O'Donnel."

"'The ould scoundrel of a father,' says he, 'on his return from Boyle, generally comes by the ould road, because it is the shortest cut. Do you and your men lie in wait in the ruins of the ould chapel, near *Loch na Garran*'—it is called so, sir, because they say there's a wild horse in it that comes out of moonlight nights to feed on the patches of green that are here and there among the moors—'near *Loch na Garran*,' says he; 'and when he gets that far turn out upon him, charge him with transportin' your uncle, and when you are levellin' your gun at him, I will come, by the way, and save him. You and I must speak angry to one another, you know; then, of course, I must see him home, and he can't do less than ask me to dine with him. At all events, thinkin' that I saved his life, we will become acquainted.'"

The squire paused and mused for some time, and then asked, "Was there no more than this between you and him?"

"Nothing more, sir."

"And tell me, did he pay you the money?"

"Here it is," replied the Rapparee, pulling out a rag in which were the precise number of guineas mentioned.

"But," said the squire, "we lost our way in the fog."

"Yes, sir," said the Rapparee. "Everything turned out in his favor. That made very little difference. You would have been attacked in or about that place, whether or not."

"Yes, but did you not attack my house that night? Did not you yourself come down by the skylight, and enter, by violence, into my daughter's apartment?"

"Well, when I heard of that, sir, I said, 'I give Reilly up for ingenuity.' No, sir, that was his own trick; but afther all it was a bad one, and tells aginst itself. Why, sir, neither I nor any of my men have the power of makin' ourselves invisible. Do you think, sir—I put it to your own common-sense—that if we had been there no one would have seen us? Wasn't the whole country for miles round searched and scoured, and I ask you, sir, was there hilt or hair of me or any one of my men seen or even heard of? Sir Robert, I must be going now," he added. "I hope Squire Folliard understands what kind of a man Reilly is. As for myself, I have nothing more to say."

"Don't go yet, O'Donnel," said Whitecraft; "let us determine what is to be done with him. You see clearly it is necessary, Mr. Folliard, that this deep-designing Jesuit should be sent out of the country."

"I would give half my estate he was fairly out of it," said the squire. "He has brought calamity and misery into my family. Created world! how I and mine have

been deceived and imposed upon! Away with him—a thousand leagues away with him! And that quickly too! Oh, the plausible, deceitful villain! My child! my child!" and here the old man burst into tears of the bitterest indignation. "Sir Robert, that cursed villain was born, I fear, to be the shame and destruction of my house and name."

"Don't dream of such a thing," said the baronet. "On the day he dined here—and you cannot forget my strong disinclination to meet him—but even on that day you will recollect the treasonable language he used against the laws of the realm. After my return home I took a note of them, and I trust that you, sir, will corroborate, with respect to this fact, the testimony which it is my purpose to give against him. I say this the rather, Mr. Folliard, because it might seriously compromise your own character with the Government, and as a magistrate, too, to hear treasonable and seditious language at your own table, from a Papist Jesuit, and yet decline to report it to the authorities."

"The laws, the authorities, and you be hanged, sir!" replied the squire; "my table is, and has been, and ever shall be, the altar of confidence to my guests; I shall never violate the laws of hospitality. Treat the man fairly, I say, concoct no plot against him, bribe no false witnesses, and if he is justly amenable to the law I will spend ten thousand pounds to have him sent anywhere out of the country."

"He keeps arms," observed Sir Robert, "contrary to the penal enactments."

"I think not," said the squire; "he told me he was on a duck-shooting expedition that night, and when I asked him where he got his arms, he said that his neighbor, Bob Gosford, always lent him his gun whenever he felt disposed to shoot, and, to my own knowledge, so did many other Protestant magistrates in the neighborhood, for this wily Jesuit is a favorite with most of them."

"But I know where he has arms concealed," said the Rapparee, looking significantly at the baronet, "and I will be able to find them, too, when the proper time comes."

"Ha! indeed, O'Donnel," said Sir Robert, with well-feigned surprise; "then there will be no lack of proof against him, you may rest assured, Mr. Folliard; I charge myself with the management of the whole affair. I trust, sir, you will leave it to me, and I have only one favor to ask, and that is the hand of your fair daughter when he is disposed of."

"She shall be yours, Sir Robert, the moment that this treacherous villain can be removed by the fair operation of the laws; but I will never sanction any dishonorable treatment towards him. By the laws of the land let him stand or fall."

At this moment a sneeze of tremendous strength and loudness was heard immediately outside the door; a sneeze which made the hair of the baronet almost stand on end.

"What the devil is that?" asked the squire. "By the great Boyne, I fear some one has been listening after all."

The Rapparee, always apprehensive of the "authorities," started behind a screen, and the baronet, although unconscious of any cause for terror, stood rather undecided. The sneeze, however, was repeated, and this time it was a double one.

"Curse it, Sir Robert," said the squire, "have you not the use of your legs? Go and see whether there has been an eavesdropper."

"Yes, Mr. Folliard," replied the doughty baronet, "but your house has the character of being haunted; and I have a terror of ghosts."

The squire himself got up, and, seizing a candle, went outside the door, but nothing in human shape was visible.

"Come here, Sir Robert," said he, "that sneeze came from no ghost, I'll swear. Who ever heard of a ghost sneezing? Never mind, though; for the curiosity of the thing I will examine for myself, and return to you in a few minutes."

He accordingly left them, and in a short time came back, assuring them that every one in the house was in a state of the most profound repose, and that it was his opinion it must have been a cat.

"I might think so myself," observed the baronet, "were it not for the double sneeze. I am afraid, Mr. Folliard, that the report is too true—and that the house is haunted. O'Donnel, you must come home with me to-night."

O'Donnel, who entertained no apprehension of ghosts, finding that the "authorities" were not in question, agreed to go with him, although he had a small matter on hand which required his presence in another part of the country.

The baronet, however, had gained his point. The heart of the hasty and unreflecting squire had been poisoned, and not one shadow of doubt remained on his mind of Reilly's treachery. And that which convinced him beyond all arguments or assertions was the fact that on the night of the premeditated attack on his house not one of the Red Rapparee's gang was seen, or any trace of them discovered.

CHAPTER VI.

The Warning—an Escape.

Reilly, in the meantime, was not insensible to his danger. About eleven o'clock the next day, as he was walking in his garden, Tom Steeple made his appearance, and approached him with a look of caution and significance.

"Well, Tom," said he, "what's the news?"

Tom made no reply, but catching him gently by the sleeve of his coat, said, "Come wid Tom; Tom *has* news for you. Here it is, in de paper;" and as he spoke, he handed him a letter, the contents of which we give:

"Dearest Reilly: The dreadful discovery I have made, the danger and treachery and vengeance by which you are surrounded, but, above all, my inexpressible love for you, will surely justify me in not losing a moment to write to you; and I select this poor creature as my messenger because he is least likely to be suspected. It is through him that the discovery of the accursed plot against you has been made. It appears that he slept in the castle last night, as he often does, and having observed Sir Thomas Whitecraft and that terrible man, the Red Rapparee, coming into the house, and going along with papa into his study, evidently upon some private business, he resolved to listen. He did so, and overheard the Rapparee stating to papa that every thing which took place on the evening you saved his life and frustrated his other designs upon the castle, was a plan preconcerted by you for the purpose of making papa's acquaintance and getting introduced to the family in order to gain my affections. Alas! if you have resorted to such a plan, you have but too well succeeded. Do not, however, for one moment imagine that I yield any credit to this atrocious falsehood. It has been concocted by your base and unmanly rival, Whitecraft, by whom all the proceedings against you are to be conducted. Some violation of the penal laws, in connection with carrying or keeping arms, is to be brought against you, and unless you are on your guard you will be arrested and thrown into prison, and if not convicted of a capital offence and executed like a felon, you will at least be sent forever out of the country. What is to be done? If you have arms in or about your house let them be forthwith removed to some place of concealment. The Rapparee is to get a pardon from government, at least he is promised it by Sir Robert, if he turns against you. In one word, dearest Reilly, you cannot, with safety to your life, remain in this country. You must fly from it, and immediately too. I wish to see you. Come this night, at half-past ten, to the back gate of our garden, which you will find shut, but unlocked. Something—is it my heart?—tells me that our fates are henceforth inseparable, whether for joy or sorrow. I ought to tell you that I confessed my affection for you to papa on the evening you dined here, and he was not angry; but this morning he insisted that I should never think of you more, nor mention your name; and he says that if the laws can do it he will lose ten thousand pounds or he will have you sent out of the country. Lanigan, our cook, from what motive I know not, mentioned to me the substance of what I have now written. He is, it seems, a cousin to the bearer of this, and got the information from him after having had much difficulty, he says, in putting it together. I know not how it is, but I can assure you that every servant in the castle seems to know that I am attached to you.

"Ever, my dearest Reilly, yours, and yours only, until death,

"Helen Folliard."

We need not attempt to describe the sensations of love and indignation produced by this letter. But we shall state the facts.

"Here, Tom," said Reilly, "is the reward for your fidelity," as he handed him some silver; "and mark me, Tom, don't breathe to a human being that you have brought me a letter from the *Coolcen Bawn*. Go into the house and get something to eat; there now—go and get one of your bully dinners."

"It is true," said he, "too true I am doomed—devoted. If I remain in this country I am lost. Yes, my life, my love, my more than life—I feel as you do, that our fates, whether for good or evil, are inseparable. Yes, I shall see you this night if I have life."

He had scarcely concluded this soliloquy when his namesake, Fergus Reilly, disguised in such a way as prevented him from being recognized, approached him, in the lowly garb of a beccah or mendicant.

"Well, my good fellow," said he, "what do you want? Go up to the house and you will get food."

"Keep quiet," replied the other, disclosing himself, "keep quiet: get all your money into one purse, settle your affairs as quickly as you can, and fly the country this night, or otherwise sit down and make your will and your peace with God Almighty, for if you are found here by to-morrow night you sleep in Sligo jail. Throw me a few

halfpence, making as it were charity. Whitecraft has spies among your own laborers, and you know the danger I run in comin' to you by daylight. Indeed, I could not do it without this disguise. To-morrow night you are to be taken upon a warrant from Sir Robert Whitecraft; but never mind; as to Whitecraft, leave *him* to me—I have a crow to pluck with him."

"How is that, Fergus?"

"My sister, man; did you not hear of it?"

"No, Fergus, nor I don't wish to hear of it, for your sake; spare your feelings, my poor fellow; I know perfectly well what a hypocritical scoundrel he is."

"Well," replied Fergus, "it was only yesterday I heard of it myself; and are we to bear this?—we that have hands and eyes and limbs and hearts and courage to stand nobly upon the gallows-tree for striking down the villain who does whatever he likes, and then threatens us with the laws of the land if we murmur? Do you think this is to be borne?"

"Take not vengeance into your own hand, Fergus," replied Reilly, "for that is contrary to the laws of God and man. As for me, I agree with you that I cannot remain in this country. I know the vast influence which Whitecraft possesses with the government. Against such a man I have no chance; this, taken in connection with my education abroad, is quite sufficient to make me a marked and suspected man. I will therefore leave the country, and ere to-morrow night, I trust, I shall be beyond his reach. But, Fergus, listen: leave Whitecraft to God; do not stain your soul with human blood; keep a pure heart, and whatever may happen be able to look up to the Almighty with a clear conscience."

Fergus then left him, but with a resolution, nevertheless, to have vengeance upon the baronet very unequivocally expressed on his countenance.

Having seriously considered his position and all the circumstances of danger connected with it, Reilly resolved that his interview that night with his beloved *Cooleen Bawn* should be his last. He accordingly communicated his apprehensions to an aged uncle of his who resided with him, and entrusted the management of his property to him until some change for the better might take place. Having heard from Fergus Reilly that there were spies among his own laborers, he kept moving about and making such observations as he could for the remainder of the day. When the night came he prepared himself for his appointment, and at, or rather before, the hour of half-past ten, he had reached the back gate, or rather door of the garden attached to Corbo Castle. Having ascertained that it was unlocked, he entered with no difficulty, and traversed the garden without being able to perceive her whose love was now, it might be said, all that life had left him. After having satisfied himself that she was not in the garden, he withdrew to an arbor or summer-house of evergreens, where he resolved to await until she should come. He did not wait long. The latch of the entrance gate from the front made a noise; ah, how his heart beat! what a commotion agitated his whole frame! In a few moments she was with him.

"Reilly," said *Cooleen Bawn*, "I have dreadful news to communicate."

"I know all," said he; "I am to be arrested to-morrow night."

"To-night, dearest Reilly, to-night. Papa told me this evening, in one of his moods of anger, that before to-morrow morning you would be in Sligo jail."

"Well, dearest Helen," he replied, "that is certainly making quick work of it. But, even so, I am prepared this moment to escape. I have settled my affairs, left the management of them to my uncle, and this interview with you, my beloved girl, must be our last."

As he uttered these melancholy words the tears came to his eyes.

"The last!" she exclaimed. "Oh, no; it must not be the last. You shall not go alone, dearest William. My mind is made up. Be it for life or for death, I shall accompany you."

"Dearest life," he replied, "think of the consequences."

"I think of nothing," said *Cooleen Bawn*, "but my love for you. If you were not surrounded by danger as you are, if the whoop of vengeance were not on your trail, if death and a gibbet were not in the background, I could part with you; but now that danger, vengeance, and death, are hovering about you, I shall and must partake of them with you. And listen, Reilly; after all it is the best plan. Papa, if I accompany you—supposing that we are taken—will relent for my sake. I know his love for me. His affection for me will overcome all his prejudices against you. Then let us fly. To-night you will be taken. Your rival will triumph over both of us; and I—I, oh! I shall not survive it. Save me, then, Reilly, and let me fly with you."

"God knows," replied Reilly, with deep emotion, "if I suffered myself to be guided by the impulse of my heart, I would yield to wishes at once so noble and disinterested. I cannot, however, suffer my affection, ab-

sorbing and inexpressible as it is, to precipitate your ruin. I speak not of myself, nor of what I may suffer. When we reflect, however, my beloved girl, upon the state of the country, and of the law, as it operates against the liberty and property of Catholics, we must both admit the present impossibility of an elopement without involving you in disgrace. You know that until some relaxation of the laws affecting marriage between Catholics and Protestants takes place, an union between us is impossible; and this fact it is which would attach disgrace to you, and a want of honor, principle, and gratitude to me. We should necessarily lead the lives of the guilty, and seek the wildest fastnesses of the mountain solitudes and the oozy caverns of the bleak and solitary hills."

"But I care not. I am willing to endure it all for your sake."

"What!—the shame, the misinterpretation, the imputed guilt?"

"Neither care I for shame or imputed guilt, so long as I am innocent, and you safe."

"Concealment, my dearest girl, would be impossible. Such a hue and cry would be raised after us as would render nothing short of positive invisibility capable of protecting us from our enemies. Then your father!—such a step might possibly break his heart; a calamity which would fill your mind with remorse to the last day of your life!"

She burst again into tears, and replied, "But as for you, what can be done to save you from the toils of your unscrupulous and powerful enemies?"

"To that, my beloved Helen, I must forthwith look. In the meantime, let me gather patience and await some more favorable relaxation in the penal code. At present, the step you propose would be utter destruction to us both, and an irretrievable stain upon our reputation. You will return to your father's house, and I shall seek some secure place of concealment until I can safely reach the continent, from whence I shall contrive to let you hear from me, and in due time may possibly be able to propose some mode of meeting in a country where the oppressive laws that separate us here shall not stand in the way of our happiness. In the meanwhile let our hearts be guided by hope and constancy." After a mournful and tender embrace they separated.

It would be impossible to describe the agony of the lovers after a separation which might probably be their last. Our readers, however, may very well conceive it, and it is not our intention to describe it here. At this stage of our story, Reilly, who was, as we have said, in consequence of his gentlemanly manners and liberal principles, a favorite with all classes and all parties, and entertained no apprehensions from the dominant party, took his way homewards deeply impressed with the generous affections which his *Cooleen Bawn* had expressed for him. He consequently looked upon himself as perfectly safe in his own house. The state of society in Ireland, however, was at that melancholy period so uncertain that no Roman Catholic, however popular, or however innocent, could for one week calculate upon safety either to his property or person, if he happened to have an enemy who possessed any influence in the opposing Church. Religion thus was made the stalking-horse, not only of power, but of persecution, rapacity, and selfishness, and the unfortunate Roman Catholic who considered himself safe to-day might find himself ruined to-morrow, owing to the cupidity of some man who turned a lustful eye upon his property, or who may have entertained a feeling of personal ill-will against him. Be this as it may, Reilly wended his melancholy way homewards, and had got within less than a quarter of a mile of his own house when he was met by Fergus in his mendicant habit, who startled him by the information he disclosed.

"Where are you bound for, Mr. Reilly?" said the latter.

"For home," replied Reilly, "in order to secure my money and the papers connected with the family property."

"Well, then," said the other, "if you go home now you are a lost man."

"How is that?" asked Reilly.

"Your house at this moment is filled with sogers, and surrounded by them too. You know that no human being could make me out in this disguise; I had heard that they were on their way to your place, and afeered that they might catch you at home, I was goin' to let you know, in ordher that you might escape them, but I was too late; the villains were there before me. I took heart o' grace, however, and went up to beg a little charity for the love and honor of God. Seein' the kind of creature I was, they took no notice of me; for to tell you the truth, they were too much bent on searchin' for, and findin' you. God protect us from such men, Mr. Reilly," and the name he uttered in a low and cautious voice; "but at all events this is no country for you to live in now. But who do you think was the busiest and the bittherest man among them?"

"Why Whitecraft, I suppose."

"No; he wasn't there himself—no; but that double distilled traitor and villain, the Red Rapparee, and bad luck to him. You

see, then, that if you attempt to go near your own house you're a lost man, as I said."

"I feel the truth of what you say," replied Reilly, "but are you aware that they committed any acts of violence? Are you aware that they disturbed my property or ransacked my house?"

"Well, that 's more than I can say," replied Fergus, "for to tell you the truth, I was afraid to trust myself inside, in regard of that scoundrel the Rapparee, who, bein' himself accustomed to all sorts of disguises, I dreaded might find me out."

"Well, at all events," said Reilly, "with respect to that I disregard them. The family papers and other available property are too well secreted for them to secure them. On discovering Whitecraft's jealousy, and knowing, as I did before, his vindictive spirit and power in the country, I lost no time in putting them in a safe place. Unless they burn the house they could never come at them. But as this fact is not at all an improbable one—so long as Whitecraft is my unscrupulous and relentless enemy I shall seize upon the first opportunity of placing them elsewhere."

"You ought to do so," said Fergus, "for it is not merely Whitecraft you have to deal wid, but ould Folliard himself, who now swears that if he should lose half his fortune he will either hang or transport you."

"Ah! Fergus," replied the other, "there is an essential difference between the characters of these two men. The father of *Cooleen Bawn* is, when he thinks himself injured, impetuous and unsparing in his resentment; but then he is an open foe, and the man whom he looks upon as his enemy always knows what he has to expect from him. Not so the other: he is secret, cautious, cowardly, and consequently doubly vindictive. He is a combination of the fox and the tiger, with all the treacherous cunning of the one, and the indomitable ferocity of the other, when he finds that he can make his spring with safety."

This conversation took place as Reilly and his companion bent their steps towards one of those antiquated and obsolete roads which we have described in the opening portion of this narrative.

"But now," asked Fergus, "where do you intend to go, or what do you intend to do with yourself?"

"I scarcely know," replied Reilly, "but on one thing my mind is determined—that I will not leave this country until I know the ultimate fate of the *Cooleen Bawn*. Rather than see her become the wife of that diabolical scoundrel, whom she detests as she does hell, I would lose my life. Let the consequences then be what they may, I will not for the present leave Ireland. This resolution I have come to since I saw her to-night. I am her only friend, and, so help me God, I shall not suffer her to be sacrificed—murdered. In the course of the night we shall return to my house and look about us. If the coast be clear I will secure my cash and papers as I said. It is possible that a few stragglers may lurk behind, under the expectation of securing me while making a stolen visit. However, we shall try. We are under the scourge of irresponsible power, Fergus; and if Whitecraft should burn my house to-night or to-morrow, who is to bring him to an account for it? or if they should, who is to convict him?"

The night had now become very dark, but they knew the country well, and soon found themselves upon the old road they were seeking.

"I will go up," said Reilly, "to the cabin of poor widow Buckley, where we will stop until we think those blood-hounds have gone home. She has a free cottage and garden from me, and has besides been a pensioner of mine for some time back, and I know I can depend upon her discretion and fidelity. Her little place is remote and solitary, and not more than three quarters of a mile from us."

They accordingly kept the old road for some time, until they reached a point of it where there was an abrupt angle, when, to their utter alarm and consternation, they found themselves within about twenty or thirty yards of a military party.

"Fly," whispered Fergus, "and leave me to deal with them—if you don't it's all up with you. They won't know me from Adam, but they'll know you at a glance."

"I cannot leave you in danger," said Reilly.

"You're mad," replied the other. "Is it an ould beggar man they'd meddle with? Off with you, unless you wish to sleep in Sligo jail before mornin'."

Reilly, who felt too deeply the truth of what he said, bounded across the bank which enclosed the road on the right-hand side, and which, by the way, was a tolerably high one, but fortunately without bushes. In the meantime a voice cried out, "Who goes there? Stand at your peril, or you will have a dozen bullets in your carcass."

Fergus advanced towards them, whilst they themselves approached him at a rapid pace, until they met. In a moment they were all about him.

"Come, my customer," said their leader, "who and what are you? Quick—give an account of yourself."

"A poor creature that's lookin' for my bit, sir, God help me."

"What's your name?"

"One Paddy Brennan, sir, please your honor."

"Ay—one Paddy Brennan (hiccough), and —and—one Paddy Brennan, where do you go of a Sunday?"

"I don't go out at all, sir, of a Sunda'; whenever I stop of a Saturday night I always stop until Monday mornin'."

"I mean, are you a Papish?"

"Troth, I oughtn't to say I am, your honor —or at least a very bad one."

"But you *are* a Papish."

"A kind of one, sir."

"Curse me, the fellow's humbuggin' you, sergeant," said one of the men; "to be sure he's a Papish."

"To be sure," replied several of the others —"doesn't he admit he's a Papish?"

"Blow me, if—if—I'll bear this," replied the sergeant. "I'm a senior off—off—officer conductin' the examination, and I'll suffer no—no—man to intherfare. I must have subor—or—ordination, or I'll know what for. Leave him to me, then, and I'll work him up, never fear. George Johnston isn't the blessed babe to be imposed upon—that's what I say. Come, my good fellow, mark—mark me now. If you let but a quarter of —of—an inch of a lie out of your lips, you're a dead man. Are you all charged, gentlemen?"

"All charged, sergeant, with loyalty and poteen at any rate; hang the Pope."

"Shoulder arms—well done. Present arms. Where is—is—this rascal? Oh, yes, here he is. Well, you are there—are you?"

"I'm here, captain."

"Well blow me, that's not—not—bad, my good fellow; if I'm not a captain, worse men have been so (hiccough); that's what I say."

"Hadn't we better make a prisoner of him at once, and bring him to Sir Robert's?" observed another.

"Simpson, hold—old—your tongue, I say. Curse me if I'll suffer any man to interfere with me in the discharge of my duty."

"How do we know," said another, "but he's a Rapparee in disguise?—for that matter, he may be Reilly himself."

"Captain and gentlemen," said Fergus, "if you have any suspicion of me, I'm willin' to go anywhere you like; and, above all things, I'd like to go to Sir Robert's, bekaise they know me there—many a good bit and sup I got in his kitchen."

"Ho, ho!" exclaimed the sergeant; "now I have you—now I know whether you can tell truth or not. Answer me this. Did ever Sir Robert himself give you charity? Come, now."

Fergus perceived the drift of the question at once. The penurious character of the baronet was so well known throughout the whole barony that if he had replied in the affirmative every man of them would have felt that the assertion was a lie, and he would consequently have been detected. He was prepared, however.

"Throth then, gintlemen," he replied, "since you must have the truth, and although maybe what I'm goin' to say won't be plaisin' to you, as Sir Robert's friends, I must come out wid it; devil resave the color of his money ever I seen yet, and it isn't but I often axed him for it. No—but the sarvints often sind me up a bit from the kitchen below."

"Well, come," said the sergeant, "if you have been lyin' all your life, you've spoke the truth now. I think we may let him go."

"I don't think we ought," said one of them, named Steen, a man of about fifty years of age, and of Dutch descent; "as Barnet said, 'we don't know what he is,' and I agree with him. He *may* be a Rapparee in disguise, or, what is worse, Reilly himself."

"What Reilly do yez mane, gintlemen, wid submission?" asked Fergus.

"Why, Willy Reilly, the famous Papish," replied the sergeant. (We don't wish to fatigue the reader with his drunken stutterings.) "It has been sworn that he's training the Papishes every night to prepare them for rebellion, and there's a warrant out for his apprehension. Do you know *him?*"

"Throth I do, well; and to tell yez the truth, he doesn't stand very high wid his own sort."

"Why so, my good fellow?"

"Bekaise they think that he keeps too much company wid Prodestans, an' that he's half a Prodestan himself, and that it's only the shame that prevents him from goin' over to them altogether. Indeed, it's the general opinion among the Catholics—"

"Papishes! you old dog."

"Well, then, Papishes—that he will—an' throth, I don't think the Papishes would put much trust in the same man."

"Where are you bound for now? and what brings you out at an illegal hour on this lonely road?" asked Steen.

"Troth, then, I'm on my way to Mr. Graham's above; for sure, whenever I'm near him, poor Paddy Brennan never wants for the good bit and sup, and the comfortable straw bed in the barn. May God reward him and his for it!"

Now, the truth was, that Graham, a wealthy and respectable Protestant farmer, was uncle to the sergeant; a fact which

Fergus well knew, in consequence of having been a house servant with him for two or three years.

"Sergeant," said the Williamite settler, "I think this matter may be easily settled. Let two of the men go back to your uncle's with him, and see whether they know him there or not."

"Very well," replied the sergeant, "let you and Simpson go back with him—I have no objection. If my uncle's people *don't* know him, why then bring him down to Sir Roberts'."

"It's not fair to put such a task upon a man of my age," replied Steen, "when you know that you have younger men here."

"It was you proposed it, then," said the sergeant, "and I say, Steen, if you be a true man you have a right to go, and no right at all to shirk your duty. But stop—I'll settle it in a word's speaking: here you—you old Papish, where are you?—oh, I see—you're there, are you? Come now, gentlemen, shoulder arms—all right—present arms. Now, you confounded Papish, you say that you have often slept in my uncle's barn?"

"Is Mr. Graham your uncle, sir?—bekaise, if he is, I know that I'm in the hands of a respectable man."

"Come now—was there anything particular in the inside of that barn?—Gentlemen, are you ready to slap into him if we find him to be an imposther?"

"All ready, sergeant."

"Come now, you blasted Papish, answer me—"

"Troth, and I can do that, sargin'. You say Mr. Graham's your uncle, an' of coorse you have often been in that barn yourself. Very well, sir, don't you know that there's a prop on one side to keep up one of the cupples that gave way one stormy night, and there's a round hole in the lower part of the door to let the cats in to settle accounts wid the mice and rats."

"Come, come, boys, it's all right. He has described the barn to a hair. That will do, my Papish old cock. Come, I say, as every man must have a religion, and since the Papishes won't have ours, why the devil shouldn't they have one of their own?"

"That's dangerous talk," said Steen, "to proceed from your lips, sergeant. It smells of treason, I tell you; and if you had spoken these words in the days of the great and good King William, you might have felt the consequences."

"Treason and King William be hanged!" replied the sergeant, who was naturally a good-natured, but out-spoken fellow—"sooner than I'd take up a poor devil of a beggar that has enough to do to make out his bit and sup. Go on about your business, poor devil; you shan't be molested. Go to my uncle's, where you'll get a bellyfull, and a comfortable bed of straw, and a winnow-cloth in the barn. Zounds!—it would be a nice night's work to go out for Willy Reilly and to bring home a beggar man in his place."

This was a narrow escape upon the part of Fergus, who knew that if they had made a prisoner of him, and produced him before Sir Robert Whitecraft, who was a notorious *persecutor*, and with whom the Red Rapparee was now located, he would unquestionably have been hanged like a dog. The officer of the party, however—to wit, the worthy sergeant—was one of those men who love a drop of the native, and whose heart besides it expands into a sort of surly kindness that has something comical and not disagreeable in it. In addition to this, he never felt a confidence in his own authority with half the swagger which he did when three quarters gone. Steen and he were never friends, nor indeed was Steen ever a popular man among his acquaintances. In matters of trade and business he was notoriously dishonest, and in the moral and social relations of life, selfish, uncandid, and treacherous. The sergeant, on the other hand, though an out-spoken and flaming anti-Papist in theory, was, in point of fact, a good friend to his Roman Catholic neighbors, who used to say of him that his bark was worse than his bite.

When his party had passed on, Fergus stood for a moment uncertain as to where he should direct his steps. He had not long to wait, however. Reilly, who had no thoughts of abandoning him to the mercy of the military, without at least knowing his fate, nor, we may add, without a firm determination to raising his tenantry, and rescuing the generous fellow at every risk, immediately sprung across the ditch and joined him.

"Well, Fergus," said he, clasping his hand, "I heard everything, and I can tell you that every nerve in my body trembled whilst you were among them."

"Why," said Fergus, "I knew them at once by their voices, and only that I changed my own as I did I won't say but they'd have nabbed me."

"The test of the barn was frightful; I thought you were gone; but you must explain that."

"Ay, but before I do," replied Fergus, "where are we to go? Do you still stand for widow Buckley's?"

"Certainly, that woman may be useful to me."

"Well, then, we may as well jog on in that direction, and as we go I will tell you."

"How then did you come to describe the

barn—or rather, was your description correct?"

"Ay, as Gospel. You don't know that by the best of luck and providence of God, I was two years and a half an inside laborer with Mr. Graham. As is usual, all the inside men-servants slept, winther and summer, in the barn; and that accounts for our good fortune this night. Only for that scoundrel, Steen, however, the whole thing would not have signified much; but he's a black and deep villain that. Nobody likes him but his brother scoundrel, Whitecraft, and he's a favorite with him, bekaise he's an active and unscrupulous tool in his hands. Many a time, when these men—military—militia—yeomen, or whatever they call them, are sent out by this same Sir Robert, the poor fellows don't wish to catch what they call the unfortunate Papishes, and before they come to the house they'll fire off their guns, pretinding to be in a big passion, but only to give their poor neighbors notice to escape as soon as they can."

In a short time they reached widow Buckley's cabin, who, on understanding that it was Reilly who sought admittance, lost not a moment in opening the door and letting them in. There was no candle lit when they entered, but there was a bright turf fire "blinkin' bonnilie" in the fireplace, from which a mellow light emanated that danced upon the few plain plates that were neatly ranged upon her humble dresser, but which fell still more strongly upon a clean and well-swept hearth, on one side of which was an humble arm-chair of straw, and on the other a grave, but placid-looking cat, purring, with half-closed eyes, her usual song for the evening.

"Lord bless us! Mr. Reilly, is this you? Sure it's little I expected you, any way: but come when you will, you're welcome. And who ought to be welcome to the poor ould widow if *you* wouldn't?"

"Take a stool and sit down, honest man," she said, addressing Fergus; "and you, Mr. Reilly, take my chair; it's the one you sent me yourself, and if anybody is entitled to a sate in it, surely you are. I must light a rush."

"No, Molly," replied Reilly, "I would be too heavy for your frail chair. I will take one of those stout stools, which will answer me better."

She then lit a rush-light, which she pressed against a small cleft of iron that was driven into a wooden shaft, about three feet long, which stood upon a bottom that resembled the head of a churn-staff. Such are the lights, and such the candlesticks, that are to be found in the cabins and cottages of Ireland.

"I suppose, Molly," said Reilly, "you are surprised at a visit from me just now?"

"You know, Mr. Reilly," she replied, "that if you came in the deadest hours of the night you'd be welcome, as I said—and this poor man is welcome too—sit over to the fire, poor man, and warm yourself. Maybe you're hungry; if you are I'll get you something to eat."

"Many thanks to you, ma'am," replied Fergus, "I'm not a taste hungry, and could ait nothing now; I'm much obliged to you at the same time."

"Mr. Reilly, maybe you'd like to ait a bit. I can give you a farrel of bread, and a sup o' nice goat's milk. God preserve him from evil that gave me the same goats, and that's your four quarthers, Mr. Reilly. But sure every thing I have either came or comes from your hand; and if I can't thank you, God will do it for me, and that's betther still."

"No more about that, Molly—not a word more. Your long residence with my poor mother, and your affection for her in all her trials and troubles, entitle you to more than that at the hands of her son."

"Mrs. Buckley," observed Fergus, "this is a quiet-looking little place you have here."

"And it is for that I like it," she replied. "I have pace here, and the noise of the wicked world seldom reaches me in it. My only friend and companion here is the Almighty—praise and glory be to his name!"—and here she devoutly crossed herself—"barrin', indeed, when the light-hearted *girshas** come a *kailyee*† wid their wheels, to keep the poor ould woman company, and rise her ould heart by their light and merry songs, the cratures."

"That must be a relief to you, Molly," observed Reilly, who, however, could with difficulty take any part in this little dialogue.

"And so indeed it is," she replied; "and, poor things, sure if their sweethearts *do* come at the dusk to help them to carry home their spinning-wheels, who can be angry with them? It's the way of life, sure, and of the world."

She then went into another little room—for the cabin was divided into two—in order to find a ball of woollen thread, her principal occupation being the knitting of mittens and stockings, and while bustling about Fergus observed with a smile,

"Poor Molly! little she thinks that it's the bachelors, rather than any particular love for her company, that brings the thieves here."

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* Young girls.

† This means to spend a portion of the day, or a few hours of the night, in a neighbor's house, in agreeable and amusing conversation.

"Yes, but," said Reilly, "you know it's the custom of the country."

"Mrs. Buckley," asked Fergus, "did the sogers ever pay you a visit?"

"They did once," she replied, "about six months ago or more."

"What in the name of wondher," he repeated, "could bring them to you?"

"They were out huntin' a priest," she replied, "that had done something contrary to the law."

"What did they say, Mrs. Buckley, and how did they behave themselves?"

"Why," she answered, "they axed me if I had seen about the country a tight-looking fat little man, wid black twinklin' eyes and a rosy face, wid a pair o' priest's boots upon him, greased wid hog's lard? I said no, but to the revarse. They then searched the cabin, tossed the two beds about—poor Jemmy's—God rest my boy's sowl!—an' afterwards my own. There was one that seemed to hould authority over the rest, and he axed who was my landlord? I said I had no landlord. They then said that surely I must pay rent to some one, but I said that I paid rent to nobody; that Mr. Reilly here, God bless him, gave me this house and garden free."

"And what did they say when you named Mr. Reilly?"

"Why, they said he was a dacent Papish, I think they called it; and that there wasn't sich another among them. They then lighted their pipes, had a smoke, went about their business, and I saw no more of them from that day to this."

Reilly felt that this conversation was significant, and that the widow's cabin was any thing but a safe place of refuge, even for a few hours. We have already said that he had been popular with all parties, which was the fact, until his acquaintance with the old squire and his lovely daughter. In the meantime the loves of Willy Reilly and the far-famed *Cooleen Bawn* had gone abroad over the whole country; and the natural result was that a large majority among those who were anxious to exterminate the Catholic Church by the rigor of bigoted and inhuman laws, looked upon the fact of a tolerated Papist daring to love a Protestant heiress, and the daughter of a man who was considered such a stout prop of the Establishment, as an act that deserved death itself. Reilly's affection for the *Cooleen Bawn* was considered, therefore, not only daring but treasonable. Those men, then, he reflected, who had called upon her while in pursuit of the unfortunate priest, had become acquainted with the fact of her dependence upon his bounty; and he took it for granted, very naturally and very properly, as the event will show, that now, while "on his keeping," it would not be at all extraordinary if they occasionally searched her remote and solitary cabin, as a place where he might be likely to conceal himself. For this night, however, he experienced no apprehension of a visit from them, but with what correctness of calculation we shall soon see.

"Molly," said he, this poor man and I must sit with you for a couple of hours, after which we will leave you to your rest."

"Indeed, Mr. Reilly," she replied, "from what I heard this day I can make a purty good guess at the raison why you are here now, instead of bein' in your own comfortable house. You have bitther enemies; but God—blessed be his name—is stronger than any of them. However, I wish you'd let me get you and that poor man something to eat."

This kind offer they declined, and as the short rush-light was nearly burned out, and as she had not another ready, she got what is called a *cam* or grisset, put it on the hearth-stone, with a portion of hog's lard in it; she then placed the lower end of the tongs in the fire, until the broad portion of them, with which the turf is gripped, became red hot; she then placed the lard in the grisset between them, and squeezed it until nothing remained but pure oil; through this she slowly drew the peeled rushes, which were instantly saturated with the grease, after which she left them on a little table to cool. Among the poorer classes—small farmers and others—this process is performed every evening a little before dusk. Having thus supplied them with these lights, the pious widow left them to their own conversation and retired to the little room in order to repeat her rosary. We also will leave them to entertain themselves as best they can, and request our readers to follow us to a different scene.

CHAPTER VII.

An Accidental Incident favorable to Reilly, and a Curious Conversation.

We return to the party from whom Fergus Reilly had so narrow an escape. As our readers may expect, they bent their steps to the magnificent residence of Sir Robert Whitecraft. That gentleman was alone in his library, surrounded by an immense collection of books which he never read. He had also a fine collection of paintings, of which he knew no more than his butler, nor perhaps so much. At once sensual, penuri

ous, and bigoted, he spent his whole time in private profligacy—for he was a hypocrite, too—in racking his tenantry, and exhibiting himself as a champion for Protestant principles. Whenever an unfortunate Roman Catholic, whether priest or layman, happened to infringe a harsh and cruel law of which probably he had never heard, who so active in collecting his myrmidons, in order to uncover, hunt, and run down his luckless victim? And yet he was not popular. No one, whether of his own class or any other, liked a bone in his skin. Nothing could infect him with the genial and hospitable spirit of the country, whilst at the same time no man living was so anxious to partake of the hospitality of others, merely because it saved him a meal. All that sustained his character at the melancholy period of which we write was what people called the uncompromising energy of his principles as a sound and vigorous Protestant.

"Sink them all together," he exclaimed upon this occasion, in a kind of soliloquy—"Church and bishop and parson, what are they worth unless to make the best use we can of them? Here I am prevented from going to that girl to-night—and that barbarous old blockhead of a squire, who was so near throwing me off for a beggarly Papist rebel; and doubly, trebly, quadruply cursed be that same rebel for crossing my path as he has done. The cursed light-headed jade loves him too—there's no doubt of that—but wait until I get him in my clutches, as I certainly shall, and, by——, his rebel carcass shall feed the crows. But what noise is that? They have returned; I must go down and learn their success."

He was right. Our friend the tipsy sergeant and his party were at the hall-door, which was opened as he went down, and he ordered lights into the back parlor. In a few minutes they were ushered in, where they found him seated as magisterially as possible in a large arm-chair.

"Well, Johnston," said he, assuming as much dignity as he could, "what has been your success?"

"A bad evening's sport, sir; we bagged nothing—didn't see a feather."

"Talk sense, Johnston," said he sternly, "and none of this cant. Did you see or hear any thing of the rebel?"

"Why, sir, we did; it would be a devilish nice business if a party led and commanded by George Johnston should go out without hearin' and seein' something."

"Well, but what *did* you see and hear, sir?"

"Why, we saw Reilly's house, and a very comfortable one it is; and we heard from the servants that he wasn't at home."

"You're drunk, Johnston."

"No, sir, begging your pardon, I'm only *hearty*;* besides, I never discharge my duty half so well as when I'm drunk; I feel no colors then."

"Johnston, if I ever know you to get drunk on duty again I shall have you reduced."

"Reduced!" replied Johnston, "curse the fig I care whether you do or not; I'm actin' as a volunteer, and I'll resign."

"Come, sir," replied Sir Robert, "be quiet; I will overlook this, for you are a very good man if you could keep yourself sober."

"I told you before, Sir Robert, that I'm a better man when I'm drunk."

"Silence, sir, or I shall order you out of the room."

"Please your honor," observed Steen, "I have a charge to make against George Johnston."

"A charge, Steen—what is it? You are a staunch, steady fellow, I know; what is this charge?"

"Why, sir, we met a suspicious character on the old bridle road beyond Reilly's, and he refused to take him prisoner."

"A poor half-Papist beggarman, sir," replied Johnston, "who was on his way to my uncle's to stop there for the night. Divil a scarecrow in Europe would exchange clothes with him without *boot*."

Steen then related the circumstances with which our readers are acquainted, adding that he suggested to Johnston the necessity of sending a couple of men up with him to ascertain whether what he said was true or not; but that he flatly refused to do so—and after some nonsense about a barn he let him off.

"I'll tell you what, sir," said Johnston, "I'll hunt a priest or a Papish that breaks the law with any man livin', but hang me if ever I'll hunt a harmless beggarman lookin' for his bit."

At this period of the conversation the Red Rapparee, now in military uniform, entered the parlor, accompanied by some others of those violent men.

"Steen," said the baronet, "what or who do *you* suppose this ragged ruffian was?"

"Either a Rapparee, sir, or Reilly himself."

"O'Donnel," said he, addressing the Red Robber, "what description of disguises do these villains usually assume? Do they often go about as beggarmen?"

"They may have changed their hand, sir, since I became a legal subject, but, before that, three-fourths of us—of them—the vil-

*"Hearty" means when a man is slightly affected by drink so as to feel his spirits elevated.

lains, I mane—went about in the shape of beggars."

"That's important," exclaimed the baronet. "Steen, take half a dozen mounted men—a cavalry party have arrived here a little while ago, and are waiting further orders—I thought if Reilly had been secured it might have been necessary for them to escort him to Sligo. Well, take half a dozen mounted men, and, as you very properly suggested, proceed with all haste to farmer Graham's, and see whether this mendicant is there or not; if he is there, take him into custody at all events, and if he is not, then it is clear he is a man for whom we ought to be on the lookout."

"I should like to go with them, your honor," said the Red Rapparee.

"O'Donnel," said Sir Robert, "I have other business for you to-night."

"Well, plaise your honor," said O'Donnel, "as they're goin' in that direction, let them turn to the left after passin' the little strame that crosses the road, I mane on their way home; if they look sharp they'll find a little *boreen* that—but indeed they'll scarcely make it out in the dark, for it's a good way back in the fields—I mane the cabin of widow Buckley. If there's one house more than another in the whole countryside where Reilly is likely to take shelter in, that's it. He gave her that cabin and a large garden free, and besides allows her a small yearly pension. But remember, you can't bring your horses wid you—you must lave some of the men to take charge of them in the *boreen* till you come back. I wish you'd let me go with them, sir."

"I cannot, O'Donnel; I have other occupation for you to-night."

Three or four of them declared that they knew the cottage right well, and could find it out without much difficulty. "They had been there," they said, "some six or eight months before upon a priest chase." The matter was so arranged, and the party set out upon their expedition.

It is unnecessary to say that these men had their journey for nothing; but at the same time one fact resulted from it, which was, that the ragged mendicant they had met must have been some one well worth looking after. The deuce of it was, however, that, owing to the darkness of the night, there was not one among them who could have known Fergus the next day if they had met him. They knew, however, that O'Donnel, the Rapparee, was a good authority on the subject, and the discovery of the pretended mendicant's imposture was a proof of it. On this account, when they had reached the *boreen* alluded to, on their return from Graham's, they came to the resolution of leaving their horses in charge, as had been suggested to them, and in silence, and with stealthy steps, pounce at once into the widow's cabin. Before they arrived there, however, we shall take the liberty of preceding them for a few minutes, and once more transport our readers to its bright but humble hearth.

About three hours or better had elapsed and our two friends were still seated, maintaining the usual chat with Mrs. Buckley, who had finished her prayers and once more rejoined them.

"Fergus, like a good fellow," whispered Reilly, "slip out for a minute or two; there's a circumstance I wish to mention to Molly—I assure you it's of a very private and particular nature and only for her own ear."

"To be sure," replied Fergus; "I want, at all events, to stretch my legs, and to see what the night's about."

He accordingly left the cabin.

"Mrs. Buckley," said Reilly, "it was not for nothing I came here to-night. I have a favor to ask of you."

"Your favor's granted, sir," she replied—"granted, Mr. Reilly, even before I hear it—that is, supposin' always that it's in my power to do it for you."

"It is simply to carry a letter—and be certain that it shall be delivered to the proper person."

"Well," she replied, "sure that's aisily done. And where am I to deliver it?" she asked.

"That I shall let you know on some future occasion—perhaps within the course of a week or so."

"Well, sir," she replied, "I'd go twenty miles to deliver it—and will do so wid a heart and a half."

"Well, Molly, I can tell you your journey won't be so far; but there is one thing you are to observe—you must never breathe it to a human creature."

"I thought you knew me better, Mr. Reilly."

"It would be impossible, however, to be too strict here, because you don't know how much depends upon it."

At this moment Fergus put in his head, and said, "For Christ's sake, snuff out the candle, and Reilly—fly!—There are people in the next field!—quick!—quick!"

Reilly snatched up his hat, and whispered to the widow, "Deny that you saw me, or that there was any one here!—Put out the candle!—they might see our figures darkening the light as we go out!"

Fergus and Reilly immediately planted themselves behind a whitethorn hedge, in a

field adjoining the cabin, in order to reconnoitre the party, whoever they might be, which they could do in safety. This act of reconnoitering, however, was performed by the ear, and not at all by the eye; the darkness of the night rendered that impossible. Of course the search in the widow's cabin was equally fruitless.

"Now," whispered Reilly, "we'll go in a line parallel with the road, "but at a safe distance from them, until they reach the cross-roads. If they turn towards my house, we are forewarned, but if they turn towards Sir Robert's, it is likely that I may have an opportunity of securing my cash and papers."

On reaching the cross-roads alluded to, the party, much to the satisfaction of Reilly and his companion, did turn towards the residence of Sir Robert Whitecraft, thus giving the fugitives full assurance that nothing further was to be apprehended from them that night. The men in fact felt fatigued and were anxious to get to bed.

After approaching Reilly's house very cautiously, and with much circumspection—not an outhouse, or other place of concealment, having been left unexamined—they were about to enter, when Reilly, thinking that no precaution on such an occasion ought to be neglected, said:

"Fergus, we are so far safe; but, under all circumstances, I think it right and prudent that you should keep watch outside. Mark me, I will place Tom Corrigan—you know him—at this window, and if you happen to see anything in the shape of a human being, or to hear, for instance, any noise, give the slightest possible tap upon the glass, and that will be sufficient."

It was so arranged, and Reilly entered the house; but, as it happened, Fergus's office proved a sinecure; although, indeed, when we consider his care and anxiety, we can scarcely say so. At all events, Reilly returned in about half an hour, bearing under his arm a large dark portfolio, which, by the way, was securely locked.

"Is all right?" asked Fergus.

"All is right," replied the other. "The servants have entered into an arrangement to sit up, two in turn each night, so as to be ready to give me instant admittance whenever I may chance to come."

"But now where are you to place these papers?" asked his companion. "That's a difficulty."

"It is, I grant," replied Reilly, "but after what has happened, I think widow Buckley's cabin the safest place for a day or two. Only that the hour is so unseasonable, I could feel little difficulty in finding a proper place of security for them, but as it is, we must only deposit them for the present with the widow."

The roads of Ireland at this period—if roads they could be called—were not only in a most shameful, but dangerous, state. In summer they were a foot deep with dust, and in winter at least eighteen inches with mud. This, however, was by no means the worst of it. They were studded, at due intervals, with ruts so deep that if a horse happened to get into one of them he went down to the saddle-skirts. They were treacherous, too, and such as no caution could guard against; because, where the whole surface of the road was one mass of mud, it was impossible to distinguish these horse-traps at all. Then, in addition to these, were deep gullies across the roads, worn away by small rills, proceeding from rivulets in the adjoining uplands, which were principally dry, or at least mere threads of water in summer, but in winter became pigmy torrents that tore up the roads across which they passed, leaving them in the dangerous state we have described.

As Reilly and his companion had got out upon the road, they were a good deal surprised, and not a little alarmed, to see a horse, without a rider, struggling to extricate himself out of one of the ruts in question.

"What is this?" said Fergus. "Be on your guard."

"The horse," observed Reilly, "is without a rider; see what it means."

Fergus approached with all due caution, and on examining the place discovered a man lying apparently in a state of insensibility.

"I fear," said he, on returning to Reilly, "that his rider has been hurt; he is lying senseless about two or three yards before the horse."

"My God!" exclaimed the other, "perhaps he has been killed; let us instantly assist him. Hold this portfolio whilst I render him whatever assistance I can."

As he spoke they heard a heavy groan, and on approaching found the man sitting, but still unable to rise.

"You have unfortunately been thrown, sir," said Reilly; "I trust in God you are not seriously hurt."

"I hope not, sir," replied the man, "but I was stunned, and have been insensible for some time; how long I cannot say."

"Good gracious, sir!" exclaimed Reilly, "is this Mr. Brown?"

"It is, Mr. Reilly; for heaven's sake aid me to my limbs—that is, if I shall be able to stand upon them."

Reilly did so, but found that he could not stand or walk without assistance. The

horse, in the meantime, had extricated himself.

"Come, Mr. Brown," said Reilly, "you must allow me to assist you home. It is very fortunate that you have not many perches to go. This poor man will lead your horse up to the stable."

"Thank you, Mr. Reilly," replied the gentleman, "and in requital for your kindness you must take a bed at my house to-night. I am aware of your position," he added in a confidential voice, "and that you cannot safely sleep in your own; with me you will be secure."

Reilly thanked him, and said that this kind offer was most welcome and acceptable, as, in point of fact, he scarcely knew that night where to seek rest with safety. They accordingly proceeded to the parsonage—for Mr. Brown was no other than the Protestant rector of the parish, a man with whom Reilly was on the most friendly and intimate terms, and a man, we may add, who omitted no opportunity of extending shelter, protection, and countenance to such Roman Catholics as fell under the suspicion or operation of the law. On this occasion he had been called very suddenly to the deathbed of a parishioner, and was then on his return home, after having administered to the dying man the last consolations of religion.

On reaching the parsonage, Fergus handed the portfolio to its owner, and withdrew to seek shelter in some of his usual haunts for the night; but Mr. Brown, aided by his wife, who sat up for him, contrived that Reilly should be conducted to a private room, without the knowledge of the servants, who were sent as soon as possible to bed. Before Reilly withdrew, however, that night, he requested Mr. Brown to take charge of his money and family papers, which the latter did, assuring him that they should be forthcoming whenever he thought proper to call for them. Mr. Brown had not been seriously hurt, and was able in a day or two to pay the usual attention to the discharge of his duties.

Reilly, having been told where to find his bedroom, retired with confidence to rest. Yet we can scarcely term it rest, after considering the tumultuous and disagreeable events of the evening. He began to ponder upon the life of persecution to which Miss Folliard must necessarily be exposed, in consequence of her father's impetuous and fiery temper; and, indeed, the fact was, that he felt this reflection infinitely more bitter than any that touched himself. In these affectionate calculations of her domestic persecution he was a good deal mistaken, however. Sir Robert Whitecraft had now gained a complete ascendancy over the disposition and passions of her father. The latter, like many another country squire—especially of that day—when his word and will were law to his tenants and dependants, was a very great man indeed, when dealing with them. He could bluster and threaten, and even carry his threats into execution with a confident swagger that had more of magisterial pride and the pomp of property in it, than a sense of either right or justice. But, on the other hand, let him meet a man of his own rank, who cared nothing about his authority as a magistrate, or his assumption as a man of large landed property, and he was nothing but a poor weak-minded tool in his hands. So far our description is correct; but when such a knave as Sir Robert Whitecraft came in his way—a knave at once calculating, deceitful, plausible, and cunning—why, our worthy old squire, who thought himself a second Solomon, might be taken by the nose and led round the whole barony.

There is no doubt that he had sapiently laid down his plans to harass and persecute his daughter into a marriage with Sir Robert, and would have probably driven her from under his roof, had he not received the *programme* of his conduct from Whitecraft. That cowardly caitiff had a double motive in this. He found that if her father should "pepper her with persecution," as the old fellow said, before marriage, its consequences might fall upon his own unlucky head afterwards—in other words, that Helen would most assuredly make him then suffer, to some purpose, for all that his pretensions to her hand had occasioned her to undergo previous to their union; for, in truth, if there was one doctrine which Whitecraft detested more than another—and with good reason too—it was that of Retribution.

"Mr. Folliard," said Whitecraft in the very last conversation they had on this subject, "you must not persecute your daughter on my account."

"Mustn't I? Why hang it, Sir Robert, isn't persecution the order of the day? If she doesn't marry you quietly and willingly, we'll turn her out, and hunt her like a priest."

"No, Mr. Folliard, violence will never do. On the contrary, you must change your hand, and try an opposite course. If you wish to rivet her affections upon that Jesuitical traitor still more strongly, persecute her; for there is nothing in this life that strengthens love so much as opposition and violence. The fair ones begin to look upon themselves as martyrs, and in proportion as you are severe and inexorable, so in proportion are they resolved to win the crown that

is before them. I would not press your daughter but that I believe love to be a thing that exists before marriage — never after. There's the honeymoon, for instance. Did ever mortal man or mortal woman hear or dream of a *second* honeymoon? No, sir, for Cupid, like a large blue-bottle, falls into, and is drowned, in the honey-pot."

"Confound me," replied the squire, "if I understand a word you say. However, I dare say it may be very good sense for all that, for you always had a long noddle. Go on."

"My advice to you then, sir, is this—make as few allusions to her marriage with me as possible; but, in the meantime, you may praise me a little, if you wish; but, above all things, don't run down Reilly immediately after paying either my mind or person any compliment. Allow the young lady to remain quiet for a time. Treat her with your usual kindness and affection; for it is possible, after all, that she may do more from her tenderness and affection for you than we could expect from any other motive; at all events, until we shall succeed in hanging or transporting this rebellious scoundrel."

"Very good—so he is. Good William! what a son-in-law I should have! I who transported one priest already!"

"Well, sir, as I was saying, until we shall have succeeded in hanging or transporting him. The first would be the safest, no doubt; but until we shall be able to accomplish either one or the other, we have not much to expect in the shape of compliance from your daughter. When the villain is removed, however, hope, on her part, will soon die out—love will lose its *pabulum*."

"Its what?" asked the squire, staring at him with a pair of round eyes that were full of perplexity and wonder.

"Why, it means food, or rather fodder."

"Curse you, sir," replied the squire indignantly; "do you want to make a beast of my daughter?"

"But it's a word, sir, applied by the poets, as the food of Cupid."

"Cupid! I thought he was drowned in the honey-pot, yet he's up again, and as brisk as ever, it appears. However, go on—let us understand fairly what you're at. I think I see a glimpse of it; and knowing your character upon the subject of persecution as I do, it's more, I must say, than I expected from you. Go on—I bid you."

"I say, then, sir, that if Reilly were either hanged or out of the country, the consciousness of this would soon alter matters with Miss Folliard. If you, then, sir, will enter into an agreement with me, I shall undertake so to make the laws bear upon Reilly as to rid either the world or the country of him; and you shall promise not to press upon your daughter the subject of her marriage with me until then. Still, there is one thing you must do; and that is, to keep her under the strictest *surveillance*."

"What the devil's that?" said the squire.

"It means," returned his expected son-in-law, "that she must be well watched, but without feeling that she is so."

"Would it not be better to lock her up at once?" said her father. "That would be making the matter sure."

"Not at all," replied Whitecraft. "So sure as you lock her up, so sure she will break prison."

"Well, upon my soul," replied her father, "I can't see that. A strong lock and key are certainly the best surety for the due appearance of any young woman disposed to run away. I think the best way would be to make her feel at once that her father is a magistrate, and commit her to her own room until called upon to appear."

Whitecraft, whose object was occasionally to puzzle his friend, gave a cold grin, and added:

"I suppose your next step would be to make her put in security. No—no. Mr. Folliard; if you will be advised by me, try the soothing system: antiphlogistic remedies are always the best in a case like hers."

"Anti—what? Curse me, if I can understand every tenth word you say. However, I give you credit, Whitecraft; for upon my soul I didn't think you knew half so much as you do. That last, however, is a tickler—a nut that I can't crack. I wish I could only get my tongue about it, till I send it among the Grand Jury, and maybe there wouldn't be wigs on the green in making it out."

"Yes, I fancy it would teach them a little supererogation."

"A little what? Is it love that has made you so learned, Whitecraft, or so unintelligible, which? Why, man, if your passion increases, in another week there won't be three men out of Trinity College able to understand you. You will become a perfect oracle. But, in the meantime, let us see how the arrangement stands. *Imprimus*, you are to hang or transport Reilly: and, until then, I am not to annoy my daughter with any allusions to this marriage: but, above all things, not to compare you and Reilly with one another in her presence, lest it might strengthen her prejudices against you."

"I beg your pardon, Mr. Folliard, I did not say so; I fear no comparison with the fellow."

"No matter, Sir Robert, if you did not knock it down you staggered it. Omitting

the comparison, however, I suppose that so far I am right."

"I think so, sir," replied the other, conscious, after all, that he had got a touch of "Roland for his Oliver."

Then he proceeded: "I'm to watch her closely, only she's not to know it. Now, I'll tell you what, Sir Robert, I know you carry a long noddle, with more hard words in it than I ever gave you credit for—but with regard to what you expect from me now—"

"I don't mean that you should watch her personally yourself, Mr. Folliard."

"I suppose you don't; I didn't think you did; but I'll tell you what—place the twelve labors of Hercules before me, and I'll undertake to perform them, if you wish, but to watch a woman, Sir Robert—and that woman keen and sharp upon the cause of such vigilance—without her knowing it in one half hour's time—that is a task that never was, can, or will be accomplished. In the meantime, we must only come as near its accomplishment as we can."

"Just so, sir; we can do no more. Remember, then, that you perform your part of this arrangement, and, with the blessing of God, I shall leave nothing undone to perform mine."

Thus closed this rather extraordinary conversation, after which Sir Robert betook himself home, to reflect upon the best means of performing his part of it, with what quickness and dispatch, and with what success, our readers already know.

The old squire was one of those characters who never are so easily persuaded as when they do not fully comprehend the argument used to convince them. Whenever the squire found himself a little at fault, or confounded by either a difficult word or a hard sentence, he always took it for granted that there was something unusually profound and clever in the matter laid before him. Sir Robert knew this, and on that account played him off to a certain extent. He was too cunning, however, to darken any part of the main argument so far as to prevent its drift from being fully understood, and thereby defeating his own purpose.

CHAPTER VIII.

A Conflagration—An Escape—And an Adventure.

We have said that Sir Robert Whitecraft was anything but a popular man—and we might have added that, unless among his own clique of bigots and persecutors, he was decidedly unpopular among Protestants in general. In a few days after the events of the night we have described, Reilly, by the advice of Mr. Brown's brother, an able and distinguished lawyer, gave up the possession of his immense farm, dwelling-house, and offices to the landlord. In point of fact, this man had taken the farm for Reilly's father, in his own name, a step which many of the liberal and generous Protestants of that period were in the habit of taking, to protect the property for the Roman Catholics, from such rapacious scoundrels as Whitecraft, and others like him, who had accumulated the greater portion of their wealth and estates by the blackest and most iniquitous political profligacy and oppression. For about a month after the first night of the unsuccessful pursuit after Reilly, the whole country was overrun with military parties, and such miserable inefficient police as then existed. In the meantime, Reilly escaped every toil and snare that had been laid for him. Sir Robert Whitecraft, seeing that hitherto he had set them at defiance, resolved to glut his vengeance on his property, since he could not arrest himself. A description of his person had been, almost from the commencement of the proceedings, published in the *Hue-and-Cry*, and he had been now outlawed. As even this failed, Sir Robert, as we said, came with a numerous party of his myrmidons, bringing along with them a large number of horses, carts, and cars. The house at this time was in the possession only of a keeper, a poor, feeble man, with a wife and a numerous family of small children, the other servants having fled from the danger in which their connection with Reilly involved them. Sir Robert, however, very deliberately brought up his cars and other vehicles, and having dragged out all the most valuable part of the furniture, piled it up, and had it conveyed to his own outhouses, where it was carefully stowed. This act, however, excited comparatively little attention, for such outrages were not unfrequently committed by those who had, or at least who thought they had, the law in their own hands. It was now dusk, and the house had been gutted of all that had been most valuable in it—but the most brilliant part of the performance was yet to come. We mean no contemptible pun. The young man's dwelling-house, and office-houses were ignited at this moment by this man's military and other official minions, and in about twenty minutes they were all wrapped in one red, merciless mass of flame. The country people, on observing this fearful conflagration, flocked from all quarters; but a cordon of outposts was stationed at some distance around the premises, to prevent the

peasantry from marking the chief actors in this nefarious outrage. Two gentlemen, however, approached, who, having given their names, were at once admitted to the burning premises. These were Mr. Brown, the clergyman, and Mr. Hastings, the actual and legal proprietor of all that had been considered Reilly's property. Both of them observed that Sir Robert was the busiest man among them, and upon making inquiries from the party, they were informed that they acted by his orders, and that, moreover, he was himself the very first individual who had set fire to the premises. The clergyman made his way to Sir Robert, on whose villainous countenance he could read a dark and diabolical triumph.

"Sir Robert Whitecraft," said Mr. Brown, "how comes such a wanton and unnecessary waste of property?"

"Because, sir," replied that gentleman, "it is the property of a popish rebel and outlaw, and is confiscated to the State."

"But do you possess authority for this conduct?—Are you the State?"

"In the spirit of our Protestant Constitution, certainly. I am a loyal Protestant magistrate, and a man of rank, and will hold myself accountable for what I do and have done. Come you, there," he added, "who have knocked down the pump, take some straw, light it up, and put it with pitchforks upon the lower end of the stable; it has not yet caught the flames."

This order was accordingly complied with, and in a few minutes the scene, if one could dissociate the mind from the hellish spirit which created it, had something terribly sublime in it.

Mr. Hastings, the gentleman who accompanied the clergyman, the real owner of the property, looked on with apparent indifference, but uttered not a word. Indeed, he seemed rather to enjoy the novelty of the thing than otherwise, and passed with Mr. Brown from place to place, as if to obtain the best points for viewing the fire.

Reilly's residence was a long, large, two-story house, deeply thatched; the kitchen, containing pantry, laundry, scullery, and all the usual appurtenances connected with it, was a continuation of the larger house, but it was a story lower, and also deeply thatched. The out-offices ran in a long line behind the dwelling house, so that both ran parallel with each other, and stood pretty close besides, for the yard was a narrow one. In the meantime, the night, though dry, was dark and stormy. The wind howled through the adjoining trees like thunder, roared along the neighboring hills, and swept down in savage whirlwinds to the bottom of the lowest valleys. The greater portion of the crowd who were standing outside the cordon we have spoken of fled home, as the awful gusts grew stronger and stronger, in order to prevent their own houses from being stripped or unroofed, so that very few remained to witness the rage of the conflagration at its full height. The Irish peasantry entertain a superstition that whenever a strong storm of wind, without rain, arises, it has been occasioned by the necromantic spell of some guilty sorcerer, who, first having sold himself to the devil, afterwards raises him for some wicked purpose; and nothing but the sacrifice of a black dog or a black cock—the one without a white hair, and the other without a white feather—can prevent him from carrying away, body and soul, the individual who called him up, accompanied by such terrors. In fact the night, independently of the terrible accessory of the fire, was indescribably awful. Thatch portions of the ribs and roofs of houses were whirled along through the air; and the sweeping blast, in addition to its own howlings, was burdened with the loud screamings of women and children, and the stronger shoutings of men, as they attempted to make each other audible, amidst the roaring of the tempest.

This was terrible indeed; but on such a night, what must not the conflagration have been, fed by such *pabulum*—as Sir Robert himself would have said—as that on which it glutted its fiery and consuming appetite. We have said that the offices and dwelling-house ran parallel with each other, and such was the fact. What appeared singular, and not without the possibility of some dark supernatural causes, according to the impressions of the people, was, that the wind, on the night in question, started, as it were, along with the fire; but the truth is, it had been gamboling in its gigantic play before the fire commenced at all. In the meantime, as we said, the whole premises presented one fiery mass of red and waving flames, that shot and drifted up, from time to time, towards the sky, with the rapidity, and more than the terror, of the *aurora borealis*. As the conflagration proceeded, the high flames that arose from the mansion, and those that leaped up from the offices, several times met across the yard, and mingled, as if to exult in their fearful task of destruction, forming a long and distinct arch of flame, so exact and regular, that it seemed to proceed from the skill and effort of some powerful demon, who had made it, as it were, a fiery arbor for his kind. The whole country was visible to an astonishing distance, and overhead, the evening sky, into which the uprushing pyramids seemed to pass, looked as

if it had caught the conflagration, and was one red mass of glowing and burning copper. Around the house and premises the eye could distinguish a pin; but the strong light was so fearfully red that the deep tinge it communicated to the earth seemed like blood, and made it appear as if it had been sprinkled with it.

It is impossible to look upon a large and extensive conflagration without feeling the mind filled with imagery and comparisons, drawn from moral and actual life. Here, for instance, is a tyrant, in the unrestrained exercise of his power—he now has his enemy in his grip, and hear how he exults; listen to the mirthful and crackling laughter with which the fiendish despot rejoices, as he gains the victory; mark the diabolical gambols with which he sports, and the demon glee with which he performs his capricious but frightful exultations. But the tyrant, after all, will become exhausted—his strength and power will fail him; he will destroy his own subjects; he will become feeble, and when he has nothing further on which to exercise his power, he will, like many another tyrant before him, sink, and be lost in the ruin he has made.

Again: Would you behold Industry? Here have its terrible spirits been appointed their tasks. Observe the energy, the activity, the persevering fury with which they discharge their separate duties. See how that eldest son of Apollyon, with the appetite of hell, licks into his burning maw every thing that comes in contact with his tongue of fire. What quickness of execution, and how rapidly they pass from place to place! how they run about in quest of employment! how diligently and effectually they search every nook and corner, lest anything might escape them! Mark the activity with which that strong fellow leaps across, from beam to beam, seizing upon each as he goes. A different task has been assigned to another: he attacks the rafters of the roof—he fails at first, but, like the constrictor, he first licks over his victim before he destroys it—bravo!—he is at it again—it gives way—he is upon it, and about it; and now his difficulties are over—the red wood glows, splits and crackles, and flies off in angry flakes, in order to become a minister to its active and devouring master. See! observe! What business—what a coil and turmoil of industry! Every flame at work—no idle hand here—no lazy lounger reposing. No, no—the industry of a hive of bees is nothing to this. Running up—running down—running in all directions: now they unite together to accomplish some general task, and again disperse themselves to perform their individual appointments.

But hark! what comes here? Room for another element. 'Tis the wind-storm, that comes to partake in the triumph of the victory which his ministers have assisted to gain. But lo! here he comes in person; and now they unite—or how?—Do they oppose each other? Here does the wind-storm drive back the god of fire from his victim; again the fiery god attempts to reach it; and again he feels that he has met more than his match. Once, twice, thrice he has failed in getting at it. But is this conflict real—this fierce battle between the elements? Alas, no; they are both tyrants, and what is to be expected?

The wind god, always unsteady, wheels round, comes to the assistance of his opponent, and gives him new courage, new vigor, and new strength. But his inferior ministers must have a share of this dreadful repast. Off go a thousand masses of burning material, whirling along. Off go the glowing timbers and rafters, on the wind, by which they are borne in thousands of red meteors across the sky. But hark, again! Room for the whirlwind! Here it comes, and addresses itself to you tall and waving pyramid; they embrace; the pyramid is twisted into the figure of a gigantic corkscrew—round they go, rapid as thought; the thunder of the wind supplies them with the appropriate music, and continues until this terrible and gigantic waltz of the elements is concluded. But now these fearful ravagers are satisfied, because they have nothing more on which they can glut themselves. They appear, however, to be seated. The wind has become low, and is only able to work up a feeble effort at its former strength. The flames, too, are subsiding—their power is gone; occasional jets of fire come forth, but they instantly disappear. By degrees, and one after another, they vanish. Nothing now is visible but smoke, and every thing is considered as over—when lo! like a great general, who has achieved a triumphant victory, it is deemed right to take a last look at the position of the enemy. Up, therefore, starts an unexpected burst of flame—blazes for a while; looks about it, as it were; sees that the victory is complete, and drops down into the darkness from which it came. The conflagration is over; the wind-storm is also appeased. Small hollow gusts, amongst the trees and elsewhere, are now all that are heard. By degrees, even these cease; and the wind is now such as it was in the course of the evening, when the elements were comparatively quiet and still.

Mr. Brown and his friend, Mr. Hastings, having waited until they saw the last rafter of unfortunate Reilly's house and premises sink into a black mass of smoking ruins, turned their steps to the parsonage, which they had no sooner entered than they went immediately to Reilly's room, who was still there under concealment. Mr. Brown, however, went out again and returned with some wine, which he placed upon the table.

"Gentlemen," said Reilly, "this has become an awful night; the wind has been tremendous, and has done a good deal of damage, I fear, to your house and premises, Mr. Brown. I heard the slates falling about in great numbers; and the inmates of the house were, as far as I could judge, exceedingly alarmed."

"It was a dreadful night in more senses than one," replied Mr. Brown.

"By the by," said Reilly, "was there not a fire somewhere in the neighborhood? I observed through the windows a strong light flickering and vibrating, as it were, over the whole country. What must it have been?"

"My dear Reilly," replied Mr. Brown, "be calm; your house and premises are, at this moment, one dark heap of smouldering ruins."

"Oh, yes—I understand," replied Reilly —"Sir Robert Whitecraft."

"Sir Robert Whitecraft," replied Mr. Brown; it is too true, Reilly—you are now houseless and homeless; and may God forgive him!"

Reilly got up and paced the room several times, then sat down, and filling himself a glass of wine, drank it off; then looking at each of them, said, in a voice rendered hoarse by the indignation and resentment which he felt himself compelled, out of respect for his kind friends, to restrain, "Gentlemen," he repeated, "what do *you* call this?"

"Malice — persecution — vengeance," replied Mr. Brown, whose resentment was scarcely less than that of Reilly himself. "In the presence of God, and before all the world, I would pronounce it one of the most diabolical acts ever committed in the history of civil society. But you have one consolation, Reilly; your money and papers are safe."

"It is not that," replied Reilly; "I think not of them. It is the vindictive and persecuting spirit of that man—that monster—and the personal motives from which he acts, that torture me, and that plant in my heart a principle of vengeance more fearful than his. But you do not understand me, gentlemen; I could smile at all he has done to myself yet. It is of the serpent-tooth which will destroy the peace of others, that I think. All these motives being considered, what do you think that man deserves at my hand?"

"My dear Reilly," said the clergyman, "recollect that there is a Providence; and that we cannot assume to ourselves the disposition of His judgments, or the knowledge of His wisdom. Have patience. Your situation is one of great distress and almost unexampled difficulty. At all events, you are, for the present, safe under this roof; and although I grant you have much to suffer, still you have a free conscience, and, I dare say, would not exchange your position for that of your persecutor."

"No," said Reilly; "most assuredly not—most assuredly not; no, not for worlds. Yet is it not strange, gentlemen, that that man will sleep sound and happily to-night, whilst I will lie upon a bed of thorns?"

At this moment Mrs. Brown tapped gently at the door, which was cautiously opened by her husband.

"John," said she, "here is a note which I was desired to give to you without a moment's delay."

"Thank you, my love; I will read it instantly."

He then bolted the door, and coming to the table took up one of the candles and read the letter, which he handed to Mr. Hastings. Now we have already stated that this gentleman, whilst looking on at the destruction of Reilly's property, never once opened his lips. Neither did he, from the moment they entered Reilly's room. He sat like a dumb man, occasionally helping himself to a glass of wine. After having perused the note he merely nodded, but said not a word; he seemed to have lost the faculty of speech. At length Mr. Brown spoke:

"This is really too bad, my dear Reilly; here is a note signed 'H. F.,' which informs me that your residence, concealment, or whatever it is, has been discovered by Sir Robert Whitecraft, and that the military are on their way here to arrest you; you must instantly fly."

Hastings then got up, and taking Reilly's hand, said:

"Yes, Reilly, you must escape—disguise yourself—take all shapes—since you will not leave the country; but there is one fact I wish to impress upon you: meddle not with—injure not—Sir Robert Whitecraft. LEAVE HIM TO ME."

"Go out by the back way," said Mr. Brown, "and fly into the fields, lest they should surround the house and render es-

cape impossible. God bless you and preserve you from the violence of your enemies!"

It is unnecessary to relate what subsequently occurred. Mr. Brown's premises, as he had anticipated, were completely surrounded ere the party in search of Reilly had demanded admittance. The whole house was searched from top to bottom, but, as usual, without success. Sir Robert Whitecraft himself was not with them, but the party were all but intoxicated, and, were it not for the calm and unshrinking firmness of Mr. Brown, would have been guilty of a very offensive degree of insolence.

Reilly, in the meantime, did not pass far from the house. On the contrary, he resolved to watch from a safe place the motions of those who were in pursuit of him. In order to do this more securely, he mounted into the branches of a magnificent oak tree that stood in the centre of a field adjoining a kind of back lawn that stretched from the walled garden of the parsonage. The fact is, that the clergyman's house had two hall-doors—one in front, and the other in the rear—and as the rooms commanded a view of the scenery behind the house, which was much finer than that in front, on this account the back hall-door was necessary, as it gave them a free and easy egress to the lawn we have mentioned, from which a magnificent prospect was visible.

It was obvious that the party, though unsuccessful, had been very accurately informed. Finding, however, that the bird had flown, several of them galloped across the lawn—it was a cavalry party, having been sent out for speed—and passed into the field where the tree grew in which Reilly was concealed. After a useless search, however, they returned, and pulled up their horses under the oak.

"Well," said one of them, "it's a clear case that the scoundrel can make himself invisible. We have orders from Sir Robert to shoot him, and to put the matter upon the principle of resistance against the law, on his side. Sir Robert has been most credibly informed that that disloyal parson has concealed him in his house for nearly the last month. Now who could ever think of looking for a Popish rebel in the house of a Protestant parson? What the deuce is keeping those fellows? I hope they won't go too far into the country."

"Any man that says Mr. Brown is a disloyal parson is a liar," said one of them in a stern voice.

"And I say," said another, with a hiccough, "that, hang me, but I think this same Reilly is as loyal a man as e'er a one amongst us. My name is George Johnston, and I'm not ashamed of it; and the truth is, that only Miss Folliard fell in love with Reilly, and refused to marry Sir Robert, Reilly would have been a loyal man still, and no ill-will against him. But, by——, it was too bad to burn his house and place—and see whether Sir Robert will come off the better of it. I myself am a good Protestant—show me the man that will deny that, and I'll become his schoolmaster only for five minutes. I do say, and I'll tell it to Sir Robert's face, that there's something wrong somewhere. Give me a Papish that breaks the law, let him be priest or layman, and I'm the boy that will take a grip of him if I can get him. But, confound me, if I like to be sent out to hunt innocent, inoffensive Papishes, who commit no crime except that of having property that chaps like Sir Robert have their eye on. Now suppose the Papishes had the upper hand, and that they treated *us* so, what would you say?"

"All I can say is," replied another of them, "that I'd wish to get the reward."

"Curse the reward," said Johnston, "I like fair play."

"But how did Sir Robert come to know?" asked another, "that Reilly was with the parson?"

"Who the deuce here can tell that?" replied several.

"The thing was a hoax," said Johnston, "and a cursed uncomfortable one for us. But here comes these fellows, just as they went, it seems. Well, boys, no trail of this cunning fox?"

"Trail!" exclaimed the others. "Gad, you might as well hunt for your grandmother's needle in a bottle of straw. The truth is, the man's not in the country, and whoever gave the information as to the parson keeping him was some enemy of the parson's more than of Reilly's, I'll go bail. Come, now, let us go back, and give an account of our luck, and then to our barracks."

Now at this period it was usual for men who were prominent for rank and loyalty, and whose attachment to the Constitution and Government was indicated by such acts and principles as those which we have hitherto read in the life of Sir Robert Whitecraft—we say, it was usual for such as him to be allowed a small detachment of military, whose numbers were mostly rated, according to the services he required of them, by the zeal and activity of their employer, as well as for his protection; and, in order to their accommodation, some uninhabited house in the neighborhood was converted into a barrack for the purpose. Such was the case in the instance of Sir Robert Whitecraft, who,

independently of his zeal for the public good, was supposed to have an eye in this disposition of things, to his own personal safety. He, consequently, had his little barrack so closely adjoining his house that a notice of five minutes could at any time have its inmates at his premises, or in his presence.

After these men went away, Reilly, having waited a few minutes, until he was satisfied that they had actually, one and all of them, disappeared, came down from the tree, and once more betook himself to the road. Whither to go he knew not. In consequence of having received his education abroad, his personal knowledge of the inhabitants belonging to the neighborhood was very limited. Go somewhere, however, he must. Accordingly, he resolved to advance, at all events, as far as he might be able to travel before bed-time, and then resign himself to chance for a night's shelter. One might imagine, indeed, that his position as a wealthy Roman Catholic gentleman, suffering persecution from the tool and scourge of a hostile government, might have calculated upon shelter and secrecy from those belonging to his own creed. And so, indeed, in nineteen cases out of twenty he might; but in what predicament should he find himself if the twentieth proved treacherous? And against this he had no guarantee. That age was peculiarly marked by the foulest personal perfidy, precipitated into action by rapacity, ingratitude, and the blackest ambition. The son of a Roman Catholic gentleman, for instance, had nothing more to do than change his creed, attach himself to the government, become a spy and informer on his family, and he ousted his own father at once out of his hereditary property—an ungrateful and heinous proceeding, that was too common in the time of which we write. Then, as to the people themselves, they were, in general, steeped in poverty and ignorance, and this is certainly not surprising when we consider that no man durst educate them. The government rewards, therefore, assailed them with a double temptation. In the first, the amount of it—taking their poverty into consideration—was calculated to grapple with and overcome their scruples; and in the next, they were certain by their treachery to secure the protection of government for themselves.

Such, exactly, was the state of the country on the night when Reilly found himself a solitary traveller on the road, ignorant of his destiny, and uncertain where or in what quarter he might seek shelter until morning.

He had not gone far when he overtook another traveller, with whom he entered into conversation.

"God save you, my friend."

"God save you kindly, sir," replied the other; "was not this an awful night?"

"If you may say so," returned Reilly unconsciously, and for the moment forgetting himself, "well may I, my friend."

Indeed it is probable that Reilly was thrown somewhat off his guard by the accent of his companion, from which he at once inferred that he was a Catholic.

"Why, sir," replied the man, "how could it be more awful to you than to any other man?"

"Suppose my house was blown down," said Reilly, "and that yours was not, would not that be cause sufficient?"

"*My* house!" exclaimed the man with a deep sigh; "but sure you ought to know, sir, that it's not every man *has* a house."

"And perhaps I do know it."

"Wasn't that a terrible act, sir—the burning of Mr. Reilly's house and place?"

"Who is Mr. Reilly?" asked the other.

"A Catholic gintleman, sir, that the soldiers are afther," replied the man.

"And perhaps it is right that they should be after him. What did he do? The Catholics are too much in the habit of violating the law, especially their priests, who persist in marrying Protestants and Papists together, although they know it is a hanging matter. If they deliberately put their necks into the noose, who can pity them?"

"It seems they do, then," replied the man in a subdued voice; "and what is still more strange, it very often happens that persons of their own creed are somewhat too ready to come down wid a harsh word upon 'em."

"Well, my friend," responded Reilly, "let them not deserve it; let them obey the law."

"And are *you* of opinion, sir," asked the man with a significant emphasis upon the personal pronoun which we have put in italics; "are *you* of opinion, sir, that obedience to the law is *always* a security to either *person or property?*"

The direct force of the question could not be easily parried, at least by Reilly, to whose circumstances it applied so powerfully, and he consequently paused for a little to shape his thoughts into the language he wished to adopt; the man, however, proceeded:

"I wonder what Mr. Reilly would say if such a question was put to him?"

"I suppose," replied Reilly, "he would say much as I say—that neither innocence nor obedience is always a security under *any* law or any constitution either."

His companion made no reply, and they walked on for some time in silence. Such indeed was the precarious state of the country

then that, although the stranger, from the opening words of their conversation, suspected his companion to be no other than Willy Reilly himself, yet he hesitated to avow the suspicions he entertained of his identity, although he felt anxious to repose the fullest confidence in him; and Reilly, on the other hand, though perfectly aware of the true character of his companion, was influenced in their conversation by a similar feeling. Distrust it could not be termed on either side, but simply the operation of that general caution which was generated by the state of the times, when it was extremely difficult to know the individual on whom you could place dependence. Reilly's generous nature, however, could bear this miserable manœuvring no longer.

"Come, my friend," said he, "we have been beating about the bush with each other to no purpose; although I know not your name, yet I think I do your profession."

"And I would hold a wager," replied the other, "that Mr. Reilly, whose house was burned down by a villain this night, is not a thousand miles from me."

"And suppose you are right?"

"Then, upon my veracity, you're safe, if I am. It would ill become my cloth and character to act dishonorably or contrary to the spirit of my religion.

'Non ignara mali miseris succurrere disco.'

You see, Mr. Reilly, I couldn't make use of any other gender but the feminine without violating prosody; for although I'm not so sharp at my Latin as I was, still I couldn't use *ignarus*, as you see, without fairly committing myself as a scholar; and indeed, if I went to that, it would surely be the first time I have been mistaken for a dunce."

The honest priest, now that the ice was broken, and conscious that he was in safe hands, fell at once into his easy and natural manner, and rattled away very much to the amusement of his companion. "Ah!" he proceeded, "many a character I have been forced to assume."

"How is that?" inquired Reilly. "How did it happen that you were forced into such a variety of characters?"

"Why, you see, Mr. Reilly—troth and maybe I had better not be naming you aloud; walls have ears, and so may hedges. How, you ask? Why, you see, I'm not registered, and consequently have no permission from government to exercise my functions."

"Why," said Reilly, "you labor under a mistake, my friend; the bill for registering Catholic priests did not pass; it was lost by a majority of two. So far make your mind easy. The consequence is, that if you labor under no ecclesiastical censure you may exercise all the functions of your office—that is, as well as you can, and as far as you dare."

"Well, that same's a comfort," said the priest; "but the report was, and is, that we are to be registered. However, be that as it may, I have been a perfect Proteus. The metamorphoses of Ovid were nothing to mine. I have represented every character in society at large; to-day I've been a farmer, and to-morrow a poor man,* sometimes a fool—a rare character, you know, in this world—and sometimes a fiddler, for I play a little."

"And which character did you prefer among them all?" asked Reilly, with a smile which he could not repress.

"Oh, in troth, you needn't ask that, Mr. R—hem—you needn't ask that. The first morning I took to the fiddle I was about to give myself up to government at once. As for my part, I'd be ashamed to tell you how I sent those that were unlucky enough to hear my music scampering across the country."

"And, pray, how long is that since?"

"Why, something better than three weeks, the Lord pity me!"

"And what description of dress did you wear on that occasion?" asked Reilly.

"Dress—why, then, an old yellow caubeen, a blue frieze coat, and—movrone, oh! a striped breeches. And the worst of it was, that big Paddy Mullin, from Mullaghmore, having met me in old Darby Doyle's, poor man, where I went to take a little refreshment, ordered in something to eat, and began to make me play for him. There was a Protestant in the house, too, so that I couldn't tell him who I was, and I accordingly began, and soon cleared the house of them. God bless you, sir, you could little dream of all I went through. I was one day *set* in the house I was concealed in, in the town of Ballyrogan, and only for the town fool, Art M'Kenna, I suppose I'd have swung before this."

"How was that?" asked Reilly.

"Why, sir, one day I got the hard word that they would be into the house where I was in a few minutes To escape them in my own dress I knew was impossible; and what was to be done? The poor fool, who was as true as steel, came to my relief. 'Here,' said he, 'exchange wid me. I'll put on your black clothes, and you'll put on my red ones'—he was dressed like an old soldier—'then I'll take to my scrapers, and while they are in pursuit of me you can escape to some friend's house, where you may get another dress

* A mendicant.

God knows,' said he, with a grin on him I didn't like, 'it's a poor exchange on my part. You can play the fool, and cock your cap, without any one to ask you for authority,' says he, 'and if I only marry a wrong couple I may be hanged. Go off now.' Well, sir, out I walked, dressed in a red coat, military hat, white knee-breeches, and black leggings. As I was going out I met the soldiers. 'Is the priest inside, Art?' they asked. I pointed in a wrong direction. 'Up by Kilclay?' I nodded. They first searched the house, however, but found neither priest nor fool: only one of them, something sharper than the rest, went out of the back door, and saw unfortunate Art, dressed in black, running for the bare life. Of course they thought it was me they had. Off they started; and a tolerable chase Art put them to. At last he was caught, after a run across the country of about four miles; but ne'er a word came out of his lips, till a keen fellow, on looking closely at him, discovered the mistake. Some of them were then going to kill the poor fool, but others interfered, and wouldn't allow him to be touched; and many of them laughed heartily when they saw Art turned into a clergyman, as they said. Art, however, was no coward, and threatened to read every man of them out from the altar. 'I'll exkimmicate every mother's son of you,' said he. 'I'm a reverend clargy; and, by the contents of my soger's cap, I'll close the mouths on your faces, so that a blessed pratie or a boult of fat bacon will never go down one of your villainous throats again; and then,' he added, 'I'll sell you for scarecrows to the Pope o' Room, who wants a dozen or two of you to sweep out his palace.' It was then, sir, that, while I was getting out of my red clothes, I was transformed again; but, indeed, the most of us are so now, God help us!"

They had now arrived at a narrow part of the road, when the priest stood.

"Mr. Reilly," said he, "I am very tired; but, as it is, we must go on a couple of miles further, until we reach Glen Dhu, where I think I can promise you a night's lodging, such as it will be."

"I am easily satisfied," replied his companion; "it would be a soft bed that would win me to repose on this night, at least."

"It will certainly be a rude and a rough one," said the priest, "and there will be few hearts there free from care, no more than yours, Mr. Reilly. Alas! that I should be obliged to say so in a Christian country."

"You say you are fatigued," said Reilly. "Take my arm; I am strong enough to yield you some support."

The priest did so, and they proceeded at a slower pace, until they got over the next two miles, when the priest stopped again.

"I must rest a little," said he, "although we are now within a hundred yards of our berth for the night. Do you know where you are?"

"Perfectly," replied Reilly; "but, good mercy! sure there is neither house nor home within two miles of us. We are in the moors, at the very mouth of Glen Dhu."

"Yes," replied his companion, and I am glad we are here."

The poor hunted priest felt himself, indeed, very much exhausted, so much so that, if the termination of his journey had been at a much longer distance from thence, he would scarcely have been able to reach it.

"God help our unhappy Church," said he, "for she is suffering much; but still she is suffering nobly, and with such Christian fortitude as will make her days of trial and endurance the brightest in her annals. All that power and persecution can direct against us is put in force a thousand ways; but we act under the consciousness that we have God and truth on our side, and this gives us strength and courage to suffer. And if we fly, Mr. Reilly, and hide ourselves, it is not from any moral cowardice we do so. It certainly is not true courage to expose our lives wantonly and unnecessarily to the vengeance of our enemies. Read the Old Testament and history, and you will find how many good and pious men have sought shelter in wildernesses and caves, as we have done. The truth is, we feel ourselves called upon, for the sake of our suffering and neglected flocks, to remain in the country, and to afford them all the consolation and religious support in our power, God help them."

"I admire the justice of your sentiments," replied Reilly, "and the spirit in which they are expressed. Indeed I am of opinion that if those who foster and stimulate this detestable spirit of persecution against you only knew how certainly and surely it defeats their purpose, by cementing your hearts and the hearts of your flocks together, they would not, from principles even of worldly policy, persist in it. The man who attempted to break down the arch by heaping additional weight upon it ultimately found that the greater the weight the stronger the arch, and so I trust it will be with us."

"It would seem," said the priest, "to be an attempt to exterminate the religion of the people by depriving them of their pastors, and consequently of their Church, in order to bring them to the impression that, upon the principle of any Church being better than no Church, they may gradually be absorbed into Protestantism. This seems to

be their policy; but how can any policy, based upon such persecution, and so grossly at variance with human liberty, ever succeed? As it is, we go out in the dead hours of the night, when even persecution is asleep, and administer the consolations of religion to the sick, the dying, and the destitute. Now these stolen visits are sweeter, perhaps, and more efficacious, than if they took place in freedom and the open day. Again, we educate their children in the principles of their creed, during the same lonely hours, in waste houses, where we are obliged to keep the windows stuffed with straw, or covered with blinds of some sort, lest a chance of discovery might ensue. Such is the life we lead—a life of want and misery and suffering, but we complain not; on the contrary, we submit ourselves to the will of God, and receive this severe visitation as a chastisement intended for our good."

The necessities of our narrative, however, compel us to leave them here for the present; but not without a hope that they found shelter for the night, as we trust we shall be able to show.

CHAPTER IX.

Reilly's Adventure Continued—A Prospect of Bygone Times—Reilly gets a Bed in a Curious Establishment.

We now beg our readers to accompany us to the library of Sir Robert Whitecraft, where that worthy gentleman sits, with a bottle of Madeira before him; for Sir Robert, in addition to his many other good qualities, possessed that of being a private drinker. The bottle, we say, was before him, and with a smile of triumph and satisfaction on his face, he arose and rang the bell. In a few minutes a liveried servant attended it.

"Carson, send O'Donnel here."

Carson bowed and retired, and in a few minutes the Red Rapparee entered.

"How is this, O'Donnel? Have you thrown aside your uniform?"

"I didn't think I'd be called out on duty again to-night, sir."

"It doesn't matter, O'Donnel—it doesn't matter. What do you think of the bonfire?"

"Begad, it was a beauty, sir, and well managed."

"Ay, but I am afraid, O'Donnel, I went a little too far—that I stretched my authority somewhat."

"But isn't he a rebel and an outlaw, Sir Robert? and in that case—"

"Yes, O'Donnel; and a rebel and an outlaw of my own making, which is the best of it. The fellow might have lain there concocting his treason, long enough, only for my vigilance. However, it's all right. The government, to which I have rendered such important services, will stand by me, and fetch me out of the burning—that is, if there has been any transgression of the law in it. The Papists are privately recruiting for the French service, and that is felony; Reilly also was recruiting for the French service—was he not?"

"He offered me a commission, sir."

"Very good; that's all right, but can you prove that?"

"Why, I can *swear* it, Sir Robert."

"Better still. But do you think he is in the country, O'Donnel?"

"I would rather swear he is, sir, than that he is not. He won't have *her* easily."

"Who do you mean by *her*, sir?"

"I would rather not name her, your honor, in connection with the vagabond."

"That's delicate of you, O'Donnel; I highly approve of your sentiment. Here, have a glass of wine."

"Thank you, Sir Robert; but have you any brandy, sir? My tongue is as dry as a stick, wid that glorious bonfire we had; but, besides, sir, I wish to drink success to you in all your undertakings. A happy marriage, sir!" and he accompanied the words with a ferocious grin.

"You shall have one glass of brandy, O'Donnel, but no more. I wish you to deliver a letter for me to-night. It is to the sheriff, who dines with Lord ——, a friend of mine; and I wish you to deliver it at his lordship's house, where you will be sure to find him. The letter is of the greatest importance, and you will take care to deliver it safely. No answer by you is required. He was out to-day, levying fines from Popish priests, and a heavy one from the Popish bishop, and I do not think, with a large sum of money about him, that he will go home to-night. Here is the letter. I expect he will call on me in the morning, to breakfast—at least I have asked him, for we have very serious business to discuss."

The Rapparee took the letter, finished his glass of brandy, and disappeared to fulfil his commission.

Now it so happened that on that very evening, before the premises had been set on fire, Mary Mahon, by O'Donnel's order, had entered the house, and under, as it were, the protection of the military, gathered up as much of Reilly's clothes and linen as she could conveniently carry to her cottage, which was in the immediate vicinity of Whitecraft's residence—it being the interest of this hypocritical voluptuary to have the corrupt

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THIS WAS CONSIDERED BY THE DRAGOONS AS A SIGNAL FROM THEIR FRIENDS IN ADVANCE, AND, WITHOUT THE LOSS OF A MOMENT, THEY SET SPURS TO THEIR HORSES, AND DASHED UP TO THE SCENE OF STRUGGLE, JUST AS REILLY HAD GOT HIS RIGHT ARM EXTRICATED, AND KNOCKED ONE OF HIS CAPTORS DOWN.—*Willy Reilly*, chap. ix.—*p.* 65.

wretch near him. The Rapparee, having left Whitecraft to his reflections, immediately directed his steps to her house, and, with her connivance, changed the dress he had on for one which she had taken from Reilly's wardrobe. He then went to the house of the nobleman where the sheriff was dining, but arrived only in time to hear that he was about to take horse on his return home. On seeing him preparing to mount, bearing a lantern in his hand, as the night was dark and the roads bad, he instantly changed his purpose as to the letter, and came to the resolution of not delivering it at all.

"I can easily say," thought he, "that the sheriff had gone home before I came, and that will be a very sufficient excuse. In the meantime," he added, "I will cross the country and be out on the road before him."

The sheriff was not unarmed, however, and felt himself tolerably well prepared for any attack that might be made on him; and, besides, he was no coward. After a ride of about two miles he found himself stopped, and almost at the same instant the lantern that he carried was knocked out of his hand and extinguished, but not until he caught a faint glimpse of the robber's person, who, from his dress, appeared to be a man much above the common class. Quick as lightning he pulled out one of his pistols, and, cocking it, held himself in readiness. The night was dark, and this preparation for self-defence was unknown to his assailant. On feeling the reins of his horse's bridle in the hands of the robber, he snapped the pistol at his head, but alas! it only flashed in the pan. The robber, on the other hand, did not seem anxious to take his life, for it was a principle among the Rapparees to shed, while exercising their rapacious functions, as little blood as possible. They have frequently taken life from a feeling of private vengeance, but not often while robbing on the king's highway. The sheriff, now finding that one pistol had missed, was about to draw out the second, when he was knocked insensible off his horse, and on recovering found himself *minus* the fines which he had that day levied—all the private cash about him—and his case of pistols. This indeed was a bitter incident to him; because, in addition to the loss of his private purse and firearms—which he valued as nothing—he knew that he was responsible to government for the amount of the fines.

With considerable difficulty he was able to remount his horse, and with a sense of stupor, which was very painful, he recommenced his journey home. After a ride of about two miles he met three horsemen, who immediately challenged him and demanded his name and residence.

"I am the sheriff of the county," he replied, "and have been robbed of a large sum of money and my pistols; and now," he added, "may I beg to know who you are, and by what authority you demand my name and residence?"

"Excuse us, Mr. Sheriff," they replied; "we belong to the military detachment which government has placed under the control of Sir Robert Whitecraft."

"Oh, indeed," exclaimed the sheriff; "I wish to heaven you had been a little more advanced on your journey; you might have saved me from being plundered, as I have been, and probably secured the robber."

"Could you observe, sir, what was the villain's appearance?"

"I had a small lantern," replied the functionary, "by which I caught a brief but uncertain glance of him. I am not quite certain that I could recognize his features, though, if I saw him again—but perhaps I might; certainly I could his dress."

"How *was* he dressed, sir?" they inquired.

"Quite beyond the common," said the sheriff; "I think he had on a brown coat, of superior cloth and make, and I think, too, the buckles of his shoes were silver."

"And his features, Mr. Sheriff?"

"I cannot exactly say," he returned; "I was too much agitated to be able to recollect them; but indeed the dim glimpse I got was too brief to afford me an opportunity of seeing them with any thing like distinctness."

"From the description you have given, sir," said one of them, "the man who robbed you must have been Reilly the Outlaw. That is the very dress he has been in the habit of wearing. Was he tall, sir, and stout in person?"

"He was a very large man, certainly," replied the sheriff; "and I regret I did not see his face more distinctly."

"It can be no other, Mr. Sheriff," observed the man; "the fellow has no means of living now, unless by levying contributions on the road. For my part, I think the scoundrel can make himself invisible; but it must go hard with us or we will secure him yet. Would you wish an escort home, Mr. Sheriff? because, if you do, we shall accompany you."

"No," replied the other, "I thank you. I would not have ventured home unattended if the Red Rapparee had still been at his vocation, and his gang undispersed; but as he is now on the safe side, I apprehend no danger."

"It's not at all impossible but Reilly may step into his shoes," said the cavalryman.

"I have now neither money nor arms,"

continued the sheriff; "nothing the villain robbers could covet, and what, then, have I to fear?"

'You have a life, sir," observed the man respectfully, "and if you'll allow me to say it—the life of a man who is not very well liked in the country, in consequence of certain duties you are obliged to perform. Come, then, sir, we shall see you home."

It was so arranged, and the sheriff reached his own residence, under their escort, with perfect safety.

This indeed was a night of adventure to Reilly—hunted, as he was, like a beast of prey. After what had taken place already in the early portion of it, he apprehended no further pursuit, and in this respect he felt his mind comparatively at ease—for, in addition to any other conviction of his safety, he knew that the night was far advanced, and as the country was unsettled, he was not ignorant that the small military parties that were in the habit of scouring the country generally—unless when in the execution of some express duty—retired to their quarters at an early hour, in order to avoid the severe retaliations which were frequently made upon them by the infuriated peasantry whom they—or rather the government which employed them—had almost driven to madness, and would have driven to insurrection had the people possessed the means of rising. As it was, however, he dreaded no further pursuit this night, for the reasons which we have stated.

In the meantime the sheriff, feeling obliged by the civility of the three dragoons, gave them refreshments on a very liberal scale, of which—rather exhausted as they were—they made a very liberal use. Feeling themselves now considerably stimulated by liquor, they mounted their horses and proceeded towards their barracks at a quick pace. In consequence of the locality in which the sheriff lived, it was necessary that they should travel in a direction opposite to that by which Reilly and the priest were going. At all events, after riding a couple of miles, they overtook three infantry soldiers who were also on their way to quarters. The blood, however, of the troopers was up—thanks to the sheriff; they mentioned the robbery, and requested the three infantry to precede them as an advanced guard, as quietly as possible, stating that there might still be a chance of coming across the villain who had plundered the sheriff, intimating their impression, at the same time, that Reilly was the man, and adding that if they could secure him their fortune was made. As has always been usual in executing cases of the law attended with peculiar difficulty, these men—the infantry—like our present detectives, had gone out that night in colored clothes. On perceiving two individuals approaching them in the dim distance, they immediately threw their guns into the ditch, lest they should put our friends upon their guard and cause them to escape if they could. Reilly could have readily done so; but having, only a few minutes before heard from the poor old priest that he had, for some months past, been branded and pursued as a felon, he could not think of abandoning him now that he was feeble and jaded with fatigue as well as with age. Now it so happened that one of these fellows had been a Roman Catholic, and having committed some breach of the law, found it as safe as it was convenient to change his creed, and as he spoke the Irish language fluently—indeed there were scarcely any other then spoken by the peasantry—he commenced clapping his hands on seeing the two men, and expressing the deepest sorrow for the loss of his wife, from whose funeral, it appeared from his lamentations, he was then returning.

"We have nothing to apprehend here," said Reilly: "this poor fellow is in sorrow, it seems—God help him! Let us proceed."

"Oh!" exclaimed the treacherous villain, clapping his hands—[we translate his words]—"Oh, *Veeah! Veeah!** what a bitther loss you'll be, my darlin' Madge, to me and your orphan childher, now and for evermore! Oh, where was there sich a wife, neighbors? who ever heard her harsh word, or her loud voice? And from mornin' till night ever, ever busy in keepin' every thing tight and clane and regular! Let me alone, will yez? I'll go back and sleep upon her grave this night—so I will; and if all the blasted sogers in Ireland—may sweet bad luck to them!—were to come to prevent me, I'd not allow them. Oh, Madge, darlin', but I'm the lonely and heartbroken man widout you this night!"

"Come, come," said the priest, "have firmness, poor man; other people have these calamities to bear as well as yourself. Be a man."

"Oh, are you a priest, sir? bekase if you are I want consolation if ever a sorrowful man did."

"I am a priest," replied the unsuspecting man, "and any thing I can do to calm your mind, I'll do it."

He had scarcely uttered these words when Reilly felt his two arms strongly pinioned, and as the men who had seized him were powerful, the struggle between him and them was dreadful. The poor priest at the same moment found himself also a prisoner in the hands of the bereaved widower, to whom

* God, God.

he proved an easy victim, as he was incapable of making resistance, which, indeed, he declined to attempt. If he did not possess bodily strength, however, he was not without presence of mind. For whilst Reilly and his captors were engaged in a fierce and powerful conflict, he placed his fore-finger and thumb in his mouth, from which proceeded a whistle so piercingly loud and shrill that it awoke the midnight echoes around them. This was considered by the dragoons as a signal from their friends in advance, and, without the loss of a moment, they set spurs to their horses, and dashed up to the scene of struggle, just as Reilly had got his right arm extricated, and knocked one of his captors down. In an instant, however, the three dragoons, aided by the other men, were upon him, and not less than three cavalry pistols were levelled at his head. Unfortunately, at this moment the moon began to rise, and the dragoons, on looking at him more closely, observed that he was dressed precisely as the sheriff had described the person who robbed him—the brown coat, light-colored breeches, and silver buckles—for indeed this was his usual dress.

"You are Willy Reilly," said the man who had been spokesman in their interview with the sheriff: "you needn't deny it, sir—I know you!"

"If you know me, then," replied Reilly, "where is the necessity for asking my name?"

"I ask again, sir, what is your name? If you be the man I suspect you to be, you will deny it."

"My name," replied the other, "*is* William Reilly, and as I am conscious of no crime against society—of no offence against the State—I shall *not* deny it."

"I knew I was right," said the dragoon. "Mr. Reilly, you are our prisoner on many charges, not the least of which is your robbery of the sheriff this night. You must come with us to Sir Robert Whitecraft; so must this other person who seems your companion."

"Not a foot I'll go to Sir Robert Whitecraft's to-night," replied the priest. "I have made my mind up against such a stretch at such an hour as this; and, with the help of God, I'll stick to my resolution."

"Why do you refuse to go?" asked the man, a good deal surprised at such language.

"Just for a reason I have: as for that fellow being Willy Reilly, he's no more Willy Reilly than I am; whatever he is, however, he's a good man and true, but must be guided by wiser heads than his own; and I now tell him—ay, and you too—that he won't see Sir Robert Whitecraft's treacherous face to-night, no more than myself."

"Come," said one of them, "drag the idolatrous old rebel along. Come, my old couple-beggar, there's a noose before you."

He had scarcely uttered the words when twenty men, armed with strong pikes, jumped out on the road before them, and about the same number, with similar weapons, behind them. In fact, they were completely hemmed in; and, as the road was narrow and the ditches high, they were not at all in a capacity to make resistance.

"Surrender your prisoners," said a huge man in a voice of thunder—"surrender your prisoners—here are we ten to one against you; or if you don't, I swear there won't be a living man amongst you in two minutes' time. Mark us well—we are every man of us armed—and I will not ask you a second time."

As to numbers and weapons the man spoke truth, and the military party saw at once that their prisoners must be given up.

"Let us have full revenge on them now, boys," exclaimed several voices; "down with the tyrannical villains that are persecuting and murtherin' the country out of a face. This night closes *their* black work;" and as the words were uttered, the military felt themselves environed and pressed in upon by upwards of five-and-twenty sharp and bristling pikes.

"It is true, you may murder us," replied the dragoon; "but we are soldiers, and to die is a soldier's duty. Stand back," said he, "for, by all that's sacred, if you approach another step, William Reilly and that rebel priest will fall dead at your feet. We may die *then;* but we will sell our lives dearly. Cover the priest, Robinson."

"Boys," said the priest, addressing the insurgent party, "hold back, for God's sake, and for mine. Remember that these men are only doing their duty, and that whoever is to be blamed, it is not they—no, but the wicked men and cruel laws that set them upon us. Why, now, if these men, out of compassion and a feeling of kindness to poor persecuted creatures, as we are, took it into their heads or their hearts to let that man and me off, they would have been, probably, treated like dogs for neglecting their duty. I am, as you know, a minister of God, and a man of peace, whose duty it is to prevent bloodshed whenever I can, and save human life, whether it is that of a Catholic or a Protestant. Recollect, my friends, that you will, every one of you, have to stand before the judgment throne of God to seek for mercy and salvation. As you hope for that mercy, then, at the moment of your utmost need, I implore, I entreat you.

to show these men mercy now, and allow them to go their way in safety."

"I agree with every word the priest has said," added Reilly; "not from any apprehension of the threat held out against myself, but from, I trust, a higher principle. Here are only six men, who, as his Reverence justly said, are, after all, only in the discharge of their public duty. On the other hand, there are at least forty or fifty of you against them. Now I appeal to yourselves, whether it would be a manly, or generous, or Christian act, to slaughter so poor a handful of men by the force of numbers. No: there would be neither credit nor honor in such an act. I assure you, my friends, it would disgrace your common name, your common credit, and your common country. Nay, it would seem like cowardice, and only give a handle to your enemies to tax you with it. But I know you are *not* cowards, but brave and generous men, whose hearts and spirits are above a mean action. If you *were* cowardly butchers, I know we might speak to you in vain; but we know you are incapable of imbruing your hands, and steeping your souls, in the guilt of unresisting blood—for so I may term it, where there are so few against so many. My friends, go home, then, in the name of God, and, as this reverend gentleman said, allow these men to pass their way without injury."

"But who are you?" said their huge leader, in his terrible voice, "who presumes to lecture us?"

"I am one," replied Reilly, "who has suffered more deeply, probably, than any man here. I am without house or home, proscribed by the vengeance of a villain—a villain who has left me without a shelter for my head—who, this night, has reduced my habitation, and all that appertained to it, to a heap of ashes—who is on my trail, night and day, and who will be on my trail, in order to glut his vengeance with my blood. Now, my friends, listen—I take God to witness, that if that man were here at this moment, I would plead for his life with as much earnestness as I do for those of the men who are here at your mercy. I feel that it would be cowardly and inhuman to take it under such circumstances; yes, and unworthy of the name of William Reilly. Now," he added, "these men will pass safely to their quarters."

As they were about to resume their journey, the person who seemed to have the command of the military said:

"Mr. Reilly, one word with you: I feel that you have saved our lives; I may requite you for that generous act yet;" and he pressed his hand warmly as he spoke, after which they proceeded on their way.

That the person of Reilly was not recognized by any of these men is accounted for by a well-known custom, peculiar to such meetings, both then and now. The individuals before and around him were all strangers, from distant parts of the country; for whenever an outrage is to be committed, or a nocturnal drilling to take place, the peasantry start across the country, in twos and threes, until they quietly reach some lonely and remote spot, where their persons are not known.

No sooner had he mentioned *his name*, however, than there arose a peculiar murmur among the insurgents—such a murmur indeed as it was difficult to understand; there was also a rapid consultation in Irish, which was closed by a general determination to restrain their vengeance for that night, at least, and for the sake of the celebrated young martyr—for as such they looked upon him—to allow the military to pass on without injury. Reilly then addressed them in Irish, and thanked them, both in his own name and that of the priest, for the respect evinced by their observation of the advice they had given them. The priest also addressed them in Irish, aware, as he was, that one sentence in that language, especially from a person in a superior rank of life, carries more weight than a whole oration in the language of the Sassenagh. The poor old man's mind was once more at ease, and after these rough, but not intractable, men had given three cheers for "bould Willy Reilly," three more for the *Cooleen Bawn*, not forgetting the priest, the latter, while returning thanks, had them in convulsions of laughter.

"May I never do harm," proceeded his reverence humorously, "but the first Christian duty that every true Catholic ought to learn is to whistle on his fingers. The moment ever your children, boys, are able to give a squall, clap their forefinger and thumb in their mouth, and leave the rest to nature. Let them talk of their spinnet and sinnet, their fiddle and their diddle, their dancing and their prancing, but there is no genteel accomplishment able to be compared to a rousing whistle on the fingers. See what it did for us to-night. My soul to glory, but only for it, Mr. Reilly and I would have soon taken a journey with our heels foremost; and, what is worse, the villains would have forced us to take a bird's-eye view of our own funeral from the three sticks, meaning the two that stand up, and the third that goes across them.* However, God's good,

* The gallows.

and, after all, boys, you see there is nothing like an accomplished education. As to the soldiers, I don't think myself that they'll recover the bit of fright they got until the new potatoes come in. Troth, while you were gathering in about them, I felt that the unfortunate vagabonds were to be pitied; but, Lord help us, when men are in trouble—especially in fear of their lives—and with twelve inches of sharp iron near their breasts, it's wonderful what effect fear will have on them. Troth, I wasn't far from feeling the same thing myself, only I knew there was relief at hand; at all events, it's well you kept your hands off them, for now, thank goodness, you can step home without the guilt of murder on your souls."

Father Maguire, for such was his name, possessed the art of adapting his language and dialect to those whom he addressed, it mattered not whether they were South, West, or North; he was, in fact, a priest who had never been in any college, but received ordination in consequence of the severity of the laws, whose operation, by banishing so many of that class from the country, rendered the services of such men indispensable to the spiritual wants of the people. Father Maguire, previous to his receiving holy orders, had been a schoolmaster, and exercised his functions on that capacity in holes and corners; sometimes on the sheltery or sunny side of a hedge, as the case might be, and on other occasions when and where he could. In his magisterial capacity, "the accomplishment" of whistling was absolutely necessary to him, because it often happened that in stealing in the morning from his retreat during the preceding night, he knew no more where to meet his little flock of scholars than they did where to meet him, the truth being that he seldom found it safe to teach two days successively in the same place. Having selected the locality for instruction during the day, he put his forefinger and thumb into his mouth, and emitted a whistle that went over half the country. Having thus given the signal three times, his scholars began gradually and cautiously to make their appearance, radiating towards him from all directions, reminding one of a hen in a farm-yard, who, having fallen upon some wholesome crumbs, she utters that peculiar sound which immediately collects her eager little flock about her, in order to dispense among them the good things she has to give. Poor Father Maguire was simplicity itself, for, although cheerful, and a good deal of a humorist, yet he was pious, inoffensive, and charitable. True, it is not to be imagined that he could avoid bearing a very strong feeling of enmity against the Establishment, as, indeed, we do not see, so long as human nature is what it is, how he could have done otherwise; he hated it, however, in the aggregate, not in detail, for the truth is, that he received shelter and protection nearly as often from the Protestants themselves, both lay and clerical, as he did from those of his own creed. The poor man's crime against the State proceeded naturally from the simplicity of his character and the goodness of his heart. A Protestant peasant had seduced a Catholic young woman of considerable attractions, and was prevailed upon to marry her, in order to legitimize the infant which she was about to bear. Our poor priest, anxious to do as much good, and to prevent as much evil as he could, was prevailed upon to perform the ceremony, contrary to the law in that case made and provided. Ever since that, the poor man had been upon his keeping like a felon, as the law had made him; but so well known were his harmless life, his goodness of heart, and his general benevolence of disposition—for, alas! he was incapable of being benevolent in any practical sense—that, unless among the bigoted officials of the day, there existed no very strong disposition to hand him over to the clutches of the terrible statute which he had, good easy man, been prevailed on to violate.

In the meantime, the formidable body who had saved Reilly's life and his own dispersed, or disappeared at least; but not until they had shaken hands most cordially with Reilly and the priest, who now found themselves much in the same position in which they stood previous to their surprise and arrest.

"Now," said Reilly, "the question is, what are we to do? where are we to go? and next, how did you come to know of the existence in this precise locality of such a body of men?"

"Because I have set my face against such meetings," replied the priest. "One of those who was engaged to be present happened to mention the fact to me as a clergyman, but you know that, as a clergyman, I can proceed no further."

"I understand," said Reilly, "I perfectly understand you. It is not necessary. And now let me say—"

"Always trust in God, my friend," replied the priest, in an accent quite different from that which he had used to the peasantry. "I told you, not long ago, that you would have a bed to-night: follow me, and I will lead you to a crypt of nature's own making, which was not known to mortal man three months ago, and which is now known only to those whose interest it is to keep the knowledge of it silent as the grave."

They then proceeded, and soon came to a gap or opening on the left-hand side of the road through which they passed, the priest leading. Next they found themselves in a wild gully or ravine that was both deep and narrow. This they crossed, and arrived at a ledge of precipitous rocks, most of which were overhung to the very ground with long luxuriant heather. The priest went along this until he came to one particular spot, when he stooped, and observed a particular round stone bedded naturally in the earth.

"God—blessed be his name—has made nothing in vain," he whispered; "I must go foremost, but do as I do." He then raised up the long heath, and entered a low, narrow fissure in the rocks, Reilly following him closely. The entrance was indeed so narrow that it was capable of admitting but one man at a time, and even that by his working himself in upon his knees and elbows. In this manner they advanced in utter darkness for about thirty yards, when they reached a second opening, about three feet high, which bore some resemblance to a Gothic arch. This also it was necessary to enter consecutively. Having passed this they were able to proceed upon their legs, still stooping, however, until, as they got onwards, they found themselves able to walk erect. A third and larger opening, however, was still before them, over which hung a large thick winnow-cloth.

"Now," said the priest, "leave every thing to me. If we were to put our heads in rashly here we might get a pair of bullets through them that would have as little mercy on us as those of the troopers, had we got them. No clergyman here, or anywhere else, ever carries firearms, but there are *laymen* inside who are not bound by our regulations. The only arms we are allowed to carry are the truths of our religion and the integrity of our lives."

He then advanced a step or two, and shook the winnow-cloth three times, when a deep voice from behind it asked, "*Quis venit?*" "*Introibo ad altare Dei*," replied the priest, who had no sooner uttered the words than the cloth was partially removed, and a voice exclaimed, "*Benedicite, dilecte frater; beatus qui venit in nomine Domini et sacrosanctæ Ecclesiæ.*"

Reilly and his companion then entered the cave, which they had no sooner done than the former was seized with a degree of wonder, astonishment, and awe, such as he had never experienced in his life before. The whole cavern was one flashing scene of light and beauty, and reminded him of the gorgeous descriptions that were to be found in Arabian literature, or the brilliancy of the fairy palaces as he had heard of them in the mellow legends of his own country. From the roof depended gorgeous and immense stalactites, some of them reaching half way to the earth, and others of them resting upon the earth itself. Several torches, composed of dried bog fir, threw their strong light among them with such effect that the eye became not only dazzled but fatigued and overcome by the radiance of a scene so unusual. In fact, the whole scene appeared to be out of, or beyond, nature. There were about fifteen individuals present, most of them in odd and peculiar disguises, which gave them a grotesque and supernatural appearance, as they passed about with their strong torches — some bright and some flashing red; and as the light of either one or other fell upon the stalactites, giving them a hue of singular brilliancy or deep purple, Reilly could not utter a word. The costumes of the individuals about him were so strange and varied that he knew not what to think. Some were in the dress of clergymen, others in that of ill-clad peasants, and nearly one-third of them in the garb of mendicants, who, from their careworn faces, appeared to have suffered severely from the persecution of the times. In a few minutes, however, about half a dozen diminutive beings made their appearance, busied, as far as he could guess, in employments, which his amazement at the whole spectacle, unprepared as he was for it, prevented him from understanding. If he had been a man of weak or superstitious mind, unacquainted with life and the world, it is impossible to say what he might have imagined. Independently of this—strong-minded as he was—the impression made upon him by the elf-like sprites that ran about so busily, almost induced him, for a few moments, to surrender to the illusion that he stood among individuals who had little or no natural connection with man or the external world which he inhabited. Reflection, however, and the state of the country, came to his aid, and he reasonably inferred that the cavern in which he stood was a place of concealment for those unfortunate individuals who, like himself, felt it necessary to evade the vengeance of the laws.

Whilst Reilly was absorbed in the novelty and excitement of this strange and all but supernatural spectacle, the priest held a short conversation, at some distance from him, with the strange figures which had surprised him so much. Whenever he felt himself enabled to take his eyes from the splendor and magnificence of all he saw around him, to follow the motions of Father Maguire, he could observe that that gentleman, from the

peculiar vehemence of his attitudes and the evident rapidity of his language, had made either himself or his presence there the topic of very earnest discussion. In fact it appeared to him that the priest, from whatever cause, appeared to be rather hard set to defend him and to justify his presence among them. A tall, stern-looking man, with a lofty forehead and pale ascetic features—from which all the genial impulses of humanity, that had once characterized them, seemed almost to have been banished by the spirit of relentless persecution—appeared to bear hard upon him, whatever the charge might be, and by the severity of his manner and the solemn but unyielding emphasis of his attitudes, he seemed to have wrought himself into a state of deep indignation. But as it is better that our readers should be made acquainted with the topic of their discussion, rather than their attitudes, we think it necessary to commence it in a new chapter.

CHAPTER X.

Scenes that took place in the Mountain Cave.

"I WILL not hear your apology, brother," said the tall man with the stern voice; "your conduct, knowing our position, and the state of this unhappy and persecuted country, is not only indiscreet, but foolish, indefensible, mad. Here is a young man attached—may God pardon him—to the daughter of one of the most persecuting heretics in the kingdom. She is beautiful, by every report that we have heard of her, even as an angel; but reflect that she is an heiress—the inheritress of immense property—and that, as a matter of course, the temptations are a thousand to one against him. He will yield, I tell you, to the heretic syren; and as a passport to her father's favor and her affection, he will, like too many of his class, abandon the faith of his ancestors, and become an apostate, for the sake of wealth and sensual affection."

"I question, my lord," replied the priest, "whether it is consistent with Christian charity to impute motives of such heinous guilt, when we are not in a condition to bear out our suspicions. The character of this young gentleman as a Catholic is firm and faithful, and I will stake my life upon his truth and attachment to our Church."

"You know him not, father," replied the bishop, for such he was; "I tell you, and I speak from better information than you possess, that he is already suspected. What has been his conduct? He has associated himself more with Protestants than with those of his own Church; he has dined with them, partaken of their hospitality, joined in their amusements, slept in their houses, and been with them as a familiar friend and boon companion. I see, father, what the result will necessarily be; first, an apostate—next, an informer—and, lastly, a persecutor; and all for the sake of wealth and the seductive charms of a rich heiress. I say, then, that deep in this cold cavern shall be his grave, rather than have an opportunity of betraying the shepherds of Christ's persecuted flock, and of hunting them into the caverns of the earth like beasts of prey. Our retreat here is known only to those who, for the sake of truth and their own lives, will never disclose the knowledge of it, bound as they are, in addition to this, by an oath of the deepest and most dreadful solemnity—an oath the violation of which would constitute a fearful sacrilege in the eye of God. As for these orphans, whose parents were victims to the cruel laws that are grinding us, I have so trained and indoctrinated them into a knowledge of their creed, and a sense of their duty, that they are thoroughly trustworthy. On this very day I administered to them the sacrament of confirmation. No, brother, we cannot sacrifice the interests and welfare of our holy Church to the safety of a single life—to the safety of a person who I foresee will be certain to betray us."

"My lord," replied the priest, "I humbly admit your authority and superior sanctity, for in what does your precious life fall short of martyrdom but by one step to the elevation which leads to glory? I mean the surrendering of that life for the true faith. I feel, my lord, that in your presence I am nothing; still, in our holy Church there is the humble as well as the exalted, and your lordship will admit that the gradations of piety, and the dispensations of the higher and the lower gifts, proceed not only from the wisdom of God but from the necessities of man."

"I do not properly understand you, father," said the bishop in a voice whose stern tones were mingled with something like contempt.

"I beg your lordship to hear me," proceeded Father Maguire. "You say that Reilly has associated more frequently with Protestants than he has with persons of our own religion. That may be true, and I grant that it is so; but, my lord, are you aware that he has exercised the influence which he has possessed over them for the protection and advantage and safety of his Catholic friends and neighbors, to the very utmost of his ability, and frequently with success?"

"Yes; they obliged him because they cal-

culated upon his accession to their creed and principles."

"My lord," replied the priest with firmness, "I am an humble but independent man; if humanity and generosity, exercised as I have seen them this night, guided and directed by the spirit of peace, and of the word of God itself, can afford your lordship a guarantee of the high and Christian principles by which this young man's heart is actuated, then I may with confidence recommend him to your clemency."

"What would you say?" asked the bishop.

"My lord, he was the principal means of saving the lives of six Protestants—heretics, I mean—from being cut off in their iniquities and sins this night."

"How do you mean?" replied the stern bishop; "explain yourself!"

The good priest then gave a succinct account of the circumstances with which the reader is already acquainted; and, after having finished his brief narrative, the unfortunate man perceived that, instead of having rendered Reilly a service, he had strengthened the suspicions of the prelate against him.

"So!" said the bishop, "you advance the history of this dastardly conduct as an argument in his favor!"

As he uttered these words, his eyes, which had actually become bloodshot, blazed again; his breath went and came strongly, and he ground his teeth with rage.

Father Maguire, and those who were present, looked at each other with eyes in which might be read an expression of deep sorrow and compassion. At length a mild-looking, pale-faced man, with a clear, benignant eye, approached him, and laying his hand in a gentle manner upon his arm, said, "Pray, my dear lord, let me entreat your lordship to remember the precepts of our great Master: 'Love your enemies; bless them that curse you; do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you.' And surely, my lord, no one knows better than you do that this is the spirit of our religion, and that whenever it is violated the fault is not that of the creed, but the man."

"Under any circumstances," said the bishop, declining to reply to this, and placing his open hand across his forehead, as if he felt confusion or pain—"under any circumstances, this person must take the oath of secrecy with respect to the existence of this cave. Call him up."

Reilly, as we have said, saw at once that an angry discussion had taken place, and felt all but certain that he was himself involved in it. The priest, in obedience to the wish expressed by the bishop, went down to where he stood, and whispering to him, said:

"Salvation to me, but I had a hard battle for you. I fought, however, like a trump. The strange, and—ahem—kind of man you are called upon to meet now is one of our bishops—but don't you pretend to know that—he has heard of your love for the *Cooleen Bawn*, and of her love for you—be easy now—not a thing it will be but the meeting of two thunderbolts between you—and he's afraid you'll be deluded by her charms—turn apostate on our hands—and that the first thing you're likely to do, when you get out of this subterranean palace of ours, will be to betray its existence to the heretics. I have now put you on your guard, so keep a sharp lookout; be mild as mother's milk. But if you 'my lord' him, I'm dished as a traitor beyond redemption."

Now, if the simple-hearted priest had been tempted by the enemy himself to place these two men in a position where a battle-royal between them was most likely to ensue, he could not have taken a more successful course for that object. Reilly, the firm, the high-minded, the honorable, and, though last not least, the most indignant at any imputation against his integrity, now accompanied the priest in a state of indignation that was nearly a match for that of the bishop.

"This is Mr. Reilly, gentlemen; a firm and an honest Catholic, who, like ourselves, is suffering for his religion."

"Mr. Reilly," said the bishop, "it is good to suffer for our religion."

"It is our duty," replied Reilly, "when we are called upon to do so; but for my part, I must confess, I have no relish whatsoever for the honors of martyrdom. I would rather aid it and assist it than suffer for it."

The bishop gave a stern look at his friends, as much as to say: "You hear! incipient heresy and treachery at the first step."

"He's more mad than the bishop," thought Father Maguire; "in God's name what will come next, I wonder? Reilly's blood, somehow, is up; and there they are looking at each other, like a pair o' game cocks, with their necks stretched out in a cockpit—when I was a boy I used to go to see them—ready to dash upon one another."

"Are you not now suffering for your religion?" asked the prelate.

"No," replied Reilly, "it is not for the sake of my religion that I have suffered any thing. Religion is made only a pretext for it; but it is not, in truth, on that account that I have been persecuted."

"Pray, then, sir, may I inquire the cause of your persecution?"

"You may," replied Reilly, "but I shall decline to answer you. It comes not within your jurisdiction, but is a matter altogether personal to myself, and with which you can have no concern."

Here a groan from the priest, which he could not suppress, was shivered off, by a tremendous effort, into a series of broken coughs, got up in order to conceal his alarm at the fatal progress which Reilly, he thought, was unconsciously making to his own ruin.

"Troth," thought he, "the soldiers were nothing at all to what this will be. There his friends would have found the body and given him a decent burial; but here neither friend nor fellow will know where to look for him. I was almost the first man that took the oath to keep the existence of this place secret from all unless those that were suffering for their religion; and now, by denying that, he has me in the trap along with himself."

A second groan, shaken out of its continuity into another comical shower of fragmental coughs, closed this dreary but silent soliloquy.

The bishop proceeded: "You have been inveigled, young man, by the charms of a deceitful and heretical syren, for the purpose of alienating you from the creed of your forefathers."

"It is false," replied Reilly; "false, if it proceeded from the lips of the Pope himself; and if his lips uttered to me what you now have done, I would fling the falsehood in his teeth, as I do now in yours—yes, if my life should pay the forfeit of it. What have you to do with my private concerns?"

Reilly's indignant and impetuous reply to the prelate struck all who heard it with dismay, and also with horror, when they bethought themselves of the consequences.

"You are a heretic at heart," said the other, knitting his brows; "from your own language you stand confessed—a heretic."

"I know not," replied Reilly, "by what right or authority you adopt this ungentlemanly and illiberal conduct towards me; but so long as your language applies only to myself and my religion, I shall answer you in a different spirit. In the first place, then, you are grievously mistaken in supposing me to be a heretic. I am true and faithful to my creed, and will live and die in it."

Father Maguire felt relieved, and breathed more freely; a groan was coming, but it ended in a "hem."

"Before we proceed any farther, sir," said this strange man, "you must take an oath."

"For what purpose, sir?" inquired Reilly.

"An oath of secrecy as to the existence of this place of our retreat. There are at present here some of the—" he checked himself, as if afraid to proceed farther. "In fact, every man who is admitted amongst us must take the oath."

Reilly looked at him with indignation. "Surely," thought he to himself, "this man must be mad; his looks are wild, and the fire of insanity is in his eyes; if not, he is nothing less than an incarnation of ecclesiastical bigotry and folly. The man must be mad, or worse." At length he addressed him.

"You doubt my integrity and my honor, then," he replied haughtily.

"We doubt every man until he is bound by his oath."

"You must continue to doubt me, then," replied Reilly; "for, most assuredly, I will not take it."

"You must take it, sir," said the other, "or you never leave the cavern which covers you," and his eyes once more blazed as he uttered the words.

"Gentlemen," said Reilly, "there appear to be fifteen or sixteen of you present: may I be permitted to ask why you suffer this unhappy man to be at large?"

"Will you take the oath, sir?" persisted the insane bishop in a voice of thunder—"heretic and devil, will you take the oath?"

"Unquestionably not. I will never take any oath that would imply want of honor in myself. Cease, then, to trouble me with it. I shall not take it."

This last reply affected the bishop's reason so deeply that he looked about him strangely, and exclaimed, "We are lost and betrayed. But here are angels—I see them, and will join in their blessed society," and as he spoke, he rushed towards the stalactites in a manner somewhat wild and violent, so much so, indeed, that from an apprehension of his receiving injury in some of the dark interstices among them, they found it necessary, for his sake, to grapple with him for a few moments.

But, alas! they had very little indeed to grapple with. The man was but a shadow, and they found him in their hands as feeble as a child. He made no resistance, but suffered himself to be managed precisely as they wished. Two of the persons present took charge of him, one sitting on each side of him. Reilly, who looked on with amazement, now strongly blended with pity—for the malady of the unhappy ecclesiastic could no longer be mistaken—Reilly, we say, was addressed by an intelligent-looking individual, with some portion of the clerical costume about him.

"Alas! sir," said he, "it was not too much learning, but too much persecution, that

has made him mad. That and the ascetic habits of his life have clouded or destroyed a great intellect and a good heart. He has eaten only one sparing meal a day during the last month; and though severe and self-denying to himself, he was, until the last week or so, like a father, and an indulgent one, to us all."

At this moment the pale, mild-looking clergyman, to whom we have alluded, went over to where the bishop sat, and throwing himself upon his bosom, burst into tears. The sorrow indeed became infectious, and in a few minutes there were not many dry eyes around him. Father Maguire, who was ignorant of the progressive change that had taken place in him since his last visit to the cave, now wept like a child, and Reilly himself experienced something that amounted to remorse, when he reflected on the irreverent tone of voice in which he had replied to him.

The paroxysm, however, appeared to have passed away; he was quite feeble, but not properly collected, though calm and quiet. After a little time he requested to be put to *bed*. And this leads us to the description of another portion of the cave to which we have not yet referred. At the upper end of the stalactite apartment, which we have already described, there was a large projection of rock, which nearly divided it from the other, and which discharged the office of a wall, or partition, between the two apartments. Here there was a good fire kept, but only during the hours of night, inasmuch as the smoke which issued from a rent or cleft in the top of this apartment would have discovered them by day. Through this slight chasm, which was strictly concealed, they received provisions, water, and fuel. In fact, it would seem as if the whole cave had been expressly designed for the purpose to which it was then applied, or, at least, for some one of a similar nature.

On entering this, Reilly found a good fire, on which was placed a large pot with a mess in it, which emitted a very savory odor. Around the sides, or walls of this rock, were at least a score of heather shake-down beds, the fragrance of which was delicious. Pots, pans, and other simple culinary articles were there, with a tolerable stock of provisions, not omitting a good-sized keg of mountain dew, which their secluded position, the dampness of the place, and their absence from free air, rendered very necessary and gratifying.

"Here!" exclaimed Father Maguire, after the feeble prelate had been assisted to this recess, "here, now, put his lordship to bed; I have tossed it up for him in great style! I assure you, my dear friends, it's a shake-down fit for a prince!—and better than most of the thieves deserve. What bed of down ever had the sweet fragrance this flowery heather sends forth? Here, my lord—easy, now—lay him down gently, just as a mother would her sleeping child—for, indeed, he is a child," he whispered, "and as weak as a child; but a sound sleep will do him good, and he'll be a new man in the morning, please God."

Upon this rough, but wholesome and aromatic couch, the exhausted prelate was placed, where he had not been many minutes until he fell into a profound sleep, a fact which gratified them very much, for they assured Reilly and the priest that he had slept but a few hours each night during the last week, and that such slumber as he did get was feverish and unquiet.

Our good-humored friend, however, was now cordially welcomed by these unfortunate ecclesiastics, for such, in fact, the majority of them were. His presence seemed to them like a ray of light from the sun. His good humor, his excellent spirits, which nothing could repress, and his drollery kept them alive, and nothing was so much regretted by them as his temporary absences from time to time; for, in truth, he was their messenger, their steward, and their newsman—in fact, the only link that connected them with external life, and the ongoings of the world abroad. The bed in which the bishop now slept was in a distant corner of this inner apartment, or dormitory, as it might be termed, because the situation was higher and drier, and consequently more healthy, as a sleeping-place, than any other which the rude apartment afforded. The fire on which the large pot simmered was at least a distance of twenty-five yards from his bed, so that they could indulge in conversation without much risk of disturbing him.

It is unnecessary to say that Reilly and his friend Father Maguire felt, by this time, a tolerably strong relish for something in the shape of sustenance—a relish which was exceedingly sharpened by the savory smell sent forth throughout the apartment by the contents of whatsoever was contained in the immense pot.

"My dear brethren," said the priest, "let us consider this cavern as a rich monastery; such, alas! as existed in the good days of old, when the larder and refectory were a credit to religion and a relief to the destitute, but which, alas!—and alas! again—we can only think of as a—in the meantime, I can stand this no longer. If I possess judgment or penetration in *re culinaria*, I am of opinion," he added (stirring up the contents of it),

"that it is fit to be operated on; so, in God's name, let us have at it."

In a few minutes two or three immense pewter dishes were heaped with a stew made up of mutton, bacon, hung beef, onions, and potatoes, forming indeed a most delicious mess for any man, much less the miserable men who were making it disappear so rapidly.

Reilly, the very picture of health, after maintaining a pace inferior to that of none, although there were decidedly some handy workmen there, now was forced to pull up and halt. In the meantime some slow but steady operations went on with a perseverance that was highly creditable; and it was now that, having a little agreeable leisure to observe and look about him, he began to examine the extraordinary costumes of the incongruous society in which, to his astonishment, he found himself a party. We must, however, first account for the oddness and incongruity of the apparent characters which they were forced to assume.

At this period the Catholics of Ireland were indeed frightfully oppressed. A proclamation had recently been issued by the Government, who dreaded, or pretended to dread, an insurrection—by which document convents and monasteries were suppressed—rewards offered for the detection and apprehension of ecclesiastics, and for the punishment of such humane magistrates as were reluctant to enforce laws so unsparing and oppressive. Increased rewards were also offered to spies and informers, with whom the country unfortunately abounded. A general disarming of all Catholics took place; domiciliary visits were made in quest of bishops, priests, and friars, and all the chapels in the country were shut up. Many of the clergy flew to the metropolis, where they imagined they might be more safe, and a vast number to caverns and mountains, in order to avoid the common danger, and especially from a wholesome terror of that class of men called priest-hunters. The Catholic peasantry having discovered their clergy in these wild retreats, flocked to them on Sundays and festivals, in order to join in private—not public—worship, and to partake of the rites and sacraments of their Church.

Such was the state of the country at the period when the unfortunate men whom we are about to describe were pent up in this newly discovered cavern.

Now, Reilly himself was perfectly acquainted with all this, and knew very well that these unhappy men, having been frequently compelled to put on the first disguise that came to hand, had not means, nor indeed disposition, to change these disguises, unless at the risk of being recognized, taken into custody, and surrendered to the mercy of the law.

When their savory meal was concluded, Father Maguire, who never forgot any duty connected with his position—be that where it might—now went over to the large pot, exclaiming:

"It would be too bad, my friends, to forget the creatures here that have been so faithful and so steady to us. Poor things, I could see, by the way they fixed their longing eyes upon us while we were doing the handy-work at the stew, that if the matter had been left to themselves, not a spoonful ever went into our mouths but they'd have practised the doctrine of tithe upon. Come, darlings—here, now, is a little race for you—every one of you seize a spoon, keep a hospitable mouth and a supple wrist. These creatures, Mr. Reilly, are so many little brands plucked out of the burning. They are the children of parents who suffered for their faith, and were brought here to avoid being put into these new traps for young Catholics, called Charter Schools, into which the Government wishes to hook in our rising generation, under pretence of supporting and educating them; but, in point of fact, to alienate them from the affection of their parents and relations, and to train them up in the State religion, poor things. At all events, they are very handy to us here, for they slip out by turns and bring us almost every thing we want—and not one of them ever opened his lips as to the existence of this *spelunca*."

The meal of the poor things was abundant, but they soon gave over, and in a few minutes they tumbled themselves into their heather beds, and were soon sunk in their innocent slumbers.

"Now, gentlemen, that we have eaten a better meal than we could expect in this miserable place, thanks to the kindness of our faithful flocks, what do you think of a sup of what's in the keg? Good eating deserves a drop of mixture after it, to aid in carrying on the process of digestion! Father Hennessy, what are you at?" he exclaimed, addressing an exceedingly ill-looking man, with heavy brows and a sinister aspect. "You forget, sir, that the management of the keg is my duty, whenever I am here. You are the only person here who violates our regulations in that respect. Walk back and wait till you are helped like another. Do you call that being spiritually inclined? If so, there is not a doubt of it but you ought to be a bishop; and if you come to that, I'll stake my credit on it that you'll never let much wind into your stomach so long as you

can get plenty of the solids and fluids to keep it out."

"I'm weak in the stomach," replied Hennessy, with a sensual grin, "and require it."

"But I say," replied Father Maguire, "that it would require stronger proof than any your outward man presents to confirm the truth of that. As for bearing a load either of the liquids or solids aforesaid, I'll back your bit of *abdomen* there against those of any three of us."

Cups and noggins, and an indescribable variety of small vessels that were never designed for drinking, were now called into requisition, and a moderate portion of the keg was distributed among them. Reilly, while enjoying his cup, which as well as the others he did with a good deal of satisfaction, could not help being amused by the comical peculiarity of their disguises.

The sinister-looking clergyman, whom we have named Hennessy, subsequently became a spy and informer, and, we may add, an enemy equally formidable and treacherous to the Catholics of the time, in consequence of having been deprived of his clerical functions by his bishop, who could not overlook his immoral and irregular conduct. He is mentioned by Matthew O'Connor, in his "History of the Irish Catholics," and consigned to infamy as one of the greatest scourges, against both the priesthood and the people, that ever disgraced the country. But it must be admitted that he stands out in dark relief against the great body of the Catholic priests at that period, whose firmness, patience, and fidelity to their trust, places them above all praise and all suspicion. It is, however, very reasonable, that men so hunted and persecuted should be forced, not only in defence of their own lives and liberties, but also for the sake of their flocks, to assume such costumes as might most effectually disguise them, so that they would be able still, even in secret and by stealth, to administer the rites of their religion to the poor and neglected of their own creed. Some were dressed in common frieze, some in servants' cast-off liveries—however they came by them—and not a few in military uniform, that served, as it were, to mark them staunch supporters of the very Government that persecuted them. A reverend archdeacon, somewhat comely and corpulent, had, by some means or other, procured the garb of a recruiting sergeant, which fitted him so admirably that the illusion was complete; and, what bore it out still more forcibly, was the presence of a smart-looking little friar, who kept the sergeant in countenance in the uniform of a drummer. Mass was celebrated every day, hymns were sung, and prayers offered up to the Almighty, that it might please him to check the flood of persecution which had overwhelmed or scattered them. Still, in the intervals of devotion, they indulged in that reasonable cheerfulness and harmless mirth which were necessary to support their spirits, depressed as they must have been by this dreadful and melancholy confinement—a confinement where neither the light of the blessed sun, nor the fresh breezes of heaven, nor the air we breathe, in its usual purity, could reach them. Sir Thomas More and Sir Walter Raleigh, however, were cheerful on the scaffold; and even here, as we have already said, many a rustic tale and legend, peculiar to those times, went pleasantly around; many a theological debate took place, and many a thesis was discussed, in order to enable the unhappy men to pass away the tedious monotony of their imprisonment in this strange lurking-place. The only man who kept aloof and took no part in these amusing recreations was Hennessy, who seemed moody and sullen, but who, nevertheless, was frequently detected in making stolen visits to the barrel.

Notwithstanding all this, however, the sight was a melancholy one; and whatever disposition Reilly felt to smile at what he saw and heard was instantly changed on perceiving their unaffected piety, which was evident by their manner, and a rude altar in a remote end of the cave, which was laid out night and day for the purpose of celebrating the ceremonies and mysteries of their Church. Before he went to his couch of heather, however, he called Father Maguire aside, and thus addressed him:

"I have been a good deal struck to-night, my friend, by all that I have witnessed in this singular retreat. The poor prelate I pity; and I regret I did not understand him sooner. His mind, I fear, is gone."

"Why, I didn't understand him myself," replied the priest; "because this was the first symptom he has shown of any derangement in his intellect, otherwise I would no more have contradicted him than I would have cut my left hand off."

"There is, however, a man—a clergyman here, called Hennessy; who is he, and what has been his life?"

"Why," replied the other, "I have heard nothing to his disadvantage. He is a quiet, and, it is said, a pious man—and I think he is too. He is naturally silent, and seldom takes any part in our conversation. He says, however, that his concealment here bears hard upon him, and is depressing his spirits every day more and more. The only thing I ever could observe in him is what you saw yourself to-night—a slight relish for an ac-

quaintance with the barrel. He sometimes drains a drop—indeed, sometimes too much—out of it, when he gets our backs turned ; but then he pleads low spirits three or four times a day—indeed, so often that, upon my word, he'll soon have the barrel pleading the same complaint."

"Well," replied Reilly, after listening attentively to him, "I desire you and your friends to watch that man closely. I know something about him ; and I tell you that if ever the laws become more lenient, the moment this man makes his appearance his bishop will deprive him of all spiritual jurisdiction for life. Mark me now, Father Maguire ; if he pleads any necessity for leaving this retreat and going abroad again into the world, don't let a single individual of you remain here one hour after him. Provide for your safety and your shelter elsewhere as well as you can ; if not, the worst consequences may—nay, will follow."

The priest promised to communicate this intelligence to his companions, one by one, after which, both he and Reilly, feeling fatigued and exhausted by what they had undergone in the course of the night, threw themselves each upon his couch of heather, and in a few minutes not only they, but all their companions, were sunk in deep sleep.

CHAPTER XI.

The Squire's Dinner and his Guests.

We now return to *Cooleen Bawn*, who, after her separation from Reilly, retired to her own room, where she indulged in a paroxysm of deep grief, in consequence of her apprehension that she might never see him again. She also calculated upon the certainty of being obliged to sustain a domestic warfare with her father, as the result of having made him the confidant of her love. In this, however, she was agreeably disappointed ; for, on meeting him the next morning, at breakfast, she was a good deal surprised to observe that he made no allusion whatsoever to the circumstance—if, indeed, an occasional muttering of some unintelligible words, *sotto voce*, might not be supposed to allude to it. The truth was, the old man found the promise he had made to Sir Robert one of such difficulty to his testy and violent disposition, that his language, and the restraint which he felt himself under the necessity of putting on it, rendered his conversation rather ludicrous.

"Well, Helen," he said, on entering the breakfast-parlor, "how did you rest last night, my love? Rested sound—eh? But you look rather pale, darling. (Hang the rascal !) "

"I cannot say that I slept as well as usual, sir. I felt headache."

"Ay, headache—was it ? (heartache, rather. The villain.) Well come, let me have a cup of tea and a mouthful of that toast."

"Will you not have some chicken, sir ? "

"No, my dear—no ; just what I said—a mouthful of toast, and a cup of tea, with plenty of cream in it. Thank you, love. (A good swing for him will be delightful. I'll go to see it.) Helen, my dear, I'm going to give a dinner-party next week. Of course we'll have your future—hem—I mean we'll have Sir Robert, and—let me see—who else ? Why, Oxley, the sheriff, Mr. Brown, the parson—I wish he didn't lean so much to the cursed Papists, though—Mr. Hastings, who is tarred with the same stick, it is whispered. Well, who next? Lord Deilmacare, a good-natured jackass—a fellow who would eat a jacketful of carrion, if placed before him, with as much *gout* as if it were venison. He went home one night, out of this, with the parson's outside coat and shovel hat upon him, and did not return them for two days."

"Does this habit proceed from stupidity, papa ? "

"Not at all ; but from mere carelessness. The next two days he was out with his laborers, and if a cow or pig chanced—(the villain ! we'll hang him to a certainty)—chanced, I say, to stray into the field, he would shy the shovel hat at them, without remorse. Oh ! we must have him, by all means. But who next ? Sir Jenkins Joram. Give him plenty to drink, and he is satisfied."

"But what are *his* political principles. papa ? "

"They are to be found in the bottle, Helen, which is the only creed, political or religious, to which I ever knew him to be attached ; and I tell you, girl, that if every Protestant in Ireland were as deeply devoted to his Church as he is to the bottle, we would soon be a happy people, uncorrupted by treacherous scoundrels, who privately harbor Papists and foster Popery itself. (The infernal scoundrel.) "

"But, papa," replied his daughter, with a melancholy smile, "I think I know *some* persons, who, although very loud and vehement in their outcry against Popery, have, nevertheless, on more than one or two occasions, harbored Papists in their house, and concealed even priests, when the minions of the law were in search of them."

"Yes, and it is of this cursed crew of hollow Protestants that I now speak—ahem—ay

—ha— well, what the devil—hem. To be sure I—I—I—but it doesn't signify; we can't be wise at all times. But after all, Helen (she has me there), after all, I say, there are some good Papists, and some good —ahem—priests, too. There now, I've got it out. However, Helen, those foolish days are gone, and we have nothing for it now but to hunt Popery out of the country. But to proceed as to the dinner."

"I think Popery is suffering enough, sir, and more than enough."

"Ho, ho," he exclaimed with triumph, "here comes the next on my list—a fine fellow, who will touch it up still more vigorously—I mean Captain Smellpriest."

"I have heard of that inhuman man," replied Helen; "I wish you would not ask him, papa. I am told he equals Sir Robert Whitecraft in both cowardice and cruelty. Is not that a nickname he has got in consequence of his activity in pursuit of the unfortunate priests?"

"It's a nickname he has given himself," replied her father; "and he has become so proud of it that he will allow himself to be called by no other. He swears that if a priest gets on the windy side of him, he will scent him as a hound would a fox. Oh! by my honor, Smellpriest must be here. The scoundrel like Whitecraft!—eh—what am I saying? Smellpriest, I say, first began his career as a friend to the Papists; he took large tracts of land in their name, and even purchased a couple of estates with their money; and in due time, according as the tide continued to get strong against them, he thought the best plan to cover his villany—ahem—his policy, I mean—was to come out as a fierce loyalist; and as a mark of his repentance, he claimed the property, as the real purchaser, and arrested those who were fools enough to trust him."

"I think I know another gentleman of my acquaintance who holds property in some similar trust for Papists," observed Helen, "but who certainly is incapable of imitating the villany of that most unprincipled man."

"Come, come, Helen; come, my girl; tut —ahem; come, you are getting into politics now, and that will never do. A girl like you ought to have nothing to do with politics or religion."

"Religion! papa."

"Oh—hem—I don't mean exactly that. Oh, no; I except religion; a girl may be as religious as she pleases, only she must say as little upon the subject as possible. Come, another cup of tea, with a little more sugar, for, I give you my honor, you did not make the last one of the sweetest;" and so saying, he put over his cup with a grimace, which resembled that of a man detected in a bad action, instead of a good one.

At this moment John, the butler, came in with a plate of hot toast; and, as he was a privileged old man, he addressed his master without much hesitation.

"That was a quare business," he observed, using the word *quare* as an equivocal one, until he should see what views of the circumstance his master might take; "a quare business, sir, that happened to Mr. Reilly."

"What business do you allude to, you old sinner?"

"The burning of his house and place, sir. All he has, or had, is in a heap of ashes."

Helen felt not for the burning, but her eyes were fixed upon the features of the old man, as if the doom of her life depended on his words; whilst the paper on which we write is not whiter than were her cheeks.

"What—what—how was it?" asked his master; "who did it?—and by whose authority was it done?"

"Sir Robert Whitecraft and his men did it, sir."

"Ay, but I can't conceive he had any authority for such an act."

"Wasn't Mr. Reilly an outlaw, sir? Didn't the Red Rapparee, who is now a good Protestant, swear insurrection against him?"

"The red devil, sirra," replied the old squire, forgetting his animosity to Reilly in the atrocity and oppression of the deed— "the red devil, sirra! would that justify such a cowardly scoundrel as Sir Rob—eh?—ugh —ugh—ugh—that went against my breath, Helen. Well, come here, I say, you old sinner; they burned the place, you say?"

"Sir Robert and his men did, sir."

"I'm not doubting that, you old houseleek. I know Sir Robert too well—I know the infernal—ahem; a most excellent loyal gentleman, with two or three fine estates, both here and in England; but he prefers living here, for reasons best known to himself and me, and—and to somebody else. Well, they burned Reilly out—but tell me this; did they catch the rascal himself? eh? here's five pounds for you, if you can say they have him safe."

"That's rather a loose bargain, your honor," replied the man with a smile; "for saying it?—why, what's to prevent me from saying it, if I wished?"

"None of your munuping, you old snapdragon; but tell me the truth, have they secured him hard and fast?"

"No, sir, he escaped them, and as report goes they know nothing about him, except that they haven't got him."

Deep and speechless was the agony in which Helen sat during this short dialogue,

her eyes having never once been withdrawn from the butler's countenance ; but now that she had heard of her lover's personal safety, a thick, smothered sob, which, if it were to kill her, she could not repress, burst from her bosom. Unwilling that either her father or the servant should witness the ecstasy which she could not conceal, and feeling that another minute would disclose the delight which convulsed her heart and frame, she arose, and, with as much composure as she could assume, went slowly out of the room. On entering her apartment, she signed to her maid to withdraw, after which she closed and bolted the door, and wept bitterly. The poor girl's emotion, in fact, was of a twofold character ; she wept with joy at Reilly's escape from the hands of his cruel and relentless enemy, and with bitter grief at the impossibility which she thought there existed that he should ultimately be able to keep out of the meshes which she knew Whitecraft would spread for him. The tears, however, which she shed abundantly, in due time relieved her, and in the course of an hour or two she was able to appear as usual in the family.

The reader may perceive that her father, though of an abrupt and cynical temper, was not a man naturally of a bad or unfeeling heart. Whatever mood of temper chanced to be uppermost influenced him for the time ; and indeed it might be said that one half of his feelings were usually in a state of conflict with the other. In matters of business he was the very soul of integrity and honor, but in his views of public affairs he was uncertain and inconsistent ; and of course his whole life, as a magistrate and public man, was a perpetual series of contradictions. The consequence of all this was, that he possessed but small influence, as arising from his personal character ; but not so from his immense property, as well as from the fact that he was father to the wealthiest and most beautiful heiress in the province, or perhaps, so far as beauty was concerned, in the kingdom itself.

At length the day mentioned for the dinner arrived, and, at the appointed hour, so also did the guests. There were some ladies asked to keep Helen in countenance, but we need scarcely say, that as the list of them was made out by her thoughtless father, he paid in the selection of some of them, very little attention to her feelings. There was the sheriff, Mr. Oxley, and his lady—the latter a compound in whom it was difficult to determine whether pride, vulgarity, or obesity prevailed. Where the sheriff had made his capture of her was never properly known, as neither of them belonged originally to that neighborhood in which he had, several years ago, purchased large property. It was said he had got her in London ; and nothing was more certain than that she issued forth the English language clothed in an inveterate cockney accent. She was a high moralist, and a merciless castigator of all females who manifested, or who were supposed to manifest, even a tendency to walk out of the line of her own peculiar theory on female conduct. Her weight might be about eighteen stone, exclusive of an additional stone of gold chains and bracelets, in which she moved like a walking gibbet, only with the felon *in* it ; and to crown all, she wore on her mountainous bosom a cameo nearly the size of a frying-pan. Sir Jenkins Joram, who took her down to dinner, declared, on feeling the size of the bracelets which encircled her wrists, that he labored for a short time under the impression that he and she were literally handcuffed together ; an impression, he added, from which he was soon relieved by the consoling reflection that it was the sheriff himself whom the clergyman had sentenced to stand in that pleasant predicament. Of Mrs. Brown and Mrs. Hastings we have only to say that they were modest, sensible, unassuming women, without either parade or pretence, such, in fact, as you will generally meet among our well-bred and educated countrywomen. Lord Deilmacare was a widower, without family, and not a marrying man. Indeed, when pressed upon this subject, he was never known to deviate from the one reply.

"Why don't you marry again, my lord?—will you ever marry?"

"No, madam, I got enough of it," a reply which, somehow, generally checked any further inquiry on the subject. Between Lady Joram and Mrs. Smellpriest there subsisted a singular analogy with respect to their conjugal attachments. It was hinted that her ladyship, in those secret but delicious moments of matrimonial felicity which make up the sugar-candy morsels of domestic life, used to sit with Sir Jenkins for the purpose, by judicious exercise, of easing, by convivial exercise, a rheumatic affection which she complained of in her right arm. There is nothing, however, so delightful as a general and loving sympathy between husband and wife ; and here it was said to exist in perfection. Mrs. Smellpriest, on the other hand, was said to have been equally attached to the political principles of the noble captain, and to wonder why any clergyman should be suffered to live in the country but those of her own Church ; such delightful men, for instance, as their curate, the Rev. Samson Strong, who was nothing more nor less than a divine bonfire in the eyes of the Christian world. Such was his zeal against Papists,

she said, as well as against Popery at large, that she never looked on him without thinking that there was a priest to be burned. Indeed Captain Smellpriest, she added, was under great obligations to him, for no sooner had his reverence heard of a priest taking earth in the neighborhood, than he lost no time in communicating the fact to her husband; after which he would kindly sit with and comfort her whilst fretting lest any mischief might befall her dear captain.

The dinner passed as all dinners usually do. They hobnobbed, of course, and indulged in that kind of promiscuous conversation which cannot well be reported. From a feeling of respect to Helen, no allusion was made either to the burning of Reilly's property or to Reilly personally. The only person who had any difficulty in avoiding the subject was the old squire himself, who more than once found the topic upon his lips, but with a kind of short cough he gulped it down, and got rid of it for the time. In what manner he might treat the act itself was a matter which excited a good deal of speculation in the minds of those who were present. He was known to be a man who, if the whim seized him to look upon it as a cowardly and vindictive proceeding, would by no means scruple to express his opinions strongly against it; whilst, on the other hand, if he measured it in connection with his daughter's forbidden attachment to Reilly, he would, of course, as vehemently express his approbation of the outrage. Indeed, they were induced to conclude that this latter view of it was that which he was most likely to take, in consequence of the following proposal, which, from any other man, would have been an extraordinary one:

"Come, ladies, before you leave us we must have one toast; and I shall give it in order to ascertain whether we have any fair traitresses among us, or any who are secretly attached to Popery or Papists."

The proposal was a cruel one, but the squire was so utterly destitute of consideration or delicacy of feeling that we do not think he ever once reflected upon the painful position in which it placed his daughter.

"Come," he proceeded, "here is prosperity to Captain Smellpriest and priest-hunting!"*

"As a Christian minister," replied Mr. Brown, "and an enemy to persecution in every sense, but especially to that which would punish any man for the great principle which we ourselves claim—the rights of conscience—I decline to drink the toast;" and he turned down his glass.

"And I," said Mr. Hastings, "as a Protestant and a Christian, refuse it on the same principles;" and he also turned down his glass.

"But you forget, gentlemen," proceeded the squire, "that I addressed myself principally to the ladies."

"But you know, sir," replied Mrs. Brown, with a smile, "that it is quite unusual and out of character for ladies to drink toasts at all, especially those which involve religious or political opinions. These, I am sure, you know too well, Mr. Folliard, are matters with which ladies have, and ought to have, nothing to do. I also, therefore, on behalf of our sex, decline to drink the toast; and I trust that every lady who respects herself will turn down her glass as I do."

Mrs. Hastings and Helen immediately followed her example, whilst at the same time poor Helen's cheeks and neck were scarlet.

"You see, sir," said Mr. Brown, good-humoredly, "that the sex—at least one-half of them—are against you."

"That's because they're Papists at heart," replied the squire, laughing.

Helen felt eased at seeing her father's good humor, for she now knew that the proposal of the toast was but a jest, and did not aim at any thing calculated to distress her feelings.

"But, in the meantime," proceeded the squire, "I am not without support. Here is Lady Joram and Mrs. Smellpriest and Mrs. Oxley—and they are a host in themselves—each of them willing and ready to support me."

"I don't see," said Lady Joram, "why a lady, any more than a gentleman, should refuse to drink a proper toast as this is; Sir Jenkins has not turned down his glass, and neither shall I. Come, then, Mr. Folliard, please to fill mine; I shall drink it in a bumper."

"And I," said Mrs. Oxley, "always drinks my 'usband's principles. In Lunnon, where true 'igh life is, ladies don't refuse to drink toasts. I know that feyther, both before and after his removal to Lunnon, used to make us all drink the 'Ard ware of Old

* We have been charged by an able and accomplished writer with an incapacity of describing, with truth, any state of Irish society above that of our peasantry; and the toast proposed by the eccentric old squire is, we presume, the chief ground upon which this charge is rested. We are, however, just as well aware as our critic, that to propose toasts before the female portion of the company leave the dinner-table, is altogether at variance with the usages of polite society. But we really thought we had guarded our readers against any such inference of our own ignorance by the character which we had drawn of the squire, as well as by the words with which the toast is introduced—where we said, "from any other man would have been an extraordinary one." I may also refer to Mrs. Brown's reply.

Hingland'—by witch," she proceeded, correcting herself by a reproving glance from the sheriff—"by witch he meant what he called the glorious sinews of the country at large, lestwise in the manufacturing districts. But upon a subject like this"—and she looked with something like disdain at those who had turned down their glasses—"every lady as is a lady ought to 'ave no objection to hexplain her principles by drinking the toast; but p'raps it ain't fair to press it upon some of 'em."

"Well, then," proceeded the squire, with a laugh that seemed to have more than mirth in it, "are all the loyal subjects of the crown ready? Lord Deilmacare, your glass is not filled; won't you drink it?"

"To be sure," replied his lordship; "I have no hatred against Papists; I get my rent by their labor; but I never wish to spoil sport—get along—I'll do anything."

With the exceptions already mentioned, the toast was drank immediately, after which the ladies retired to the drawing-room.

"Now, gentlemen," said the squire, "fill your glasses, and let us enjoy ourselves. You have a right to be proud of your wife, Mr. Sheriff, and you too, Sir Jenkins—for, upon my soul, if it had been his Majesty's health, her ladyship couldn't have honored it with a fuller bumper. And, Smellpriest, your wife did the thing handsomely as well as the rest. Upon my soul, you ought to be happy men, with three women so deeply imbued with the true spirit of our glorious Constitution."

"Ah, Mr. Folliard," said Smellpriest, "you don't know the value of that woman. When I return, for instance, after a hunt, the first question she puts to me is—Well, my love, how many priests did you catch to-day? And out comes Mr. Strong with the same question. Strong, however, between ourselves, is a goose; he will believe any thing, and often sends me upon a cold trail. Now, I pledge you my honor, gentlemen, that this man, who is all zeal, has sent me out dozens of times, with the strictest instructions as to where I'd catch my priest; but, hang me, if ever I caught a single priest upon his instructions yet! still, although unfortunate in this kind of sport, his heart is in the right place. Whitecraft, my worthy brother sportsman, how does it happen that Reilly continues to escape you?"

"Why does he continue to escape yourself, captain?" replied the baronet.

"Why," said the other, "because I am more in the ecclesiastical line, and, besides, he is considered to be, in an especial manner, *your* game."

"I will have him yet, though," said Whitecraft, "if he should assume as many shapes as Proteus."

"By the way, Whitecraft," observed Folliard, "they tell me you burned the unfor——you burned the scoundrel's house and offices."

"I wish you had been present at the bonfire, sir," replied his intended son-in-law; "it would have done your heart good."

"I daresay," said the squire; "but still, what harm did his house and place do you? I know the fellow is a Jesuit, a rebel, and an outlaw—at least you tell me so; and you must know. But upon what authority did you burn the rascal out?"

"As to that," returned the baronet, "the present laws against Popery and the general condition of the times are a sufficient justification; and I do not think that I am likely to be brought over the coals for it; on the contrary, I look upon myself as a man who, in burning the villain out, have rendered a very important service to Government."

"I regret, Sir Robert," observed Mr. Brown, "that you should have disgraced yourself by such an oppressive act. I know that throughout the country your conduct to this young man is attributed to personal malice rather than to loyalty."

"The country may put what construction on my conduct it pleases," he replied, "but I know I shall never cease till I hang him."

Mr. Hastings was a man of very few words; but he had an eye the expression of which could not be mistaken—keen, manly, and firm. He sat sipping his wine in silence, but turned from time to time a glance upon the baronet, which was not only a searching one, but seemed to have something of triumph in it.

"What do *you* say, Hastings?" asked Whitecraft; "can you not praise a loyal subject, man?"

"I say nothing, Sir Robert," he replied; "but I think occasionally."

"Well, and what do you think occasionally?"

"Why, that the times may change."

"Whitecraft," said Smellpriest, "I work upon higher principles than they say you do. I hunt priests, no doubt of it; but then I have no personal malice against them; I proceed upon the broad and general principle of hatred to Popery: but, at the same time, observe it is not the man but the priest I pursue."

"And when you hang or transport the priest, what becomes of the man?" asked the baronet, with a diabolical sneer. "As for me, Smellpriest, I make no such distinctions; they are unworthy of you, and I'm sorry to hear you express them. I say, the man."

"And I say, the priest," replied the other.

"What do you say, my lord?" asked Mr. Folliard of the peer.

"I don't much care which," replied his lordship; "man or priest, be it as you can determine; only I say that when you hang the priest, I agree with Whitecraft there, that it is all up with the man, and when you hang the man, it is all up with the priest. By the way, Whitecraft," he proceeded, "how would you like to swing yourself?"

"I am sure, my lord," replied the baronet, "you wouldn't wish to see me hanged."

"Well, I don't know—perhaps I might, and perhaps I might not; but I know you would make a long corpse, and I think you would dangle handsomely enough; you have long limbs, a long body, and half a mile of neck; upon my soul, one would think you were made for it. Yes, I dare say I should like to see you hanged—I am rather inclined to think I would—it's a subject, however, on which I am perfectly indifferent; but if ever you should be hanged, Sir Robert, I shall certainly make it a point to see you thrown off if it were only as a mark of respect for your humane and excellent character."

"He would be a severe loss to the country," observed Sir Jenkins; "the want of his hospitality would be deeply felt by the gentry of the neighborhood; for which reason," he observed sarcastically, "I hope he will be spared to us as long as his hospitality lasts."

"In the meantime, gentlemen," observed the sheriff, "I wish that, with such keen noses for priests and rebels and criminals, you could come upon the trail of the scoundrel who robbed me of three hundred and fifty pounds."

"Would you know him again, Mr. Sheriff?" asked Sir Robert, "and could you describe his appearance?"

"I have been turning the matter over," replied the sheriff, "and I feel satisfied that I would know him if I saw him. He was dressed in a broadcloth brown coat, light-colored breeches, and had silver buckles in his shoes. The fellow was no common robber. Stuart—one of your dragoons, Sir Robert, who came to my relief when it was too late—insists, from my description of the dress, that it was Reilly."

"Are you sure he was not dressed in black?" asked Smellpriest. "Did you observe a beads or crucifix about him?"

"I have described the dress accurately," replied the sheriff; "but I am certain that it was not Reilly. On bringing the matter to my recollection, after I had got rid of the pain and agitation, I was able to remember that the ruffian had a coarse face and red whiskers. Now Reilly's hair and whiskers are black."

"It was a reverend Papist," said Smellpriest; "one of those from whom you had levied the fines that day, and who thought it no harm to transfer them back again to holy Church. You know not how those rascals can disguise themselves."

"And you blame them, Smellpriest," said the squire, "for disguising themselves? Now, suppose the tables were turned upon us, that Popery got the ascendant, and that Papists started upon the same principles against us that we put in practice against them; suppose that Popish soldiers were halloed on against our parsons, and all other Protestants conspicuous for an attachment to their religion, and anxious to put down the persecution under which we suffered · why, hang it, could you blame the parsons, when hunted to the death, for disguising themselves? And if you could not, how can you blame the priests? Would you have the poor devils walk into your hands and say, 'Come, gentlemen, be good enough to hang or transport us?' I am anxious to secure Reilly, and either to hang or transport *him*. I would say the latter, though."

"And I the former," observed Sir Robert

"Well, Bob, that is as may happen; but in the meantime, I say he never robbed the sheriff here; and if he were going to the gallows to-morrow, I would maintain it."

Neither the clergyman nor Mr. Hastings took much part in the conversation; but the eye of the latter was, during the greater portion of the evening, fixed upon the baronet, like that of a basilisk, accompanied by a hidden meaning, which it was impossible to penetrate, but which, nevertheless, had such an effect upon Whitecraft that he could not help observing it.

"It would seem, Mr. Hastings," said he, "as if you had never seen me before. Your eye has scarcely been off me during the whole evening. It is not pleasant, sir, nor scarcely gentlemanly."

"You should feel proud of it, Sir Robert," replied Hastings; "I only admire you."

"Well, then, I wish you would express your admiration in some other manner than by staring at me."

"Gadzooks, Sir Robert," said the squire, "don't you know that a cat may look at a king? Hastings must be a man of devilish good taste, Bob, and you ought to thank him."

Mr. Brown and Mr. Hastings soon afterwards went upstairs, and left the other gentlemen to their liquor, which they now began to enjoy with a more convivial spirit. The old squire's loyalty rose to a very high

pitch, as indeed did that of his companions, all of whom entertained the same principles, with the exception of Lord Deilmacare, whose opinions never could be got at, for the very sufficient reason that he did not know them himself.

"Come, Whitecraft," said the squire, "help yourself, and push the bottle; now that those two half-Papists are gone, we can breathe and speak a little more freely. Here's our glorious Constitution, in Church and State, and curse all priests and Papists—barring a few, that I know to be honest."

"I drink it. but I omit the exception," said Sir Robert, "and I wonder, sir, you would make any exception to such a toast."

"I drink it," said Smellpriest, "including the rascal priests."

"And I drink it," said the sheriff, "as it has been proposed."

"What was it?" said Lord Deilmacare; "come, I drink it—it doesn't matter. I suppose, coming from our excellent host, it must be right and proper."

They caroused deeply, and in proportion as the liquor affected their brains, so did their determination to rid the squire of the rebel Reilly form itself into an express resolution to that effect.

"Hang Reilly — hang the villain — the gallows for him—hurra!" and in this charitable sentiment their voices all joined in a fierce and drunken exclamation, uttered with their hands all clasped in each other with a strong and firm grip. From one mouth alone, however, proceeded, amidst a succession of hiccups, the word "transportation," which, when Lord Deilmacare heard, he changed his principle, and joined the old squire in the same mitigation of feeling.

"I say, Deilmacare," shouted Sir Robert, "we must hang him high and dry."

"Very well," replied his lordship, "with all my heart, Sir Robert; we must hang you high and dry."

"But, Deilmacare," said the squire, "we shall only transport him."

"Very good," exclaimed his lordship, emptying a bumper; "we shall only transport you, Sir Robert."

"Hang him, Deilmacare!"

"Very well, hang him!"

"Transport him, I say, Deilmacare," from the squire.

"Good again," said his lordship; "transport him, say I."

And on went the drunken revel, until they scarcely knew what they said.

The clergyman and Mr. Hastings, on reaching the drawing-room, found Helen in a state of inexpressible distress. A dispute upon the prevailing morals of all modern young ladies had been got up by Lady Joram and Mrs. Oxley, for the express purpose of venting their petty malice against the girl, because they had taken it into their heads that she paid more attention to Mrs. Brown and Mrs. Hastings than she did to them. This dispute was tantamount to, what, in the prize ring, is called *cross*, when the fight is only a mock one, and terminates by the voluntary defeat of one of the parties, upon a preconcerted arrangement.

"I don't agree with you, my lady; nor can I think that the morals of young ladies in 'igh life, by witch I mean the daughters and heiresses of wealthy squires—"

"But, my dear Mrs. Oxley," said her ladyship, interrupting her, and placing her hand gently upon her arm, as if to solicit her consent to the observation she was about to make, "you know, my dear Mrs. Oxley, that the daughter of a mere country squire can have no pretensions to come under the definition of high life."

"Wy not?" replied Mrs. Oxley; "the squires are often wealthier than the haristocracy; and I don't at all see," she added, "wy the daughter of such a man should not be considered as moving in 'igh life—always, of course, provided that she forms no disgraceful attachments to Papists and rebels and low persons of that 'ere class. No, my lady, I don't at all agree with you in your view of 'igh life."

"You don't appear, madam, to entertain a sufficiently accurate estimate of high life."

"I beg pardon, ma'am, but I think I can understand 'igh life as well as those that don't know it better nor myself. I've seen a great deal of 'igh life. Feyther 'ad a willar at 'Igate, and 'Igate is known to be the 'ighest place about the metropolis of Lumnon—it and St. Paul's are upon a bevel."

"Level, perhaps, you mean, ma'am?"

"Level or bevel, it doesn't much diversify—but I prefer the bevel to the level on all occasions. All I knows is," she proceeded, "that it is a shame for any young lady, as is a young lady, to take a liking to a Papist, because we know the Papists are all rebels and would cut our throats, only for the protection of our generous and merciful laws."

"I don't know what you mean by merciful laws," observed Mrs. Brown. "They surely cannot be such laws as oppress and persecute a portion of the people, and give an unjust license to one class to persecute another, and to prevent them from exercising the duties which their religion imposes upon them."

"Well," said Lady Joram, "all I wish is, that the Papists were exterminated; we should then have no apprehensions that our

daughters would disgrace themselves by falling in love with them."

This conversation was absolutely cruel, and the amiable Mrs. Brown, from compassion to Helen, withdrew her into a corner of the room, and entered into conversation with her upon a different topic, assuring her previously that she would detail their offensive and ungenerous remarks to her father, who, she trusted, would never see them under his roof again, nor give them an opportunity of indulging in their vulgar malignity a second time. Helen thanked her, and said their hints and observations, though rude and ungenerous, gave her but little pain. The form of language in which they were expressed, she added, and the indefensible violation of all the laws of hospitality, blunted the severity of what they said.

"I am not ashamed," she said, "of my attachment to the brave and generous young man who saved my father's life. He is of no vulgar birth, but a highly educated and a highly accomplished gentleman—a man, in fact, my dear Mrs. Brown, whom no woman, be her rank in life ever so high or exalted, might blush to love. *I* do not blush to make the avowal that I love him; but, unfortunately, in consequence of the existing laws of the country, my love for him, which I will never conceal, must be a hopeless one."

"I regret the state of those laws, my dear Miss Folliard, as much as you do; but still their existence puts a breach between you and Reilly, and under those circumstances my advice to you is to overcome your affection for him if you can. Marriage is out of the question."

"It is not marriage I think of—for that *is* out of the question—but Reilly's life and safety. If he were safe, I should feel comparatively happy; happiness, in its full extent, I never can hope to enjoy; but if he were only safe—if he were only safe, my dear Mrs. Brown! I know that he is hunted like a beast of prey, and under such circumstances as disturb and distract the country, how *can* he escape?"

The kind-hearted lady consoled her as well as she could; but, in fact, her grounds for consolation were so slender that her arguments only amounted to those general observations which, commonplace as they are, we are in the habit of hearing from day to day. Helen was too high-minded to shed tears, but Mrs. Brown could plainly perceive the depth of her emotion, and feel the extent of what she suffered.

We shall not detail at further length the conversation of the other ladies—if ladies they can be called; nor that of the gentlemen, after they entered the drawing-room. Sir Robert Whitecraft attempted to enter into conversation with Helen, but found himself firmly and decidedly repulsed. In point of fact, some of the gentlemen were not in a state to grace a drawing-room, and in a short time they took their leave and retired.

CHAPTER XII.

Sir Robert Meets a Brother Sportsman—Draws his Nets, but Catches Nothing.

"'Tis conscience that makes cowards of us all," said Shakespeare, with that wonderful wisdom which enlightens his glorious pages; and, in fact, Sir Robert Whitecraft, in his own person, fully corroborated the truth of the poet's apophthegm. The man, besides, was naturally a coward; and when to this we add the consciousness of his persecutions and cruelties, and his apprehensions from the revenge of Reilly—the destruction of whose property, without any authority from Government for the act, he felt himself guilty of—the reader may understand the nature and extent of his terrors on his way home. The distance between his own house and that of his intended father-in-law was about three miles, and there lay a long space of level road, hedged in, as was then the custom, on both sides, from behind which hedges an excellent aim could be taken. As Sir Robert proceeded along this lonely path, his horse stumbled against some stones that were in his way, or perhaps that had been purposely placed there. Be that as it may, the baronet fell, and a small man, of compact size and vigorous frame, was found aiding him to rise. Having helped him into the saddle, the baronet asked him, with an infirm and alarmed voice, who he was.

"Why, Sir Robert," he replied, "you must know I am not a Papist, or I wouldn't be apt to render *you* any assistance; I am somewhat of your own kidney—a bit of a priest-hunter, on a small scale. I used to *set* them for Captain Smellpriest, but he paid me badly, and as there was great risk among the bloody Papists, I made up my mind to withdraw out of his service; but you are a gentleman, Sir Robert, what Captain Smellpriest is not, and if you want an active and useful enemy to Popery, I am your man."

"I want such a person, certainly," replied the baronet, who, in consequence of the badness of the road and the darkness of the night, was obliged to walk his horse with caution. "By the way," said he, "did you not hear a noise behind the hedge?"

"I did," replied the other, "but it was the noise of cattle."

"I am not aware," replied Sir Robert, "what the devil cattle can have to do immediately behind the hedge. I rather think they are some of our own species;" and as he ceased speaking the tremendous braying of a jackass came upon their ears.

"You were right, Sir Robert," replied his companion; "I beg pardon, I mean that *I* was right; you know now it was cattle."

"What is your name?" asked Sir Robert.

"Rowland Drum, Sir Robert; and, if you will permit me, I should like to see you safe home. I need not say that you are hated by the Papists; and as the road is lonesome and dangerous, as a priest-hunter myself I think it an act of duty not to leave you."

"Thank you," said Sir Robert, "you are a civil person, and I will accept your escort."

"Whatever danger you may run, Sir Robert, I will stand by your side and partake of it."

"Thank you, friend," replied Sir Robert; "there is a lonely place before us, where a ghost is said to be seen—the ghost of a priest whom I hunted for a long time; Smellpriest, it is said, shot him at the place I allude to. He was disguised as a drummer, and is said to haunt the locality where he was shot."

"Well, I shall see you safe over the place, Sir Robert, and go home with you afterwards, provided you will promise to give me a bed and my supper; to-morrow we can talk on matters of business."

"I shall certainly do so," replied Sir Robert, "not only in consequence of your attention to me, but of our common purpose."

They then proceeded onwards—passed the haunted spot—without either hearing or seeing the spectral drummer. On arriving at home, Sir Robert, who drank privately, ordered wine for himself, and sent Rowland Drum to the kitchen, where he was rather meagerly entertained, and was afterwards lodged for the night in the garret.

The next morning, after breakfast, Sir Robert sent for Mr. Drum, who, on entering the breakfast parlor, was thus addressed by his new patron:

"What's this you say your name is?"

"Rowland Drum, sir."

"Rowland Drum! Well, now, Rowland Drum, are you well acquainted with the priests of this diocese?"

"No man better," replied the redoubtable Rowland. "I know most of them by person, and have got private descriptions of them all from Captain Smellpriest, which will be invaluable to you, Sir Robert. The fact is—and this I mention in the strictest confidence—that Smellpriest is suspicious of your attachment to our glorious Constitution."

"The confounded rascal," replied the baronet. "Did he ever burn as many Popish houses as I have done? He has no appetite for any thing but the pursuit and capture of priests; but I have a far more general and unsparing practice, for I not only capture the priests, where I can, but every lay Papist that we suspect in the country. Here, for instance. Do you see those papers? They are blank warrants for the apprehension of the guilty and suspected, and also protections, transmitted to me from the Secretary of State, that I may be enabled, by his authority, to protect such Papists as will give useful information to the Government. Here they are, signed by the Secretary, but the blanks are left for myself to fill up."

"I wish we could get Reilly to come over," said Mr. Drum.

"Oh! the infernal villain," said the baronet, "all the protections that ever were or could be issued from the Secretary's office would not nor could not save him. Old Folliard and I will hang him, if there was not another man to be hanged in the three kingdoms."

At this moment a servant came in and said, "Sir Robert, there is a woman here who wishes to have some private conversation with you."

"What kind of a woman is she?" asked the baronet.

"Faith, your honor, a sturdy and strapping wench, somewhat rough in the face, but of great proportions."

Now it so happened that Mr. Drum had been sitting at the window during this brief conversation, and at once recognized, under the disguise of a woman, the celebrated informer, the Rev. Mr. Hennessy, a wretch whose criminal course of life, as we said before, was so gross and reprobate that his pious bishop deemed it his duty to suspend him from all clerical functions.

"Sir Robert," said Drum, "I must go up to my room and shave. My presence, I apprehend, won't be necessary where there is a lady in question."

"Very well," replied the baronet; "I know not what her business may be; but I shall be glad to speak with you after she shall have gone."

It was very well that Hennessy did not see Drum, whom he would at once have recognized; but, at all events, the interview between the reprobate priest and the baronet lasted for at least an hour.

After the Rev. Miss Hennessy had taken her departure, Mr. Drum was sent for by the baronet, whom he still found in the breakfast parlor.

"Drum," said he, "you have now an opportunity of essentially serving not only me, but the Government of the country. This lady turns out to be a Popish priest in disguise, and I have taken him into my confidence as a guide and auxiliary. Now you have given me proofs of personal attachment, which is certainly more than he has done as yet. I have heard of his character as an immoral priest; and the man who could be false to his own creed is not a man to be relied upon. He has described to me the position of a cavern, in which are now hiding a set of proscribed priests; but I cannot have confidence in his information, and I wish you to go to the ravine or cavern, or whatever the devil it is, and return to me with correct intelligence. It may be a lure to draw me into danger, or perhaps to deprive me of my life; but, on second thought, I think I shall get a military force, and go myself."

"And perhaps never return, unless with your heels foremost, Sir Robert. I tell you that this Hennessy is the most treacherous scoundrel on the face of the earth. You do not know what he's at, but I will tell you, for I have it from his own cousin. His object is to have you assassinated, in order to restore himself to the good graces of the bishop and the Catholic party, who, I must say, however, would not countenance such a murderous act; still, Sir Robert, if you were taken off, the man who took you off would have his name honored and exalted throughout the country."

"Yes, I believe you are right, Drum; they are thirsting for my blood, but not more than I am thirsting for theirs."

"Well, then," said Drum, "don't trust yourself to the counsels of this Hennessy, who, in my opinion, only wants to make a scapegoat of you. Allow me to go to the place he mentions, for I know the ravine well, but I never knew nor do I believe that there is a cavern at all in it, and that is what makes me suspect the scoundrel's motives. He can have hundreds of outlaws secretly armed, who would never suffer you to escape with your life. The thing is an ambuscade; take my word for it, it is nothing less. Of course you can go, yourself and your party, if you wish. You will prevent me from running a great risk; but I am only anxious for your safety."

"Well, then," said Sir Robert, "you shall go upon this mission. It may not be safe for me to do so. Try if you can make out this cavern, if there be a cavern."

"I *will* try, Sir Robert; and I will venture to say, that if it *can* be made out, *I* will make it out."

Rowland Drum accordingly set out upon his mission, and having arrived at the cavern, with which he was so well acquainted, he entered it with the usual risk. His voice, however, was recognized, and he got instant admittance.

"My dear friends," said he, after he had entered the inner part of it, "you must disperse immediately. Hennessy has betrayed you, and if you remain here twenty-four hours longer, Sir Robert Whitecraft and a party of military, guided, probably, by the treacherous scoundrel himself, will be upon you. The villain had a long interview with him, and gave a full detail of the cavern and its inmates."

"But how did *you* become acquainted with Sir Robert Whitecraft?" asked the bishop

"In order, my lord, to ascertain his intentions and future proceedings," replied Mr. Drum, "that we might guard against his treachery and persecution. On his way home from a dinner at Squire Folliard's I met him in a lonely part of the road, where he was thrown from his horse; I helped him into his saddle, told him I was myself a priest-hunter, and thus got into his confidence so far as to be able to frustrate Hennessy's treachery, and to counteract his own designs."

"Sir," said the bishop sternly, "you have acted a part unworthy of a Christian clergyman. We should not do evil that good may follow; and you have done evil in associating yourself, in any sense and for any purpose, with this bloodthirsty tiger and persecutor of the faithful."

"My lord," replied the priest, "this is not a time to enter into a discussion on such a subject. Hennessy has betrayed us; and if you do not disperse to other places of safety, he will himself, as I said, lead Sir Robert Whitecraft and a military party to this very cavern, and then may God have mercy on you all."

"Brethren," said the bishop, "this is, after all, possible that our brother has, by the mercy and providence of God, through his casual meeting with this remorseless man, been made the instrument of our safety. As for myself, I am willing to embrace the crown of martyrdom, and to lay down my life, if necessary, for the faith that is in me. You all know what I have already suffered, and you know that persecution drives a wise man mad. My children," he added, "it is possible, and I fear too probable, that some of us may never see each other in this life again; but at the same time, let it be our hope and consolation that we shall meet in a better. And for this purpose, and in order to secure a futurity of happiness, let us lead spotless and irreproachable lives, such as will enable us to meet the hour of death, whether it comes

by the hand of God or the persecution of man. Be faithful to the principles of our holy religion—be faithful to truth—to moral virtue—be faithful to God, before whose awful tribunal we must all appear, and render an account of our lives. It would be mere wantonness to throw yourselves into the hands of our persecutors. Reserve yourselves for the continuance and the sustainment of our blessed religion; but if you should happen to fall, by the snares and devices of the enemy, into the power of those who are striving to work our extermination, and if they should press you to renounce your faith, upon the alternative of banishment or death, then, I say, banishment, or death itself, sooner than become apostates to your religion. I shall retire to a neighborhood only a few miles distant from this, where the poor Catholic population are without spiritual aid or consolation. I have been there before, and I know their wants, and were it not that I was hunted and pursued with a view to my death—to my murder, I should rather say—I would have remained with them still. But that I considered it a duty to that portion of the Church over which God called upon me to preside and watch, I would not have avoided those inhuman traffickers in the blood of God's people. Yet I am bound to say that, from the clergymen of the Established Church, and from many Protestant magistrates, we have received kindness, sympathy, and shelter. Their doors, their hearths, and their hearts have been open to us, and that, too, in a truly Christian spirit. Let us, then, render them good for good; let us pray for their conversion, and that they may return to the right path."

"They have acted generously and nobly," added Reilly, "and in a truly Christian spirit. Were it not for the shelter and protection which I myself received from one of them, my mangled body would probably be huddled down into some obscure grave, as a felon, and my property—which is mine only by a necessary fiction and evasion of the law—have passed into the hands of Sir Robert Whitecraft. I am wrong, however, in saying that it could. Mr. Hastings, a generous and liberal Protestant, took it in his own name for my father, but gave me a deed of assignment, placing it as securely in my hands, and in my power, as if I were Sir Robert Whitecraft himself; and I must add—which I do with pleasure—that the deed in question is now in the possession of the Rev. Mr. Brown, the amiable rector of the parish."

"But he is a heretic," said a red-faced little man, dressed in leather breeches, top boots, and a huntsman's cap; "*vade retro, sathanas.* It is a damnable crime to have any intercourse with them, or to receive any protection from them: *vade retro, sathanas.*"

"If I don't mistake," said the cook—an archdeacon, by the way—"you yourself received protection from them, and were glad to receive it."

"If I did receive protection from one of their heretic parsons, it was for Christian purposes. My object was not so much to seek protection from him as to work out his salvation by withdrawing him from his heresy. But then the fellow was as obstinate as *sathanas* himself, and had Greek and Hebrew at his fingers' ends. I made several passes at him—tried Irish, and told him it was Italian. 'Well,' said he, smiling, 'I understand Italian too;' and to my astonishment he addressed me in the best Irish I ever heard spoken. 'Now,' said he, still smiling, 'you perceive that I understand *Italian* nearly—I will not say so well—as you do.' Now, as I am a sinner, that, I say, was ungenerous treatment. He was perfectly irreclaimable."

This man was, like Mr. Maguire, what has been termed a hedge-priest—a character which, as we have already said, the poverty of the Catholic people, during the existence of the penal laws, and the consequent want of spiritual instruction, rendered necessary. There were no Catholic colleges in the country, and the result was that the number of foreign priests—by which I mean Irish priests educated in foreign colleges—was utterly inadequate to meet the spiritual necessities of the Irish population. Under those circumstances, men of good and virtuous character, who understood something of the Latin tongue, were ordained by their respective bishops, for the purpose which we have already mentioned. But what a difference was there between those half-educated men and the class of educated clergymen who now adorn, not only their Church, but the literature of the country!

"Well, my dear friend," said the bishop, "let us be thankful for the protection which we have received at the hands of the Protestant clergy and of many of the Protestant laity also. We now separate, and I for one am sensible how much this cruel persecution has strengthened the bonds of Christian love among us, and excited our sympathy for our poor persecuted flocks, so many of whom are now without a shepherd. I leave you with tears—but they are tears of affection, and not of despair. I shall endeavor to be useful wherever I may abide. Let each of you do all the spiritual good you can—all the earthly good—all good in its most enlarged and purest sense. But we must separate—probably, some of us, forever; and

now may the blessing of the Almighty God —of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, rest upon you all, and be with you and abide in your hearts, now and forever! Amen!"

Having pronounced these words, he covered his face with his two hands and wept bitterly. There were indeed few dry eyes around him; they knelt before him, kissed his ring, and prepared to take their departure out of the cavern.

"My lord," said Reilly, who still entertained apprehensions of the return of his malady, "if you will permit me I shall share your fate, whatever it may be. The poor people you allude to are not in a condition to attend to your wants. Allow me, then, to attend and accompany you in your retreat."

"My dear friend," said the bishop, clasping his hand, "you are heaping coals of fire upon my head. I trust you will forgive me, for I knew not what I did. I shall be glad of your companionship. I fear I still stand in need of such a friend. Be it so, then," he proceeded—"be it so, my dear friend; only that I should not wish you to involve yourself in unnecessary danger on my account."

"Danger, my lord!" replied Reilly; "there is not an individual here against whom personal malignity has directed the vengeance of the law with such a bloodthirsty and vindictive spirit as against myself. Why else am I here? No, I will accompany your lordship, and share your fate."

It was so determined, and they left the cavern, each to procure some place of safety for himself.

In the meantime, Sir Robert Whitecraft, having had another interview with Hennessy, was prevailed upon to get a military party together, and the cunning reprobate, in order to excite the baronet's vengeance to a still higher pitch, mentioned a circumstance which he had before forgotten, to wit, that Reilly, his arch-enemy, was also in the cave.

"But," said Sir Robert, who, as we have already said, was a poltroon and a coward, "what guarantee can you give me that you are not leading me into an ambuscade? You know that I am unpopular, and the Papists would be delighted to have my blood; what guarantee, then, can you give me that you are acting by me in good faith?"

"The guarantee of my own life," replied the other. "Let me be placed between two of your men, and if you see any thing like an ambuscade, let them shoot me dead on the spot."

"Why," replied the baronet, "that is fair; but the truth is, I have been put on my guard against you by a person who escorted me home last night. He rendered me some assistance when I fell from my horse, and he slept here."

"What is his name?" asked Hennessy.

"He told me," replied the baronet, "that his name was Drum."

"Could you give me a description, Sir Robert, of his person?"

Sir Robert did so.

"I declare to God, Sir Robert, you have had a narrow escape from that man. He is one of the most bigoted priests in the kingdom. He used to disguise himself as a drummer—for his father was in the army, and he himself *was* a drummer in his boyhood; and his object in preventing you from bringing a military party to the cavern was merely that he might have an opportunity of giving them notice of your intentions. I now say that if you lose an hour's time they will be gone."

Sir Robert did not lose an hour's time. The local barracks were within a few hundred yards of his house. A party of military were immediately called out, and in a short time they arrived, under the guidance of Hennessy, to the very mouth of the cavern, which he disclosed to them. It is unnecessary to detail the particulars of the search. The soldiers entered it one by one, but found that the birds had flown. The very fires were burning, but not a living soul in the cave; it was completely deserted, and nothing remained but some miserable relics of cold provisions, with which, by the aid of fir splices, that served as torches, they regaled themselves as far as they went.

Sir Robert Whitecraft now felt full confidence in Hennessy; but would have given a trifle to renew his acquaintance with Mr. Rowland Drum, by whose ingenuity he was so completely outwitted. As it was, they scoured the country in search of the inmates of the cave, but above all things in search of Reilly, for whose capture Whitecraft would have forgiven every man in the cavern. The search, however, was unsuccessful; not a man of them was caught that day, and gallant Sir Robert and his myrmidons were obliged to return wearied and disappointed men.

CHAPTER XIII.

Reilly is Taken, but connived at by the Sheriff—The Mountain Mass.

Reilly and the bishop traversed a wild and remote part of the country, in which there was nothing to be seen but long barren wastes, over which were studded, here and

there, a few solitary huts ; upon its extremity, however, there were some houses of a more comfortable description, the habitations of middling farmers, who possessed small farms at a moderate rent. As they went along, the prelate addressed Reilly in the following terms :

"Mr. Reilly," said he, "I would advise you to get out of this unhappy country as soon as you can."

"My lord," replied Reilly, who was all candor and truth, and never could conceal his sentiments, at whatever risk, "I cannot think of leaving the country, let the consequences be what they may. I will not trouble your lordship with my motives, because they are at variance with your character and religious feelings ; but they are *not* at variance with religion or morality. It is enough to say that I wish to prevent a beautiful and innocent girl from being sacrificed. My lord, you know too well that persecution is abroad ; and when I tell you that, through the influence which this admirable creature has over her father—who, by the way, has himself the character of a persecutor—many Catholics have been protected by him, I am sure you will not blame me for the interest which I feel in her fate. In addition to this, my lord, she has been a ministering angel to the Catholic poor in general, and has contributed vast sums, privately, to the relief of such of our priesthood as have been brought to distress by the persecution of the times. Nay, she has so far influenced her father that proscribed priests have found refuge and protection in his house."

The bishop, on hearing this, stood, and taking off his hat, raised his right hand, and said : "May the blessing of the Almighty God rest upon her, and guard her from the snares of those who would make her unhappy ! But, Reilly, as you say you are determined, if possible, to rescue her from ruin, you know that if you go at large in your usual dress you will unquestionably be taken. I advise you, then, to disguise yourself in such a way as that you will not, if possible, be known."

"Such, my lord, is my intention—but who is this ? what—eh—yes, 'tis Fergus O'Reilly, a distant and humble relation of mine who is also in disguise. Well, Fergus, where have you been for some time past ? "

"It would be difficult to tell that, God knows ; I have been everywhere—but," he added in a whisper, "may I speak freely ? "

"As free as the wind that blows, Fergus."

"Well, then, I tell you that Sir Robert Whitecraft has engaged me to be on the lookout for you, and said that I would be handsomely rewarded if I could succeed in enabling the scoundrel to apprehend you."

"But how did that come about, Fergus ? "

"Faith, he met me one day—you see I have got a bag at my back—and taking me for a beggarman, stopped me on the road. 'I say, you, poor man,' says he, 'what's your name ? ' 'Paddy M'Fud,' says I—'I belong to the M'Fuds of Ballymackknockem.' 'You're a beggar,' says he, 'and travel from place to place about the country.' 'It's true enough, your honor,' I replied, 'I travel about a good deal, of coorse, and it's only that way that I get my bit and sup.' 'Do you know the notorious villain called Willy Reilly ? ' 'Not by sight, your honor, but I have often heard of him. Wasn't he in love with the beautiful *Cooleen Bawn*, Squire Folliard's daughter ? ' 'That's not the question between us,' he said, 'but if you enable me to catch Reilly, I will give you twenty pounds.' 'Well, your honor,' says I, 'lave the thing to myself ; if he is to be had it'll go hard but I'll find him.' 'Well, then,' says he, 'if you can tell me where he is I will give you twenty pounds, as I said.' 'Well, sir,' says I, 'I expect to hear from you ; I am not sure he's in the country—indeed they say he is not—but if he is, I think I'll find him for you ;' and so we parted."

"Fergus," said Reilly, "I feel that a disguise is necessary. Here is money to enable you to purchase one. I do not know where you may be able to find me ; but go and buy me a suit of frieze, rather worn, a dingy caubeen hat, coarse Connemara stockings, and a pair of clouted brogues ; some coarse linen, too ; because the fineness of my shirts, should I happen to be apprehended, might betray me. Leave them with widow Buckley, and I can find them there."

It was so arranged. Fergus went on his way, as did Reilly and the bishop. The latter conducted him to the house of a middling farmer, whose son the bishop had sent, at his own expense, to a continental college. They were both received with the warmest affection, and, so far as the bishop was concerned, with every expression of the deepest gratitude. The situation was remote, and the tumult of pursuit did not reach them. Reilly privately forced upon the farmer compensation for their support, under a solemn injunction that he should not communicate that circumstance to the bishop, and neither did he. They were here, then, comparatively safe, but still Reilly dreaded the active vigilance of his deadly enemy, Sir Robert Whitecraft. He felt that a disguise was absolutely necessary, and that, without it, he might fall a sacrifice to the diabolical vengeance of his

powerful enemy. In the course of about ten days after he had commissioned Fergus to procure him the disguise, he resolved to visit widow Buckley, in order to make the necessary exchange in his apparel. He accordingly set out—very foolishly we must admit—in open day, to go to the widow's house. The distance was some miles. No appearance of danger, or pursuit, was evident, until he came to the sharp angle of the road, where he was met by four powerful constables, who, on looking at him, immediately surrounded him and made him prisoner. Resistance was impossible; they were well armed, and he was without any weapon with which he could defend himself.

"We have a warrant for your apprehension, sir," said one of them.

"Upon what grounds?" replied Reilly. "I am conscious of no offence against the laws of the land. Do you know who I am? and is my name in your warrant?"

"No, but your appearance answers completely to the description given in the *Hue and Cry*. Your dress is the same as that of the robber, and you must come with us to the sheriff whom you have robbed. His house is only a quarter of a mile from this."

They accordingly proceeded to the sheriff's house, whom they found at home. On being informed that they had captured the man who had robbed him, he came downstairs with great alacrity, and in a spirit replete with vengeance against the robber. The sheriff, however, was really a good-natured and conscientious man, and would not lend himself to a dishonorable act, nor had he ever been known to do so. When he appeared, Reilly addressed him:

"I am here, sir," said he, "under a charge of having robbed you. The charge against me is ridiculous. I am a gentleman, and never was under the necessity of having recourse to such unlawful means of raising money."

"Well," replied the sheriff, "your dress is precisely the same as the fellow wore when he robbed me. But I feel confident that you are not the man. Your hair is black, his was red, and he had large red whiskers. In the excitement and agitation of the moment I forgot to mark the villain's features distinctly; but I have since thought over the matter, and I say that I would now know him if I saw him again. This, however," he added, turning to the constables, "is not the person who robbed and beat me down from my horse."

"But he may be Willy Reilly, sir, for all that; and you know the reward that is offered for *his* apprehension."

"I know Willy Reilly," replied the sheriff, "and I can assure you that this gentleman is not Willy Reilly. Go, now, continue your pursuit. The robber lurks somewhere in the neighborhood. You know the reward; catch him, and you shall have it."

The constables departed; and after they had gone the sheriff said,

"Mr. Reilly, I know you well; but I would scorn to avail myself of the circumstance which has thus occurred. I am aware of the motive which urges Sir Robert Whitecraft against you—so is the whole country. That penurious and unprincipled villain is thirsting for your blood. Mr. Hastings, however, has a rod in pickle for him, and he will be made to feel it in the course of time. The present administration is certainly an anti-Catholic one; but I understand it is tottering, and that a more liberal one will come in. This Whitecraft has succeeded in getting some young profligate Catholics to become Protestants, who have, consequently, ousted their fathers out of their estates and property; younger sons, who, by this act of treachery, will get the estates into their own possession. The thing is monstrous and unnatural. But let that pass; Whitecraft is on our trail in all directions; beware of him, I say; and I think, with great respect to you, Mr. Reilly, it is extremely foolish to go abroad in your usual apparel, and without disguise."

"Sir," replied Reilly, "I cannot express, as I would wish, my deep gratitude to you for your kindness and forbearance. That Sir Robert Whitecraft is thirsting for my blood I know. The cause of that vengeance is now notorious."

"You know Mr. Hastings, Mr. Reilly?"

"Intimately, sir."

"He took your property in his own name?"

"He did, sir; he purchased it in his own name. The property was hereditary property, and when my title to it, in point of law, as a Catholic, was questioned, and when one of my family, as a Protestant, put in his claim for it, Mr. Hastings came in as the purchaser, and ousted him. The money was supplied by me. The moment, however, that I found Whitecraft was after me, I immediately surrendered the whole of it back to him: so that Sir Robert, in burning what he considered my property, in fact burned Mr. Hastings'."

"And I have reason to know, Mr. Reilly, that it will be the blackest act of his guilty life. This, however, I mention to you in the strictest confidence. Keep the secret, for if it transpired the scoundrel might escape from the consequences of his own cruelty and oppression. In the meantime, do you

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"HERE, NOW, I SPREAD OUT MY ARMS—FIRE!"—p. 91.

take care of yourself—keep out of his way, and, as I said, above all things, procure a disguise. Let the consequences be what they may, I don't think the beautiful *Cooleen Bawn* will ever marry him."

"But," replied Reilly, "is there no risk of compulsion by her father?"

"Why, I must confess there is," replied the sheriff; "he is obstinate and headstrong, especially if opposed, and she will find it necessary to oppose him—and she *will* oppose him. I myself have had a conversation with her on the subject, and she is firm as fate against such a union; and I will tell you more, Reilly—it was she who principally engaged me to protect you as far as I could, and so I shall, you may rest assured of it. I had only to name you a few minutes ago, and your fate was sealed. But, even if she had never spoken to me on the subject, I could not lend myself to the cruel plots of that villain. God knows, in consequence of my official situation, I am put upon tasks that are very painful to me; levying fines from men who are harmless and inoffensive, who are peaceable members of society, who teach the people to be moral, well conducted, and obedient to the laws, and who do not themselves violate them. Now," he added, "be advised by me, and disguise yourself."

"Sir," said Reilly, "your sentiments do you honor; I am this moment on my way to put on a disguise, which has been procured for me. I agree with you and other friends that it would be impossible for me to remain in the country in my own natural aspect and dress. Allow me, before I go, to express my sense of your kindness, and believe me I shall never forget it."

"The disguise, above all things," said the sheriff, smiling and holding out his hand. Reilly seized it with a warm pressure; they bid each other farewell, and so they parted.

Reilly then wound his way to the cottage of Mrs. Buckley, but not by the public road. He took across the fields, and, in due time, reached her humble habitation. Here he found the disguise, which his friend Fergus had provided—a half-worn frieze coat, a half-worn caubeen, and a half-worn pair of corduroy breeches, clouted brogues, and Connemara stockings, also the worse for the wear, with two or three coarse shirts, in perfect keeping with the other portion of the disguise.

"Well, Mrs. Buckley," said he, "how have you been since I saw you last?"

"Oh, then, Mr. Reilly," said she, "it's a miracle from God that you did not think of stopping here! I had several visits from the sogers who came out to look for you."

"Well, I suppose so, Mrs. Buckley; but it was one comfort that they did not find me."

"God be praised for that!" replied the poor woman, with tears in her eyes; "it would a' broken my heart if you had been catched in my little place."

"But, Mrs. Buckley," said Reilly, "were there any plain clothes left for me here?"

"Oh, indeed there was, sir," she replied, "and I have them safe for you; but, in the meantime, I'll go outside, and have an eye about the country, for somehow they have taken it into their heads that this would be a very likely place to find you."

While she was out, Reilly changed his dress, and in a few minutes underwent such a metamorphosis that poor Mrs. Buckley, on re-entering the house, felt quite alarmed.

"Heavenly Father! my good man, where did you come from? I thought I left Mr.—" here she stopped, afraid to mention Reilly's name.

"Don't be alarmed, Mrs. Buckley," said Reilly; "I am only changed in outward appearance; I am your true friend still; and now accept this for your kindness," placing money in her hand.

"I can't, Mr. Reilly; you are under the persecutions, and will want all the money you have to support yourself. Didn't the thieves of the devil burn you out and rob you, and how can you get through this wicked world without money—keep it yourself, for I don't want it."

"Come, come, Mrs. Buckley, I have money enough; you must take this; I only ask you to conceal these clothes in some place where the hell-hounds of the law can't find them. And now, good-by, Mrs. Buckley; I shall take care that, whatever may happen me, you shall not be disturbed out of your little cabin and your garden."

The tears ran down the poor old woman's cheeks, and Reilly left her sobbing and crying behind him. This indeed was an eventful day to him. Strong in the confidence of his disguise, he took the public road, and had not gone far when he met a party of Sir Robert Whitecraft's. To fly would have been instant ruin; he accordingly commenced an old Irish song at the very top of his lungs. Sir Robert Whitecraft was not himself of the party, but scarcely any individual was met by them whom they did not cross-examine.

"Hallo, my good fellow," said the leader of the party, "what is that you're singin'?"

Reilly stared at him like a man who was sorely puzzled; "*Ha neil bearla agum;*" that is, "I have no English."

"Here, Connor, you can speak Irish; sift this able-bodied tyke."

A conversation in that language then took place between them which reflected everlasting honor upon Connor, who, by the way, was one of Reilly's tenants, but himself and his progenitors were Protestants for three generations. He was a sharp, keen man, but generous and honorable, and after two or three glances at our hero, at once recognized him. This he could only intimate by a wink, for he knew that there were other persons there who spoke Irish as well as either of them. The dialogue, however, was not long, neither was it kind-hearted Connor's wish that it should be so. He was asked, however, if he knew any thing about Willy Riley, to which he replied that he did not, only by all accounts he had left the country. This, indeed, was the general opinion.

"This blockhead," said Connor, "knows nothing about him, only what he has heard; he's a pig dealer, and is now on his way to the fair of Sligo; come on."

They passed onwards, and Reilly resumed his journey and his song.

On reaching the farmer's house where he and the bishop lodged, the unhappy prelate felt rather annoyed at the appearance of a stranger, and was about to reprove their host for his carelessuess in admitting such persons.

"What do you want here, my good man?" inquired the farmer.

"Do you wish to say any thing to me?" asked the bishop.

"A few words," replied Reilly; but, on consideration, he changed his purpose of playing off a good-humored joke on his lordship and the farmer. For the melancholy prelate he felt the deepest compassion and respect, and apprehended that any tamvering with his feelings might be attended with dangerous consequences to his intellect. He consequently changed his purpose, and added, "My lord, don't you know me?"

The bishop looked at him, and it was not without considerable scrutiny that he recognized him.

In the meantime the farmer, who had left the room previous to this explanation, and who looked upon Reilly as an impostor or a spy, returned with a stout oaken cudgel, exclaiming, "Now, you damned desaver, I will give you a jacketful of sore bones for comin' to pry about here. This gintleman is a doctor; three of my family are lying ill of faver, and that you may catch it I pray gorra this day! but if you won't catch that, you'll catch this," and he whirled the cudgel about his head, and most unquestionably it would have descended on Reilly's cranium were it not for the bishop, who interposed and prevented the meditated violence.

"Be quiet, Kelly," said he, "be quiet, sir; this is Mr. Reilly disguised."

"Troth, I must look closely at him first," replied Kelly; "who knows but he's imposin' upon you, Dr. Wilson?"

Kelly then looked closely into his face, still holding a firm grip of the cudgel.

"Why, Kelly," said Reilly, "what the deuce are you at? Don't you know my voice at least?"

"Well," replied Kelly, "bad luck to the like o' that ever I see. Holy Moses, Mr. Reilly, but you had a narrow escape, Devil a man in the barony can handle a cudgel as I can, and it was a miracle, and you may thank his lordship here for it that you hadn't a shirtful of sore bones."

"Well, my dear friend," said Reilly, "put up your cudgel; I really don't covet a shirtful of sore bones; but, after all, perhaps you would have found my fist a match for your cudgel."

"Nonsense!" replied Kelly; "but God be praised that you escaped the welting anyhow; I would never forgive myself, and you the friend of his lordship."

He then left the room, his terrific cudgel under his arm, and Reilly, after his absence, related to the bishop the events of the day, involving, as they did, the two narrow escapes which he had had. The bishop thanked God, and told Reilly to be of good courage, for that he thought the hand of Providence was protecting him.

The life they led here was, at all events, quiet and peaceable. The bishop was a man of singular, indeed of apostolic, piety. He spent most of the day in meditation and prayer; fasting beyond the powers of his enfeebled constitution: and indeed it was fortunate that Reilly had accompanied him, for so ascetic were his habits that were it not for his entreaties, and the influence which he had gained over him, it is not at all unlikely that his unfortunate malady might have returned. The neighborhood in which they resided was, as we have said, remote, and exclusively Catholic; and upon Sundays the bishop celebrated mass upon a little grassy platform—or rather in a little cave, into which it led. This cave was small, barely large enough to contain a table, which served as a temporary altar, the poor shivering congregation kneeling on the platform outside. At this period of our story all the Catholic chapels and places of worship were, as we have said, closed by proclamation, and the poor people were deprived of the means of meeting to worship God. It had soon, however, become known to them that an opportunity of public worship was to be had every Sunday, at the place we have described.

Messengers had been sent among them with information to that effect; and the consequence was that they not only kept the secret, but flocked in considerable numbers to attend mass. On the Sunday following the adoption of Reilly's disguise, the bishop and he proceeded to the little cave, or rather cleft, where a table had been placed, together with the vestments necessary for the ceremony. They found about two or three hundred persons assembled—most of them of the humblest class. The day was stormy in the extreme. It was a hard frost, and the snow, besides, falling heavily, the wind strong, and raging in hollow gusts about the place. The position of the table-altar, however, saved the bishop and the chalice, and the other matters necessary for the performance of worship, from the direct fury of the blast, but not altogether; for occasionally a whirlwind would come up, and toss over the leaves of the missal in such a way, and with such violence, that the bishop, who was now trembling from the cold, was obliged to lose some time in finding out the proper passages. It was a solemn sight to see two or three hundred persons kneeling, and bent in prostrate and heartfelt adoration, in the pious worship of that God who sends and withholds the storm; bareheaded, too, under the piercing drift of the thick-falling granular snow, and thinking of nothing but their own sins, and that gladsome opportunity of approaching the forbidden altar of God, now doubly dear to them that it *was* forbidden. As the ceremony was proceeding the bishop was getting on to that portion of the sacred rites where the consecration and elevation of the Host are necessary, and it was observed by all that an extraordinary and sudden lull took place, and that the rage of the storm had altogether ceased. He proceeded, and had consecrated the Host—*hoc est corpus meum*—when a cry of terror arose from the affrighted congregation.

"My lord, fly, and save yourself! Captain Smellpriest and his gang are upon us."

The bishop never once turned round, nor seemed to hear them; but Reilly did, and saw that the whole congregation had fled, and that there only remained the bishop and himself.

"Our day of doom," said he to himself, "is come. Nothing now can save us."

Still the bishop proceeded undisturbed in the worship of the Almighty; when, lo! the military party, headed and led on by the notorious Captain Smellpriest, came thundering up, the captain exclaiming:

"You idolatrous Papist, stop that mummery—or you shall have twelve bullets in your heart before half a minute's time."

The bishop had consecrated the Host, as we have said, but had not yet had time to receive it.

"Men," said Smellpriest, "you are all primed and loaded. Present."

They accordingly did so; every musket was levelled at him. The bishop now turned round, and, with the calmness of a martyr—a calmness and conduct that were sublime—he said:

"Sir, I am engaged in the worship of the Eternal God, and if you wish to shed my blood I should rather it were here and now than in any other place. Give me but a few minutes—I do not ask more."

"Oh," said Smellpriest, "we will give you ten, if you wish it, and the more so because we are sure of you."

When the bishop turned round again, after having received the Host, his pale face had altogether changed its complexion—it burned with an expression which it is difficult to describe. A lofty sense of the sacrifice he was about to make was visible in his kindling and enthusiastic eye; his feeble frame, that had been, during the ceremony of mass, shivering under the effects of the terrible storm that howled around them, now became firm, and not the slightest mark of fear or terror was visible in his bearing; calmly and undauntedly he turned round, and with a voice full and steady he said:

"I am willing to die for my religion, but I say to you that the slaughter of an inoffensive man at the foot of God's altar will not smooth the pillow of your deathbed, nor of those who shoot down a minister of God while in the act of worshipping his Creator. My congregation, poor timid creatures, have fled, but as for me, I will not! I dare not! Here, now, I spread out my arms—fire!"

"I also," said Reilly, "will partake of whatever fate may befall the venerable clergyman who is before you," and he stood up side by side with the bishop.

The guns were still levelled, the fingers of the men on the triggers, when Smellpriest shouted out, "Ground arms! By——," says he, "here is a new case; this fellow has spunk and courage, and curse me, although I give the priests a chase wherever I can, still I am a soldier, and a man of courage, and to shoot down a priest in the worship of God would be cowardly. No, I can't do it—nor I won't; I like pluck, and this priest has shown it. Had he taken to his heels, by ——, he would have had half a dozen bullets in his rear; but, as I said, I like pluck, and on that account we shall pass him by this time. To the right about. As to the clerk, by ——, he has shown pluck

too, but be hanged to him, what do we care about *him?*"

We must say a word or two here about Smellpriest. He was, in the true sense of the word, a priest-hunter; but yet, with all his bigotry, he was a brave man, and could appreciate courage wherever he found it. The reader already knows that his range of persecution was by no means either so wide or so comprehensive as that of the coward Whitecraft. He was a dashing, outspoken fellow, with an equal portion of boisterous folly and mischief; whereas Whitecraft was a perfect snake—treacherous, cruel, persevering in his enmity, and unrelenting in his vengeance. Such was the difference in the character of these two worthies.

After Smellpriest had drawn off his men, the bishop concluded the ceremony of the mass; but when he turned round to announce its conclusion in the words, *ite, missa est*, there was not a soul before him, the terrified congregation, as we have said, having all betaken themselves to flight. Reilly then assisted him to unrobe, and placed the vestments, the chalice, pix, and every thing connected with the ceremony, in a pair of saddle-bags, which belonged to the parish priest, whose altar was then closed, as we said, by proclamation.

Reilly and the bishop then proceeded to the farmer's house, Reilly carrying the saddle-bags, and as they went along the following conversation took place between them:

"My lord," said his companion, "if I might presume to advise you, I think it would be more prudent for you to retire to the Continent for a time. This ferocious captain, who, subdued by the sublime tenor of your conduct, spared you on this occasion, may not under other and less impressive circumstances, exercise a similar forbearance."

"But, my dear Reilly," replied the bishop, in a tone of deep melancholy, "I am not in circumstances to go to the Continent; I am poor; most of my available money I have distributed among the unhappy people, until I am now nearly as poor as themselves; but, independently of that, I do not think it would be right to abandon the charge which God has entrusted to my keeping. The shepherd should not desert his flock, especially in the moment of danger, when the wolves are abroad."

"But, my lord," replied Reilly, "under the present circumstances of the country your residence here can be of no service to them. The chapels are all closed, and public worship forbidden by law. This cannot, and, I hope, will not, last long; but in the meantime, think if it be not wiser in you to go for a time into what I may call a voluntary exile, than be forced into banishment by a cruel edict of the law, as you will be if you should be discovered."

"There is great truth in what you say, my dear Reilly, and on thinking over the circumstances of the country, I am indeed of opinion that your advice is good; but, unfortunately, my present poverty prevents me from acting on it."

"But that shall not be, my lord; I have the means—amply, too—of enabling your lordship to withdraw to the Continent, where you can remain quite safe until better times return, as I hope in God they will soon."

"And yourself, Reilly? why not accompany me? You, it is said, are outlawed; why then remain in a country where your danger is still greater than mine?"

"My lord," replied Reilly, "do not press me on that subject."

"I do not wish to do so, Reilly; but here are the circumstances: you and the beautiful daughter of that old squire are attached—in other words, you love each other passionately. Now, you know, marriage is impossible, unless you should abandon the creed of your fathers."

"I think, my lord," replied Reilly, in a very serious and somewhat offended tone, "that my conduct this day, and within the last half hour, was not that of a man likely to abandon the creed of his fathers."

"Certainly not—most certainly not," replied the bishop. "I would have died this day for my religion, and so would you."

"And so would I certainly, my lord, any day, sooner than renounce it for the love of woman. So far let your lordship's mind be at rest. But in the meantime, let me impress upon your lordship's consideration the absolute necessity of retiring to the Continent for a time. Your lordship's charity has made you poor; but, thank God, I am not poor—but in a position to place £200 in your hands to enable you to bear the expenses of your voyage, and to maintain your ecclesiastical rank and position for a time, when you get there."

"Oh," replied the bishop, "if I were once there, very little money would be necessary; I could almost immediately get a professorship of divinity, especially in the College of Louvain, where I held a professorship for several years."

It was arranged that the bishop should go, at least until the times should change, and in the course of a week, Reilly having furnished him with the necessary funds, he departed and reached the Continent in safety.

Their separation was extremely affecting. The bishop wept bitterly, not only in con-

sequence of his parting with Reilly, but still more because he was forced to separate himself from his flock. Reilly was deeply affected, nor could he restrain his tears. The bishop put his hand on his head and blessed him. "I feel," said he, "as if it were a prophetic impulse, that God will bring you out of the tribulations that encompass you. Forget not his word nor his law; love and adhere to your religion; be guided by its precepts, let them sink deeply into your heart. Take care, also, that the love of woman shall not seduce you from your allegiance to our Church. And now, may the Almighty God bless and protect you, and rescue you from the hands and the snares of your enemies!" And so they parted.

No stronger proof could exist, so far as the *Cooleen Bawn* was concerned, than her extraordinary power of conciliating love and attachment from all who approached her, or were engaged in attending upon her person. The singular softness of her sweet and mellow voice was in itself an exponent of the remarkable suavity and benignity of her disposition. In fact, she carried a charm about her—an atmosphere of kindness and benevolence that no human being who came within its influence could resist. Her smile was a perfect fascination, which, in addition to her elegance of form—her grace and harmony of motion—her extensive charity—her noble liberality of sentiment—and, above all, her dazzling beauty, constituted a character which encircled her with admiration and something almost bordering on worship.

At this time a scheme came into the fertile brain of Whitecraft, worthy of being concocted only in the infernal pit itself. This was to prevail on the squire to remove her faithful, attached, and confidential maid, Ellen Connor, from about her person, under the plea that as, unfortunately, Miss Folliard had been seduced into an affection for Reilly, it was not only probable that her attendant had originated and encouraged her passion, but that it was also likely that, as Reilly was a Catholic, Connor, the confidant, being herself of that persuasion, might so work upon the feelings and principles of his daughter as to induce her, for the sake of the more easily bringing about their marriage, to abandon her own religion, and embrace that of her lover. The old man became instantly alarmed, and, with his usual fiery impetuosity, lost not a moment in dismissing her altogether from his family.

When this faithful girl found that she was about to be separated from her fair and affectionate young mistress, no language could depict the violence of her grief, nor could that mistress herself refuse the tribute of her tears to her sense of the loss which she knew she must sustain by her absence at a crisis when she stood so much in need of her friendship and attachment.

"Oh! it is not for myself, my dear mistress, that I feel this grief," exclaimed Connor, weeping bitterly as she spoke, "but for you. Here you will be alone," she proceeded, "without one being on whom you can depend, or to whom you can open your heart—for many a time you eased that poor heart by telling me of your love for him, and by dwellin' upon his accomplishments and beauty—and, indeed, it's no wonder you should, for where, oh! where is his aiquil to be found? Like yourself, every one that comes near him must love him; and, like you, again, isn't he charity itself to the poor, no matter what their creed may be—oh, no! it's he that is neither the bigot nor the oppressor, although God he knows what he himself is sufferin' from both. God's curse on that blasted Sir Robert Whitecraft! I declare to mercy, I think, if I was a man, that I'd shoot him, like a mad dog, and free the country of him at wanst."

The *Cooleen* was herself in tears, occasioned by such a glowing picture of her lover, as well as by the loss of this faithful and devoted girl. Yet she could not repress a smile at the indignation expressed by Ellen against the man whom she looked upon with such detestation and abhorrence.

"My dear Ellen," said she, drying her tears, "we must only have patience. Every thing is in the hands of God, and in him let us trust. Do not weep so. It is true that, without your society, I shall feel as if I were in a desert, or rather, I should say, in a dungeon; for, indeed, I fear that I am about to become a prisoner in my father's house, and entangled more and more every day in the meshes of that detestable villain. In the meantime, we must, as I said, have courage and patience, and trust to a change of circumstances for better times."

"May the Lord in heaven grant them soon and sudden, for both your sakes," ejaculated Ellen. "I pray the Saviour that he may!"

"But, Ellen," said the *Cooleen*, "didn't you hint to me, once or twice, that you yourself have, or had, a lover named Reilly?"

"I did," she replied, "not that I have, but that I *had*—and, what is more, an humble and distant relation of *his*."

"You say you *had*. What do you mean by that, Ellen? Have you, too, experienced your crosses and calamities?"

"Indeed, ma'am, I have had my share and I know too well what it is to have the heart within as full of sorrow, and all but broken."

"Why, my poor girl, and have you too experienced disappointment and affliction?"

"God, ma'am, has given me my share; but, in my case, the affliction was greater than the disappointment, although that too came soon enough upon me."

"Why, did not the affliction, in your case, proceed from the disappointment?"

"Not exactly, miss, but indeed partly it did. It's but a short story, my dear mistress, and I'll tell it to you. Fergus is his name—Fergus O'Reilly. His father, for doin' something or other contrary to the laws—harborin' some outlaw, I believe, that was a relation of his own, and who was found by the army in his house—well, his father, a very ould man, was taken prisoner, and put into jail, where he died before they could try him; and well it was he did so, for, by all accounts, they'd have transported or hanged the poor ould man, who was then past seventy. Now, over and above that, they'd have done the same thing with his son Fergus, but that he disappeared and but few knows what became of him."

"Why, did he go without having had an interview with you?" asked the *Cooleen*.

"Indeed he did, miss, and small blame to him; for the truth is, he had little time for leavetakin'—it was as much as he could do to make his escape, which, thank God, he did. But, indeed, I oughtn't to thank God for it, I doubt, because it would have been better, and ten times more creditable to himself, if he had been transported, or hanged itself—for that, ma'am, is many a good man's case, as every one knows."

"I agree with you, Ellen. There is, indeed, a most essential difference between flagitious crimes, such as theft, robbery, murder, and other dreadful outrages of that character, and those which may be termed offences arising from political opinions, which are often honestly entertained by individuals who, in all the relations of life, are sometimes the most exemplary members of society. But proceed, Ellen—what was the result?"

Poor Ellen's eyes filled with tears, and she could scarcely summon composure enough to reply:

"Worse than transportation or even death, my dear mistress; oh! far worse—guilt and crime. Yes: he that had gained my affections, and gave me his, joined the Red Rapparee and his gang, and became—a robber. I was goin' to say an outlaw, but he was that before he joined them, because he wouldn't submit to the laws—that is, wouldn't submit to be transported, or maybe hanged—or you know, ma'am, how little a thing it is that will either hang or transport any one of our unfortunate creed now."

"Alas! my dear Ellen, you forget that I am a living witness of it, and an afflicted one; but proceed. Have you ever seen your lover since?"

"I did, ma'am, but at that time he mentioned nothing about his havin' joined the Rapparees. He came, he said, to bid me farewell, and to tell me that he wasn't worthy of me. 'The stain that's upon me,' said he, 'draws a gulf between you and me that neither of us can ever pass.' He could scarcely speak, but he dashed away the tears that came to his eyes—and—and—so he took his departure. Now, my dear young mistress, you see how well I can understand your case, and the good reason I have to feel for you, as I do, and ever will, until God in his mercy may set you both free from what you're sufferin'."

"But, are you certain, Ellen, that he actually *has* joined the Rapparees?"

"Too sure, ma'am—too sure; my father had it in private from his own lips, for, as the poor boy said, he hadn't the courage himself to tell me."

"But, Ellen," asked Miss Folliard, "where had you an opportunity of seeing and becoming acquainted with this young man? You surely could not have known him, or conceived an attachment for him, previous to your coming to reside with us?"

"Oh, no, ma'am," replied Ellen; "it was at my father's I became acquainted with him, principally whenever I got lave to spend a Sunday at home. And now, my dear mistress," she proceeded, sobbing, "I must go—your poor, faithful Ellen will never let you, nor the thought of your sorrows, out of her heart. All she can do now is to give you her prayers and her tears. Farewell! my darlin' mistress—may the blessing of God guard and prosper you both, and bring you to the happiness you deserve." She wept bitterly as she concluded.

"Ellen," replied her mistress, and she paused—"Ellen," said she again—she would, indeed, have spoken, but, after a silent struggle, she covered her eyes with her handkerchief, and was fairly carried away by her emotions—"Ellen," said she, taking her hand, and recovering herself, "be of courage; let neither of us despair—a brighter light may shine on our path yet. Perhaps I may have it in my power to befriend you, hereafter. Farewell, Ellen; and if I can prevail on my father to bring you back, I will." And so they parted.

Connor's father was a tenant of the squire's, and held rather a comfortable farm of about eighteen or twenty acres. Ellen herself had, when very young, been, by some accident or other, brought within the notice of Mrs

Folliard, who, having been struck by her vivacity, neatness of figure, and good looks, begged permission from her parents to take the little girl under her care, and train her up to wait upon her daughter. She had now been eight years in the squire's family—that is, since her fourteenth—and was only two years older than the *Cooleen Bawn*, who was now, and had been for the last three years, her only mistress. She had consequently grown, as it were, into all her habits, and we may justly say that there was not an individual in existence who had a better opportunity of knowing and appreciating her good qualities and virtues; and, what was much to her honor, she never for a moment obtruded her own private sorrows upon the ear or heart of her mistress, who, she saw, had a sufficient number of her own to bear.

It was late in the evening when she took farewell of her mistress, and twilight had come on ere she had got within half mile of her father's house. On crossing a stile which led, by a pathway, to the little hamlet in which her father lived, she was both surprised and startled by perceiving Fergus Reilly approach her. He was then out of his disguise, and dressed in his own clothes, for he could not prevail upon himself to approach her father's house, or appear before any of the family, in the tattered garb of a mendicant. On this occasion he came to tell them that he had abandoned the gang of the Red Rapparee, and come to the resolution of seeking his pardon from the Government, having been informed that it offered protection to all who would come in and submit to the laws, provided they had not been guilty of shedding human blood. This intelligence, however, was communicated to the family, as a means of preparing them for still more important information upon the subject of his own liberty—a matter with which the reader will soon become acquainted, as he will with the fact of his having left off his disguise only for a brief period. In the meantime, he felt perfectly conscious of the risk he ran of a failure in the accomplishment of his own project, by throwing off his disguise, and was then hastening on his way to the cottage of widow Buckley, where he had left his mendicant apparel for the time being.

When Ellen saw him she felt a tumult in her bosom which almost overcame her. Her heart palpitated almost audibly, and her knees became feeble under her. There was something so terrible associated with the idea of a Rapparee that she took it for granted that some frightful transformation of person and character must have taken place in him, and that she would now meet a man thoroughly imbued with all the frightful and savage vices which were so frequently, and too often so generally, attributed to that fierce and formidable class. Still, the recollection of their former affection, and her knowledge of the oppression which had come upon himself and his family, induced her to hope that the principles of humanity could not have been altogether effaced from his heart. Full of doubt and anxiety, therefore, she paused at the stile, against which she felt it necessary to lean for support, not without a touch of interest and somewhat of curiosity, to control the vague apprehensions which she could not help feeling. We need scarcely inform the reader that the meeting on both sides was accidental and unexpected.

"Heavenly Father!" exclaimed Ellen, in a voice trembling with agitation, "is this Fergus O'Reilly that I see before me? Fergus, ruined and undone!" She then looked cautiously about her, and added, "Fergus, *the Rapparee!*"

"God bless me!" he exclaimed in return, "and may I ask, is this Ellen Connor on my path?"

"Well, I think I may say so, in one sense. Sure enough, I am Ellen Counor; but, unfortunately, not the Ellen Connor that *you* wanst knew; neither, unfortunately again, are you the Fergus O'Reilly that *I* wanst knew. We are both changed, Fergus—I into sorrow, and you into crime."

"Ellen," said he, nearly as much agitated as herself, "I stand before you simply as Fergus O'Reilly, but *not* Fergus the Rapparee."

"You will not deny your own words to my father," she replied.

"No, Ellen, I will not—they were true *then*, but, thank God, they are not true *now*."

"How is that, Fergus?"

"Simply because I *was* a Rapparee when I spoke to your father; but I have left them, once and for ever."

"How long have you left them?"

"Ever since *that* night. If it were not for Reilly and those that were out with him duck-shooting, the red villain would have murdhered the squire and Andy Cummiskey, as sure as there is life in my body. After all, it is owin' to Mr. Reilly that I left him and his cursed crew. And now, Ellen, that I have met you, let me spake to you about ould times. In the first place, I am heart sorry for the step I took; but you know it was oppression and persecution that drove me to it."

"Fergus," she replied, "that's no excuse. Persecution may come upon us, but that's no reason why we should allow it to drive us into evil and crime. Don't you know that

it's such conduct that justifies the persecutors in their own eyes and in the eyes of the world. What will become of you now? If you're caught, you must die a shameful death."

"Devil a fear of it, my darlin' Ellen. I could tell you something, if I thought myself at liberty to do so—something *mavourneen*, that 'ud give you a light heart."

"Indeed, Fergus, I don't wish to hear any of your secrets. It's my opinion they would not be fit for me to hear. But in the mane time," she added—prompted by the undying principle of female curiosity, and, let us add, a better and more generous feeling—"in the mane time, Fergus, if it's any thing about yourself, and that it would give me a light heart, as you say it would, and that there is nothing wrong and dishonorable in it, I would, *for your sake*, be glad to hear it."

"Well then, Ellen, I will tell it; but it must, for reasons that there's no use in mentionin' to you, be a secret between us, for some time—not a long time, I hope. I am, thank God, free as the air of heaven, and may walk abroad, openly, in the face of day, if I like, without any one darin' to ask me a question."

"But, Fergus," said Ellen, "I don't undherstand this. You were a robber—a Rapparee—and now you are a free man. But what did you do to deserve this at the hands of the Government?"

"Don't be alarmed, my darlin' Ellen—nothing unbecomin' an honest man."

"I hope," she proceeded—her cheeks mantling with indignation and scorn—"I hope, Fergus, you wouldn't think of stoopin' to treachery against the unfortunate, ay, or even against the guilty. I hope you wouldn't sell yourself to the Government, and get your liberty, afther all, only as a bribe for villany, instead of a free gift."

"See, now," he returned, "what I have brought on myself by tellin' you any thing at all about it—a regular ould house on my shouldhers. No, darlin'," he proceeded, "you ought to know me better."

"Oh, Fergus," she replied quickly, "I thought I knew you wanst."

"Is that generous, Ellen?" he said, in a tone of deep and melancholy feeling, "afther statin' my sorrow for that step?"

"Well," she replied, moved by what she saw he suffered in consequence of her words, "if I have given you pain, Fergus, forgive me—you know it's not in my nature to give pain to any one, but, above all persons in the world, to you."

"Well, darlin'," said he, "you will know all in time; but there is a good deal to be done yet. All I can say, and all I will say, is, that if God spares me life, I will take away one of the blackest enemies that Willy Reilly and the *Cooleen Bawn* has in existence. He would do any thing that the villain of perdition he's a slave to would bid him. Now, I'll say no more; and I'm sure, as the friend of your beautiful mistress, the fair *Cooleen Bawn*, you'll thank me for what I have promised to do against the Red Rapparee."

"I will pry no further into your affairs or intentions, Fergus; but, if you can take danger out of the way of the *Cooleen Bawn* or Reilly, I will forgive you a great deal—every thing, indeed, but treachery or dishonor. But, Fergus, I have something to mention that will take a start out of you. I have been discharged by the squire from his family, and—*mavrone*, oh!—I can now be of no service to the *Cooleen Bawn*."

"Discharged!" replied Fergus with astonishment; "why, how did that come? But I suppose I needn't ask—some of the mad old Squire's tantrums, I suppose? And what did the *Cooleen Bawn* herself say?"

"Why, she cried bitterly when I was lavin' her; indeed if I had been her sister she couldn't feel more; and, as might be expected from her, she promised to befriend me as long as she had it in her power; but, poor thing, if matters go against her, as I'm afeared they will—if she's forced to marry that villain, it's little for any thing that's either good or generous ever she'll have in her power; but marry him she never will. I heard her say more than wanst that she'd take her own life first; and indeed I'm sartain she will, too, if she's forced to it. Either that, or she'll lose her senses; for, indeed, Fergus, the darlin' girl was near losin' them wanst or twic't as it is—may God pity and relieve her."

"Amen," replied Fergus. "And you're now on your way home, I suppose?"

"I am," said Ellen, "and every thing belongin' to me is to be sent to my father's; but indeed, Fergus, I don't much care now what becomes of me. My happiness in this world is bound up in hers; and if she's to be sunk in grief and sorrow, I can never be otherwise—we'll have the one fate, Fergus, and God grant it may be a happy one, although I see no likelihood of it."

"Come, come, Ellen," replied Fergus, "you think too much of it. The one fate! No, you won't, unless it is a happy one. I am now free, as I said; and at present I see nothing to stand between your happiness and mine. We loved one another every bit as well as Reilly and she does—ay, and do still, I hope; and if they can't be happy, that's no raison why you and I shouldn't.

Happy! There's nothing to prevent us from bein' so. I am free, as I said; and all we have to do is to lave this unfortunate country and go to some other, where there's neither oppression nor persecution. If you consent to this, Ellen, I can get the means of bringing us away, and of settlin' comfortably in America."

"And I to leave the *Cooleen Bawn* in the uncertain state she's in? No, never, Fergus —never."

"Why? of what use can you be to her now, and you separated from her—ay, and without the power of doin' any thing to sarve her?"

"Fergus," said she, resolutely, "it's useless at the present time to speak to me on this subject. I'm glad you've got yourself from among these cruel and unconscionable Rapparees—I'm glad you're free; but I tell you that if you had the wealth of Squire Folliard—ay, or of Whitecraft himself, which they say is still greater, I wouldn't become your wife so long as she's in the state she's in."

"That's strong language, Ellen, and I am sorry to hear it from you. My God! can you think of nobody's happiness but the *Cooleen Bawn's?* As for me, it's my opinion I like Reilly as well every bit as you do her; but, for all that, not even the state he's in, nor the danger that surrounds him, would prevent me from marryin' a wife—from bindin' your heart and mine together for life, my darlin' Ellen."

"Ah! Fergus, you're a man—not a woman —and can't undherstand what true attachment is. You men never can. You're a selfish set—at least the most of you are—with some exceptions, I grant."

"And, upon my soul, Ellen," replied Fergus, with a good-humored smile, "I'm one of the choicest and natest of the exceptions. I prefer everybody's happiness to my own—poor Sir Robert Whitecraft's, for instance. Now, don't you call that generosity?"

She gave a mournful smile, and replied, "Fergus, I can't join in your mirth now as I used to do. Many a pleasant conversation we've had; but then our hearts were light, and free from care. No, Fergus, you must lave all thoughts of me aside, for I will have nothing of either love or courtship till I know her fate. Who can say but I may be brought back? She said she'd try what she could do with her father to effect it. You know how whimsical the old Squire is; and who knows whether she may not stand in need of me again? But, Fergus, there's one thing strikes me as odd, and, indeed, that doesn't rise you much in my good opinion. But first, let me ask you, what friend it is who'd give you the means of going to another country?"

"Why, who else but Reilly?" he replied.

"And could you," she returned, with something like contempt stamped upon her pretty features—"could you be mane and ungrateful enough to leave him now in the trouble and sorrow that he's in, and think only of yourself?"

"No, indeed, my dear Ellen; but I was only layin' the plan whenever we might be able to put it in practice. I'm not exactly a boy of that kidney—to desart my friend in the day of his trouble—devil a bit of it, my darlin'."

"Well, I am glad to hear you speak as you do," she said, with a smile; "and now, to reward your constancy to him, I tell you that whenever *they're* settled, or, at all events, out of their troubles, if you think me worth your while, I won't have any objection to become your wife; and—there—what are you about, Fergus? See this now—you've almost broken the tortoise-shell crooked-comb that *she* made me a present of."

"Why, blood alive, Ellen, sure it was only sealin' the bargain I was."

"But remember it *is* a bargain, and one I'll stick to. Now leave me: it's gettin' quite dark; or, if you like, you may see me across the fields."

Such, in fact, was the indomitable attachment of this faithful girl to her lovely and affectionate mistress that, with a generosity as unselfish as it was rare, and almost heroic, she never for a moment thought of putting her own happiness or prospects in life in competition with those of the *Cooleen Bawn*. The latter, it is true, was conscious of this unparalleled attachment, and appreciated it at its true value. How nobly this admirable girl fulfilled her generous purpose of abiding by the fate and fortunes of her unhappy mistress will be seen as the narrative goes along.

Ellen's appearance in her father's house surprised the family not a little. The expression of sorrow which shaded her very handsome features, and a paleness which was unusual to her, alarmed them considerably—not so much from any feeling connected with herself, as from an apprehension that some new distress or calamity had befallen the *Cooleen Bawn*, to whom they all felt almost as deeply attached as she did herself. After the first affectionate salutations were over, she said, with a languid smile:

"I suppose you all wonder to see me here at this hour; or, indeed, to see me here at all."

"I hope, Ellen," said her father, "that nothing unpleasant has happened to *her*."

"May the Lord forbid," said her mother, "and may the Lord take the darlin' creature out of all her troubles. But has there, Ellen—has anything happened to her?"

"Nothing more than usual," replied their daughter, "barring that I have been sent away from her—I am no longer her own maid now."

"*Chierna!*" exclaimed her mother; "and what is that for, *alanna?*"

"Well, indeed, mother, I can't exactly say," replied Ellen, "but I suppose it is because they knew I loved her too much to be a spy upon her. I have raison, however, to suspect that the *villain* is at the bottom of it, and that the girl who came in my place will act more like a jailer than a maid to her. Of course they're all afraid that she'll run away with Reilly."

"And do you think she will, Ellen?" asked her father.

"Don't ask me any such questions," she replied. "It's no matter what I think—and, besides, it's not my business to mention my thoughts to any one—but one thing I know, it'll go hard if she ever leaves her father, who, I really think, would break his heart if she did."

"Oh!" observed the father, with a smile, "divil a one o' you girls, Ellen, ever thinks much of father or mother when you have made up your minds to run away wid your *bouchaleens*—sorra a taste."

"Arra, Brian, will you have sinse," said his wife; "why wouldn't they think o' them?"

"Did *you* do it?" he asked, winking at the rest, "when you took a brave start wid myself across Crockaniska, one summer Sunday night, long ago. Be me sowl, you proved yourself as supple as a two-year-old—cleared drain and ditch like a bird—and had me, when we reached my uncle's, that the eyes wor startin' out o' my head."

"Bad scran to him, the ould slingpoker! Do you hear him," she exclaimed, laughing—"never mind him, children!—troth, he went at sich a snail's pace that one 'ud think it was to confession he was goin', and that he did nothing but think of his sins as he went along."

"That was bekaise I knew that I had the penance before me," he replied, laughing also.

"Any how," replied his wife, "our case was not like their's. We were both Catholics, and knew that we'd have the consent of our friends, besides; we only made a runaway because it was the custom of the country, glory be to God!"

"Ay, ay," rejoined her husband; "but, faith, it was you that proved yourself the active girl that night, at any rate. However, I hope the Lord will grant her grace to go wid him, at all events, for, upon my sowl, it would be a great boast for the Catholics—bekaise we know there is one thing sure, and that is, that the divil a long she'd be wid him till he'd have left her fit to face Europe as a Christian and a Catholic, bekaise every wife ought to go wid her husband, barrin' he's a Prodestant."

Poor Ellen paid little attention to this conversation. She felt deeply depressed, and, after many severe struggles to restrain herself, at last burst into tears.

"Come, darlin'," said her father, "don't let this affair cast you down so much; all will yet turn out for the betther, I hope. Cheer up, *avillish;* maybe that, down-hearted as you are, I have good news for you. Your ould sweetheart was here this evenin', and hopes soon to have his pardon—he's a dacent boy, and has good blood in his veins; and as for his joinin' O'Donnel, it wasn't a bad heart set him to do it, but the oppression that *druv* him, as it did many others, to take the steps he took—oppression on the one side, and bitterness of heart on the other."

"I saw him awhile ago," she replied, "and he tould me a good deal about himself. But, indeed, father, it's not of him I'm thinkin', but on the darlin' girl that's on the brink of destruction, and what I know she's sufferin'."

"I wondher where Reilly is," said her mother. "My goodness! sure he ought to make a push, and take her off at wanst. I dunna is he in the country at all? What do you think, Ellen?"

"Indeed, mother," she replied, "very few, I believe, knows any thing about him. All I'm afraid of is, that, wherever he may be, he'll hardly escape discovery."

"Well," said her father, "I'll tell you what we'll do. Let us kneel down and offer up ten pathers, ten aves, and a creed, that the Lord may protect them both from their enemies, and grant them a happy marriage, in spite of laws, parliaments, magistrates, spies, persecutors and priest-hunters, and, as our hands are in, let us offer up a few that God may confound that villain, Whitecraft, and bring him snugly to the gallows."

This was immediately complied with, in a spirit of earnestness surpassing probably what they might have felt had they been praying for their own salvation. The prayers having been concluded, and supper prepared, in due time the family retired to rest for the night.

When Fergus Reilly took his leave of Ellen, he directed his steps to the cottage of Mrs. Buckley, where, for certain purposes

connected with his designs on the Red Rapparee, he had been in the habit of meeting the sagacious fool, Tom Steeple. It was there, besides, that he had left his disguise, which the unaccomplished progress of his projects rendered it necessary that he should once more resume. This, in fact, was the place of their rendezvous, where they generally met at night. These meetings, however, were not always very regular; for poor Tom, notwithstanding his singular and anomalous cunning, was sometimes led away by his gastric appetite to hunt for a bully dinner, or a bully supper, or a mug of strong beer, as the case might be, and after a gorge he was frequently so completely overtaken by laziness and a consequent tendency to sleep, that he retired to the barn, or some other outhouse, where he stretched his limbs on a shake-down of hay or straw, and lapped himself into a state of luxury which many an epicure of rank and wealth might envy.

On reaching the widow's cottage, Fergus felt somewhat disappointed that Tom was not there, nor had he been seen that day in any part of the neighborhood. Fergus, however, whilst the widow was keeping watch outside, contrived to get on his old disguise once more, after which he proceeded in the direction of his place of refuge for the night. On crossing the fields, however, towards the wild and lonely road, which was at no great distance from the cottage, he met Tom approaching it, at his usual sling-trot pace.

"Is that Tom?" said he—"tall Tom?"

"Hicco, hicco!" replied Tom, quite gratified with the compliment. "You be tall, too—not as tall as Tom dongh. Tom got bully dinner to-day, and bully sleep in de barn, and bully supper, but wasn't sleepy den—hicco, hicco."

"Well, Tom, what news about what you know?"

"In toder house," replied Tom; "him sleeps in Peg Finigan's sometimes, and sometimes in toder again—dat is, Mary Mahon's. Him's afeared o' something—hard him say so, sure, to ould Peg."

"Well, Tom, if you will keep your eye on him, so as that you can let us know where to find him, we'll engage to give you a bully dinner every day, and a bully supper every night of your life, and a swig of stout ale to wash it down, with plenty of straw to sleep on, and a winnow-cloth and lots of sacks to keep you as warm and cosey as a winter hob. You know where to find me every evenin' after dusk, Tom, and when you come with good news, you'll be a made man; and, listen, Tom, it'll make you a foot taller, and who knows, man alive, but we may show you for a giant, now."

"Hicco, hicco!" said Tom; "dat great—never mind; me catch him for you. A giant!—oh, gorramarcy!— a giant!—hicco!—gorramarcy!" and with these words he darted off in some different direction, whilst Fergus went to his usual place of rest for the night.

It would seem by the Red Rapparee's movements at this time as if he entertained some vague suspicions of awakened justice, notwithstanding the assurances of safety previously communicated to him by Sir Robert Whitecraft. Indeed, it is not impossible that even the other individuals who had distinguished themselves under that zealous baronet might, in their conversations with each other, have enabled the Rapparee to get occasional glimpses of the new state of things which had just taken place, and that, in consequence, he shifted about a good deal, taking care never to sleep two nights in succession under the same roof. Be this as it may, the eye of Tom Steeple was on him, without the least possible suspicion on his part that he was under his *surveillance*.

CHAPTER XIV.

Reilly takes Service with Squire Folliard.

Reilly led a melancholy life after the departure of the pious bishop. A week, however, had elapsed, and he felt as if it had been half a year. His anxiety, however, either to see or hear from his *Cooleen Bawn* completely overcame him, and he resolved, at all events, to write to her; in the meantime, how was he to do this? There was no letter-paper in the farmer's house, nor any to be procured within miles, and, under these circumstances, he resolved to pay a visit to Mr. Brown. After some trouble he was admitted to the presence of that gentleman, who could scarcely satisfy himself of his identity; but, at length, he felt assured, and asked him into the study.

"My dear Reilly," said he, "I think you are infatuated. I thought you had been out of the country long before this. Why, in heaven's name, do you remain in Ireland, when you know the difficulty of escape? I have had, since I saw you last, two or three domiciliary visits from Whitecraft and his men, who searched my whole house and premises in a spirit of insolence that was most indelicate and offensive. Hastings and I have sent a memorial to the Lord Lieutenant, signed by some of the most respectable Protestant gentry in the country, in which we stated his wanton tyranny as well as his

oppression of his Majesty's subjects—harmless and loyal men, and whom he pursues with unsatiable vengeance, merely because they are Roman Catholics. I certainly do not expect that our memorial will be attended to by this Administration. There is a report, however, that the present Ministry will soon go out, and be succeeded by one more liberal."

"Well," replied Reilly, "since I saw you last I have had some narrow escapes; but I think it would be difficult to know me in my present disguise."

"I grant that," said Mr. Brown, "but then is there nothing to be apprehended from treachery?"

"I think not," replied the other. "There is only the farmer and his family, with whom the bishop and I harbored, who are aware of my disguise, and to that number I must now add yourself."

"Well," replied Mr. Brown, smiling, "I do not think you have much to apprehend from me."

"No," said Reilly, "you have given me too many substantial proofs of your confidence for that. But I wish to write a letter; and I have neither pen, ink, nor paper; will you be good enough to lend me the use of your study for a few minutes, and your writing materials?"

The excellent clergyman immediately conducted him to the study, and placed the materials before him with his own hands, after which he left the room. Reilly then sat down, and penned the following letter to his dear *Cooleen Bawn:*

"I am now thoroughly disguised, indeed so effectually that my nearest and dearest friends could not know me; nay, I question whether even you yourself would, except by the keen intuition of affection, which is said to penetrate all disguises, unless those of falsehood and hypocrisy. These, however, are disguises I have never worn, nor ever shall wear—either to you or any human being. I had intended to go to the Continent until this storm of persecution might blow over; but on reflection I changed my purpose, for I could not leave you to run the risk of being ensnared in the subtle and treacherous policy of *that* villain. It is my intention to visit your father's house and to see you if I can. You need not, for the sake of my safety, object to this, because no one can know me. The description of my dress, though somewhat undignified, I must give you. In the first place, then, I am, to all outward appearance, as rude-looking a country lout as ever you looked upon. My disguise consists, first, of a pair of brogues embroidered with clouts, or what is vulgarly denominated patches, out of the point of one of which — that of the right foot — nearly half my toe visibly projects. The stockings are coarse Connemaras, with sufficient air-holes, both in feet and legs, to admit the pure atmosphere, and strengthen the muscular system. My small-clothes are corduroys, bought from a hard-working laborer, with a large patch upon each knee. A tailor, however, has promised to get some buttons for them and sew them on. The waistcoat is altogether indescribable; because, as its materials seem to have been rescued, that is, stolen, from all the scarecrows in the country, I am unable to come at the first fabric. The coat itself is also beautifully variegated, its patches consisting of all the colors of the rainbow, with two or three dozen that never appeared in that beautiful phenomenon. But what shall I say of the pendiment, or caubeen, which is a perfect gem of its kind? The villain who wore it, I have been told by the person who acted as factor for me in its purchase, was one of the most quarrelsome rascals in Ireland, and seldom went without a black eye or a broken pate. This, I suppose, accounts for the droop in the leaf, which covers the left eye so completely, as well as for the ventilator, which so admirably refreshes the head, and allows the rain to come in so abundantly to cool it. I cannot help reflecting, however, on the fate of those who have nothing better to wear, and of the hard condition which dooms them to it. And now, my beloved *Cooleen Bawn*, whilst I have thus endeavored to make you smile, I assure you I have exaggerated very little. This dress, you know, is precisely that of a wretched Connaught-man looking for employment The woman, who will, through our confidant. Lanigan, deliver this to you, is a poor faithful creature, a pensioner of mine, who may be trusted. Appoint through her a day and hour when, as a man seeking for labor, I will stand at the hall-door. I am quite satisfied that neither your father, nor the *villain*, will know me from Adam. The woman who is to bring this will call on the second day after its delivery, and I shall be guided by whatever message you may send me. On one thing, however, I am determined, which is, that if it should cost me my life, I will prevent the meditated marriage between you and him. Sooner than such an event should take place, I would put a pistol to his head and blow his guilty soul into that perdition which awaits it. Don't write; let your message be verbal, and destroy this."

On going to widow Buckley's, he learned —after some trouble in identifying himself — that she had several visits from Sir Robert

and his men, at all hours, both by night and day. He therefore hastily gave her the necessary instructions how to act, and, above all things, to ask to see Lanigan, and, if possible, to bring some eggs or chickens for sale, which fact, he said, would give a color to her appearance there, and prevent the possibility of any suspicion. Having placed the letter in her keeping, together with some silver to enable her to purchase either the eggs or the chickens, in case she had them not herself, he then returned to the farmer's, where he remained quietly and without disturbance of any kind until the third day, when widow Buckley made her appearance. He brought her out to the garden, because in discussing matters connected with his *Cooleen Bawn* he did not wish that even the farmer's family should be auditors—although we may say here that not only were the loves of Willy Reilly and *Cooleen Bawn* known to the farmer and his family, but also to the whole country, and, indeed, through the medium of ballads, to the greater portion of the kingdom.

"Well, Mrs. Buckley," said he, "did you see her?"

"Oh, bad scran to you, Mr. Reilly! you're the very sarra among the girls when you could persuade that lovely creature to fall in love with you—and you a Catholic, an' her a Protestant! May I never, if I think there's her aquil out o' heaven! Devil an angel I think in it could hould a candle to her for beauty and figure. She only wants the wings, sir—for they say that all the angels have wings; and upon my conscience if she had them I know the man she'd fly to."

"But what happened, Mrs. Buckley?"

"Why, I sould some chickens and eggs to the cook, who at wanst knew me, because I had often sould him chickens and eggs before. He came up to the hall-door, and—'Well, Mrs. Buckley,' says he, 'what's the news?' '*Be dhe husth*,' says I, 'before I sell you the chickens, let me ax is the *Cooleen Bawn* at home?' 'She is,' says he, lookin' me sharp and straight in the face; 'do you want her?' 'I would like to see her,' says I, 'for a minute or two.' 'Ay,' says he, back agin to me, 'you have a message—and you know besides that *she* never buys chickens; that's my business.' 'But,' says I, back agin, 'I was tould by *him* that you were faithful, and could be depinded on.' 'Ay,' says he; 'but I thought he had left the counthry.' 'Troth, then,' says I, 'he's to the fore still, and won't lave the counthry till he sees *her* wanst more, at all events.' 'Have you a letther?' '*Bethershin*,' says I, 'could you let me see her; for he tould me to say to her that she is not to indite letthers to him, for fraid of discovery.' 'Well,' says he, 'as the master's at home, I'll have some difficulty in spakin' to her. Devil a move she gives but he watches; and we got a new servant the other day, and devil a thing she is but a spy from Sir Robert Whitecraft, and some people say that her master and she forgot the Gospel between them. Indeed I believe *that's* pretty well known; and isn't he a horrid villain to send such a vagabone to attend and be about the very woman that he expects to be his own wife?'"

"Don't be so particular in your descriptions, Mrs. Buckley," said Reilly. "Did you see the *Cooleen Bawn?*"

"Look at that," she replied, opening her hand, and showing him a golden guinea—"don't you know by that that I seen her? but you must let me go on my own way. 'Well,' says Lanigan, the cook, 'I must go and see what I can do.' He then went upstairs, and contrived to give her a hint, and that was enough. 'The Lord bless us, Mr. Reilly, what won't love do? This girl—as Lanigan tould me—that the villain Whitecraft had sent as a spy upon her actions, was desired to go to her wardrobe, to pick out from among her beautiful dresses one that she had promised her as a present some days before. The cook had this from the girl herself, who was the sarra for dress; but, anyhow, while the *she* spy was tumbling about *Cooleen Bawn's* dresses, the darlin' herself whipped downstairs, and coming to me says, 'The cook tells me you have a message for me.' Jist at this moment, and after she had slipped the letter into her bosom, her father turns a corner round the garden, and seeing his daughter, which was a very unusual thing, in conversation with a person like myself, he took the alarm at once. 'How, Helen? who is this you are speaking to? No go-between, I hope? Who are you, you blasted old she-whelp?' 'I am no more a she-whelp than you are.' 'Then maybe you are a *he* one in disguise. What brought you here?' 'Here! I came to sell my eggs and my chickens, as I done for years.' '*Your* eggs and *your* chickens! curse you, you old Jezebel, did *you* ever lay the eggs or hatch the chickens? And if you did, why not produce the old cock himself, in proof of the truth of what you say? I'll have you searched, though, in spite of your eggs and chickens. Here,' he said to one of the footmen, who was passing through the hall—'here, Jones, send up Lanigan, till we see whether he knows this old faggot, who has the assurance to tell me that she lays eggs and hatches chickens.' When Lanigan came up again, he looked at me as at an old acquaintance, which, in point of fact, we were.

'Why, your honor,' said he, 'this is a poor, honest creature that has been selling us eggs and chickens for many years.' 'She wouldn't be a go-between, Lanigan — eh? What's your name, you old faggot—eh?' 'My name is Scrahag, your honor,' says I, 'one of the Scrahags of Ballycumpiatee—an honest and dacint family, sir; but if your honor would buy the eggs, at any rate, and hatch them yourself,' says I to him" (for she had a large stock of Irish humor), "'you know, sir, you could have the chickens at first cost.' 'Ha, ha, ha,' and the squire laughed till he nearly split his sides; 'by —— I'm hit'—God pardon me for repeatin' his oaths. 'Here, Lanigan, bring her down to the kitchen, and give her a fog meal.' 'I understand you, sir,' said Lanigan, smiling at him. 'Yes, Lanigan, give her a cargo of the best in the pantry. She's a shrewd and comical old blade,' said he; 'give her a kegful of beef or mutton, or both, and a good swill of ale or porter, or whatever she prefers. Curse me, but I give the old whelp credit for the hit she gave me. Pay her, besides, whatever she asks for her eggs and chickens. Here, you bitter old randle-tree, there are three thirteens for you; and if you will go down to the kitchen with the cook, he will give you a regular skinful.' The cook, knowing that the *Cooleen Bawn* wished to send some message back to you, sir, brought me down, and gave me not only plenty to ait and drink, but stuffed the praskeen that I had carried the eggs and chickens in with as much cold meat and bread as it could contain."

"Well, but did you not see her afterwards? and did she send no message?"

"Only two or three words; the day afther to-morrow, at two o'clock, come to look for labor, and she will contrive to see you."

This was enough, and Reilly did not allow his ambassadress to leave him without substantial marks of *his* bounty also.

When the old squire went to his study, he desired the gardener to be sent for, and when that individual entered, he found his master in a towering passion.

"What is the reason, Malcomson," said he, "that the garden is in such a shameful state? I declare to God it is scandalous."

"Ou, your honor," replied Malcomson, who was a Scotchman, "e'en because you will not allow me an under gerdener. No one man could manage your gerden, and it canna be managed without some clever chiel, what understands the sceence."

"The what?"

"The sceence, your honor."

"Why, confound you, sir, what science is necessary in gardening?"

"I tell your honor that the management of a gerden requires baith skeel and knowledge, and feelosophy."

"Why, confound you, sir, again, what kind of doctrine is this?"

"It's vera true doctrine, sir. You have large and spacious green-hooses, and I wad want some one to assist me wha understands buttany."

"Buttony—Buttony—why, confound you, sirra, send for a tailor, then, for he understands buttony."

"I see your honor is detarmined to indulge in a jocular spirit the day. The truth is, your honor, I hae no men to assist me but common laborers, who are athegether ignorant of gerdening; now, if I had a man who could direct the operations—"

"Operations! curse your Scotch impudence, do you think yourself a general?"

"Na, na, sir; but a better man; and I tell ye that I winna remain in your service unless I get an assistant; and I say that, if it were-na for the aid of Miss Folliard, I wouldna been able to keep the green-hoose e'en in its present state. She has trailed the passion-flower wi' her ain hands until it is flourishing. Then she has a beautiful little plot of forget-me-nots; but, above a', it wad do your honor's heart gude to see the beautiful bed she has of sweet-william and love-lies-bleeding."

"Ay, ay! love-lies-bleeding; no doubt but she'll take care of that. Well, go and get an under-gardener wherever you can, and let my garden be, at all events, such as a stranger can walk through, and such as becomes my name and property. Engage such a person, give him whatever you consider fair wages, and the house-steward will pay him weekly. These are matters I can't trouble myself with now—I have other things to think of."

On the day mentioned in *Cooleen Bawn's* message, Reilly hazarded a visit to the squire's house, and after giving a single knock, begged to see the cook. The porter having looked at him with the usual contempt which menials of his class bestow upon poor persons, went down to the kitchen with a good deal of reluctance, and told the cook, with a grin, that one of his relations wanted to see him.

"Well," replied Lanigan, who had been made aware of the intended visit, "it's wonderful, in these hard times, the number of respectable but reduced families that's goin' about. What kind of a gentleman is he, John? because I am very busy now. To be sure there is a great deal of cold vittles left, that would be lost and destroyed if we didn't give them to the poor; and you know the masther, who is a charitable man, desired us

to do so. I'll go up and see what the poor devil wants."

He accordingly went up to the hall-door, and found Reilly there. It was to no purpose that he had been already apprised of his disguise—it was so complete that he did not know him—his beard was half an inch long; and, besides, Reilly, knowing the risk he ran in this daring adventure, had discolored his complexion with some wash that gave it the tinge of a mulatto. The cook was thunderstruck.

"Well, my good fellow," said he, not in the slightest degree recognizing him, "what do you want with me?"

"Lanigan," replied Reilly, "don't you know me?"

"Know you! how the devil should I know you?—I never saw you before. What do you want with me?"

"Lanigan," whispered the other, "did you never hear of Willy Reilly?"

"Yes, I did; have you any message from him?"

"I am the man myself," said Reilly, "but you don't know me, I am so completely disguised. Don't you know my voice?"

"Merciful Father!" said the cook, "I'm in a doldrum; can I be sure that you don't come from Sir Robert Whitecraft, the notorious blackguard?"

"Lanigan, *I am* Willy Reilly: my voice ought to tell you so; but I wish to see and speak with my dear *Cooleen Bawn*."

"Oh, my God, sir!" replied Lanigan, "but this love makes strange transmigrations. She won't know you, sir."

"Make your mind easy on that point," replied Reilly; "only let her know that I am here."

"Come down to the kitchen then, sir, and I shall put you into the servants' hall, which branches off it. It is entered, besides, by a different door from that of the kitchen, and while you stay there—and you can pass into it without going through the kitchen—I will try to let her know where you are. She has at present a maid who was sent by Sir Robert Whitecraft, and she is nothing else than a spy; but it'll go hard, or I'll baffle her."

He accordingly placed Reilly in the servants' hall, and on his way to the drawing-room met Miss Folliard going to her own apartment, which commanded a view of the front of the house. He instantly communicated to her the fact of Reilly's presence in the servants' hall; "but," added Lanigan, "you won't know him—his own mother, if she was livin', wouldn't know a bone in his body."

"Oh!" she replied, whilst her eyes flashed fearfully, in fact, in a manner that startled the cook—"oh! if he is there I shall soon know him. He has a voice, I think—he has a voice! Has he not, Lanigan?"

"Yes, ma'am," replied Lanigan, "he has a voice, and a heart too."

"Oh! yes, yes," she said, "I must go to him; they want to marry me to that monster—to that bigot and persecutor, on this very day month; but, Lanigan, it shall never be—death a thousand times sooner than such a union. If they attempt to bind us, death shall cut the link asunder—that I promise you, Lanigan. But I must go to him—I must go to him."

She ran down the stairs as she spoke, and Lanigan, having looked after her, seemed deeply concerned.

"My God!" he exclaimed, "what will become of that sweet girl if she is forced to marry that wealthy scoundrel? I declare to my God I hardly think she is this moment in her proper senses. There's a fire in her eyes; and something in her manner, that I never observed before. At all events, I have locked the door that opens from the kitchen into the servants' hall, so that they cannot be interrupted from that quarter."

When the *Cooleen Bawn* entered, she shrunk back instinctively. The disguise was so complete that she could not impose even on her imagination or her senses. The complexion was different, in fact, quite sallow; the beard long, and the costume such as we have described it. There was, in fact, something extremely ludicrous in the meeting. Here was an elegant and beautiful young woman of fashion, almost ready, as it were, to throw herself in the arms of a common pauper, with a beard upon him better than half an inch long. As it was, she stopped suddenly and retreated a step or two, saying, as she did so:

"This must be some mistake. Who are you?"

"Helen!"

"Reilly! oh, that voice has set all right. But, my God, who could know you in this disguise?"

They approached, and Reilly, seizing her hand, said, "I will shake hands with you: but until this disguise is off I would consider it sacrilege to approach nearer to your person."

"No disguise can ever shut you out from my heart, dear Reilly; but what is to be done? I have discovered, by one of my maids, who overheard my father say, in a short soliloquy—'Well, thank God, she'll be Sir Robert's wife within a month, and then my mind will be easy at last.' Oh! I'm glad you did not leave this country. But, as I said, what is to be done? What will become of us?"

"Under our peculiar circumstances," replied Reilly, "the question cannot, for the present at least, be answered. As for leaving the country, I might easily have done it, but I could not think of leaving you to the snares and windings of that villain. I declare solemnly, I would rather die than witness a union between you and him."

"But what, think you, should I feel? You would be only a spectator of the sacrifice, whereas I should be the victim."

"Do not be cast down, my love; whilst I have life, and a strong arm, it shall never be. Before I go I shall make arrangements with Lanigan when and where to see you again."

"It will be a matter of some difficulty," she replied "for I am now under the strictest surveillance. I am told, and I feel it, that Whitecraft has placed a spy upon all my motions."

"How is that?" inquired Reilly. "Are you not under the protection of your father, who, when occasion is necessary, has both pride and spirit?"

"But my poor credulous father is, notwithstanding, easily imposed on. I know not exactly the particulars," replied the lovely girl, "but I can easily suspect them. My father it was, certainly, who discharged my last maid, Ellen Connor, because, he said, he did not like her, and because, he added, he would put a better and a more trustworthy one in her place. I cannot move that she is not either with me or after me; nay, I cannot write a note that she does not immediately acquaint papa, who is certain to stroll into my apartment and ask to see the contents of it, adding, 'Helen, when a young lady of rank and property forms a clandestine and disgraceful attachment it is time that her father should be on the lookout; so I will just take the liberty of throwing my eye over this little *billet-doux*.' I told him often that he was at liberty to inspect every line I should write, but that I thought that very few parents would express such want of confidence in their daughters, if, like me, the latter had deserved such confidence at their hands as I did at his."

"What is the name of your present maid?" asked Reilly, musing.

"Oh," replied Miss Folliard, "I have three maids altogether, but she has been installed as *our* maid. Her name is Eliza Herbert."

"A native of England, is she not? Eliza Herbert!" he exclaimed; "in the lowermost depths of perdition there is not such a villain. This Eliza Herbert is neither more nor less than one of his—but I will not pain your pure and delicate mind by mentioning at further length what she is and was to him. The clergyman of the parish, Mr. Brown, knows the whole circumstances. Se him at church, and get him to communicate them to your father. The fact is, this villain, who is at once cunning and parsimonious, had a double motive, each equally base and diabolical, in sending her here. In the first place, he wished, by getting her a good place, to make your father the unconscious means of rewarding her profligacy; and in the second of keeping her as a spy upon you."

A blush, resulting from her natural sense of delicacy, as well as from the deepest indignation at a man who did not scruple to place the woman whom he looked upon as almost immediately to become his wife, in the society of such a wretch—such a blush, we say, overspread her whole neck and face, and for about two minutes she shed bitter tears. But she felt the necessity of terminating their interview, from an apprehension that Miss Herbert, as she was called, on not finding her in the room, might institute a search, and in this she was not mistaken.

She had scarcely concluded when the shrill voice of Miss Herbert was heard, as she rushed rapidly down the stairs, screaming, "Oh, la! oh, dear me! oh, my goodness! Where, where—oh, bless me, did any one see Miss Folliard?"

Lanigan, however, had prepared for any thing like a surprise. He planted himself, as a sentinel, at the foot of the stairs, and the moment he heard the alarm of Miss Herbert on her way down, he met her half way up, after having given a loud significant cough.

"Oh, cook, have you seen Miss Folliard? I can't find her in the house!"

"Is her father in his study, Miss Herbert? because I want to see him; I'm afeared there's a screw loose. I did see Miss Folliard; she went out a few minutes ago—indeed she rather stole out towards the garden, and, I tell you the truth, she had a condemned look of her own. Try the garden, and if you don't find her there, go to the back gate, which you'll be apt to find open."

"Oh, I will, I will; thank you, cook. I'm certain it's an elopement."

"Indeed, I wouldn't be surprised to find," replied Lanigan, "that she is with Reilly this moment; any way you haven't a minute to lose."

She started towards the garden, which she ran over and over; and there we shall leave her, executing the fool's errand upon which Lanigan had sent her. "Now," said he, going in, "the coast's clear; I have sent that impertinent jade out to the garden, and as the back gate is open—the gardener's men are wheeling out the rubbish—and they are now at dinner—I say, as the back gate is

open, it's ten to one but she'll scour the country. Now, Miss Folliard, go immediately to your room ; as for this poor man, I will take care of him."

"Most sincerely do I thank you, Lanigan; he will arrange with you when and where to see me again. Farewell, Reilly—farewell ; rely upon my constancy ;" and so they parted, Reilly to the kitchen, and the *Coolcen Bawn* to her own room.

"Come into the pantry, poor man," said good-natured Lanigan, addressing our hero, "till I give you something to eat and drink."

"Many thanks to you, sir," replied he ; "troth and whaix, I didn't taste a morshel for the last fwhour—hugh—hugh—and twenty hours ; and sure, sir, it's this cough that's killin' me by inches."

A thought struck Lanigan, who had been also spoken to by the gardener, about half an hour before, to know if he could tell him where he might have any chance of finding an assistant. At all events they went into the pantry, when Lanigan, after having pulled to the door, to prevent their conversation from being overheard, disclosed a project, which had just entered his head, of procuring Reilly employment in the garden. Here it was arranged between them that the latter, who was both a good botanist and florist, should be recommended to the gardener as an assistant. To be sure, his dress and appearance were both decidedly against him ; but still they relied upon the knowledge which Reilly confidently assured the cook that he possessed. After leaving the pantry with Lanigan, whom our hero thanked in a thorough brogue, the former called after him, as he was going away :

"Come here again, my good man."

"What is it, shir? may God bless you anyhow, for your charity to the—hugh—hugh—ugh—to the poor man. Oh, then, but it's no wondher for you all to be fat and rosy upon sich beautiful vittles as you gave to me, shir. What is it, achora? and may the Lord mark you with grace!"

"Would you take employment from the master, his honor Mr. Folliard, if you got it?"

"Arrah now, shir, you gave me my skinful of what was gud; but don't be makin' fwhun o' me after. Would I take employment, achora?—ay, but where would I get it?"

"Could you work in a garden? Do you know any thing about plants or flowers?"

"Oh thin, that I may never sup sarra (sorrow), but that's just what I'm fwhit fwhor."

"I'm afeared this scoundrel is but an imposthor afther all," whispered Lanigan to the other servants ; "but in ordher to make sure, we'll try him. I say—what's this your name is?"

"Solvesther M'Bethershin, shir."

"Well, now, would you have any objection to come with me to the garden and see the gardener? But hould, here he is. Mr. Malcomson," continued Lanigan, "here is a poor man, who says he understands plants and flowers, and weeds of that kind."

"Speak wi' reverence, Mr. Lanigan, o' the art o' gerdening. Dinna ye ken that the founder o' the hail human race was a gerdener?—Hout awa, mon ; speak o' it wi' respeck."

"Upon my conscience," replied Lanigan, "whether he was a good gardener or not is more than I know ; but one thing I *do* know, that he didn't hould his situation long, and mismanaged his orchard disgracefully ; and, indeed, like many more of his tribe, he got his walkin' papers in double quick—was dismissed without a characther—ay, and his wife, like many another gardener's wife, got a habit of stalin' the apples. However, I wish Mr. Malcomson, that you, who *do* undherstand gardenin', would thry this fellow, because I want to know whether he's an imposthor or not."

"Weel," replied Malcomson, "I dinna care if I do. We'll soon find that out. Come wi' me and Maisther Lanigan here, and we'll see what you ken about the scientific profession."

They accordingly went to the garden, and it is unnecessary to say that Reilly not only bore the examination well, but proved himself by far the better botanist of the two. He tempered his answers, however, in such a way as not to allow the gardener's vanity to be hurt, in which case he feared that he might have little chance of being engaged.

CHAPTER XV.

More of Whitecraft's Plots and Pranks.

On the Sunday following, Miss Folliard, as was her usual custom, attended divine service at her parish church, accompanied by the virtuous Miss Herbert, who scarcely ever let her for a moment out of her sight, and, in fact, added grievously to the misery of her life. After service had been concluded, she waited until Mr. Brown had descended from the pulpit, when she accosted him, and expressed a wish to have some private conversation with him in the vestry-room. To this room they were about to

proceed, when Miss Herbert advanced with an evident intention of accompanying them.

"Mr. Brown," said the *Cooleen Bawn*, looking at him significantly, "I wish that our interview should be private."

"Certainly, my dear Miss Folliard, and so it shall be. Pray, who is this lady?"

"I am forced, sir, to call her my maid."

Mr. Brown was startled a good deal, not only at the words, but the tone in which they were uttered.

"Madam," said he, "you will please to remain here until your mistress shall return to you, or, if you wish, you can amuse yourself by reading the inscriptions on the tombstones."

"Oh, but I have been ordered," replied Miss Herbert, "by her father and another gentleman, not to let her out of my sight."

Mr. Brown, understanding that something was wrong, now looked at her more closely, after which, with a withering frown, he said,

"I think I know you, madam, and I am very sorry to hear that you are an attendant upon this amiable lady. Remain where you are, and don't attempt to intrude yourself as an ear-witness to any communication Miss Folliard may have to make to me."

The profligate creature and unprincipled spy bridled, looked disdain and bitterness at the amiable clergyman, who, accompanied by our heroine, retired to the vestry. It is unnecessary to detail their conversation, which was sustained by the *Cooleen Bawn* with bitter tears. It is enough to say that the good and pious minister, though not aware until then that Miss Herbert had, by the scoundrel baronet, been intruded into Squire Folliard's family, was yet acquainted, from peculiar sources, with the nature of the immoral relation in which she stood to that hypocrite. He felt shocked beyond belief, and assured the weeping girl that he would call the next day and disclose the treacherous design to her father, who, he said, could not possibly have been aware of the wretch's character when he admitted her into his family. They then parted, and our heroine was obliged to take this vile creature into the carriage with her home. On their return, Miss Herbert began to display at once the malignity of her disposition, and the volubility of her tongue, in a fierce attack upon, what she termed, the ungentlemanly conduct of Mr. Brown. To all she said, however, Helen uttered not one syllable of reply. She neither looked at her nor noticed her, but sat in profound silence, not, however, without a distracted mind and breaking heart.

On the next day the squire took a fancy to look at the state of his garden, and, having got his hat and cane, he sallied out to observe how matters were going on, now that Mr. Malcomson had got an assistant, whom, by the way, he had not yet seen.

"Now, Malcomson," said he, "as you have found an assistant, I hope you will soon bring my garden into decent trim. What kind of a chap is he, and how did you come by him?"

"Saul, your honor," replied Malcomson, "he's a divilish clever chiel, and vara weel acquent wi' our noble profession."

"Confound yourself and your noble profession! I think every Scotch gardener of you believes himself a gentleman, simply because he can nail a few stripes of old blanket against a wall. How did you come by this fellow, I say?"

"Ou, just through Lanigan, the cook, your honor."

"Did Lanigan know him?"

"Hout, no, your honor—it was an act o' charity like."

"Ay, ay, Lanigan's a kind-hearted old fool, and that's just like him; but, in the meantime, let me see this chap."

"There he is, your honor, trimming, and taking care of that bed of 'love-lies-bleeding.'"

"Ay, ay; I dare say my daughter set him to that task."

"Na, na, sir. The young leddy hasna seen him yet, nor hasna been in the gerden for the last week."

"Why, confound it, Malcomson, that fellow's more like a beggarman than a gardener."

"Saul, but he's a capital hand for a' that. Your honor's no' to tak the beuk by the cover. To be sure he's awfully vulgar, but, ma faith, he has a richt gude knowledgeable apprehension o' buttany and gerdening in generhal."

The squire then approached our undergardener, and accosted him,

"Well, my good fellow, so you understand gardening?"

"A little, your haner," replied the other, respectfully touching his hat, or caubeen rather.

"Are you a native of this neighborhood?"

"No, your haner. I'm fwaither up—from Westport, your haner."

"Who were you engaged with last?"

"I wasn't engaged, shir—it was only job-work I was able to do—the health wasn't gud wid me."

"Have you no better clothes than these?"

"You see all that I have on me, shir."

"Well, come, I'll give you the price of a suit rather than see such a scarecrow in my garden."

"I couldn't take it, shir."

"The devil you couldn't! Why not, man?"

"Bekaise, shir, I'm under pinance."

"Well, why don't you shave?"

"I can't, shir, for de same raison."

"Pooh, pooh! what the devil did you do that they put such a penance on you."

"Why, I runned away wit' a young woman, shir."

"Upon my soul you're a devilish likely fellow to run away with a young woman, and a capital taste she must have had to go with you; but perhaps you took her away by violence, eh?"

"No, shir; she was willin' enough to come; but her fadher wouldn't consint, and so we made off wit' ourselves."

This was a topic on which the squire, for obvious reasons, did not like to press him. It was in fact a sore subject, and, accordingly, he changed it.

"I suppose you have been about the country a good deal?"

"I have, indeed, your haner."

"Did you ever happen to hear of, or to meet with, a person called Reilly?"

"Often, shir; met many o' dem."

"Oh, but I mean the scoundrel called Willy Reilly."

"Is dat him dat left the country, shir?"

"Why, how do you know that he has left the country?"

"I don't know myself, shir; but dat de people does be sayin' it. Dey say dat himself and wan of our bishops went to France togeder."

The squire seemed to breathe more freely as he said, in a low soliloquy, "I'm devilish glad of it; for, after all, it would go against my heart to hang the fellow. "Well," he said aloud, "so he's gone to France?"

"So de people does be sayin, shir."

"Well, tell me—do you know a gentleman called Sir Robert Whitecraft?"

"Is dat him, shir, dat keeps de misses privately?"

"How do you know that he keeps misses privately?"

"Fwhy, shir, dey say his last one was a Miss Herbert, and dat she had a young one by him, and dat she was an Englishwoman. It isn't ginerally known, I believe, shir, but dey do be sayin' dat she was brought to bed in de cottage of some bad woman named Mary Mahon, dat does be on de lookout to get sweethearts for him."

"There's five thirteens for you, and I wish to God, my good fellow, that you would allow yourself to be put in better feathers."

"Oh, I expect my pinance will be out before a mont', shir; but, until den, I couldn't take any money."

"Malcomson," said he to the gardener, "I think that fellow's a half fool. I offered him a crown, and also said I would get him a suit of clothes, and he would not take either; but talked about some silly penance he was undergoing."

"Saul, then, your honor, he may be a fule in ither things, but de'il a ane of him's a fule in the sceence o' buttany. As to that penance, it's just some Papistrical nonsense he has gotten into his head—de'il hae't mair; but sure they're a' full o't—a' o' the same graft, an' a bad one I fear it is."

"Well, I believe so, Malcomson, I believe so. However, if the unfortunate fool is clever, give him good wages."

"Saul, your honor, I'll do him justice; only I think that, anent that penance he speaks o', the hail Papish population, bad as we think them, are suffering penance eneuch, one way or tither. It disna' beseem a Protestant—that is, a prelatic Government—to persecute ony portion o' Christian people on account o' their religion. We have felt and kenned that in Scotland, sairly. I'm no freend to persecution, in ony shape. But, as to this chiel, I ken naething aboot him, but that he is a gude buttanist. Hout, your honor, to be sure I'll gi'e him a fair wage for his skeel and labor."

Malcomson, who was what we have often met, a pedant gardener, saw, however, that the squire's mind was disturbed. In the short conversation which they had, he spoke abruptly, and with a flushed countenance; but he was too shrewd to ask him why he seemed so. It was not, he knew, his business to do so; and as the squire left the garden, to pass into the house, he looked after him, and exclaimed to himself, "my certie, there's a bee in that man's bonnet."

On going to the drawing-room, the squire found Mr. Brown there, and Helen in tears.

"How!" he exclaimed, "what is this? Helen crying! Why, what's the matter, my child? Brown, have you been scolding her, or reading her a homily to teach her repentance. Confound me, but I know it would teach her patience, at all events. What *is* the matter?"

"My dear Miss Folliard," said the clergyman, "if you will have the goodness to withdraw, I will explain this shocking business to your father."

"Shocking business! Why, in God's name, Brown, what has happened? And why is my daughter in tears, I ask again?"

Helen now left the drawing-room, and Mr. Brown replied:

"Sir, a circumstance which, for baseness and diabolical iniquity, is unparalleled in civilized society. I could not pollute your

daughter's ears by reciting it in her presence, and besides she is already aware of it."

"Ay, but what is it? Confound you, don't keep me on tenter hooks."

"I shall not do so long, my dear friend. Who do you imagine your daughter's maid—I mean that female attendant upon your pure-minded and virtuous child—is?"

"Faith, go ask Sir Robert Whitecraft. It was he who recommended her; for, on hearing that the maid she had, Ellen Connor, was a Papist, he said he felt uneasy lest she might prevail on my daughter to turn Catholic, and marry Reilly."

"But do you not know who the young woman that is about your daughter's person is? You are, however, a father who loves your child, and I need not ask such a question. Then, sir, I will tell you who she is. Sir, she is one of Sir Robert Whitecraft's cast-off mistresses—a profligate wanton, who has had a child by him."

The fiery old squire had been walking to and fro the room, in a state of considerable agitation before—his mind already charged with the same intelligence, as he had heard it from the gardener (Reilly). He now threw himself into a chair, and putting his hands before his face, muttered out between his fingers—"D—n seize the villain! It is true, then. Well, never mind, I'll demand satisfaction for this insult; I am not too old to pull a trigger, or give a thrust yet; but then the cowardly hypocrite won't fight. When he has a set of military at his back, and a parcel of unarmed peasants before him, or an unfortunate priest or two, why, he's a dare devil—Hector was nothing to him; no, confound me, nor mad Tom Simpson, that wears a sword on each side, and a double case of pistols, to frighten the bailiffs. The scoundrel of hell!—to impose on me, and insult my child!"

"Mr. Folliard," observed the clergyman calmly, "I can indeed scarcely blame your indignation; it is natural; but, at the same time, it is useless and unavailable. Be cool, and restrain your temper. Of course, you could not think of bestowing your daughter, in marriage, upon this man."

"I tell you what, Brown—I tell you what, my dear friend—let the devil, Satan, Beelzebub, or whatever you call him from the pulpit—I say, let him come here any time he pleases, in his holiday hoofs and horns, tail and all, and he shall have her sooner than Whitecraft."

Mr. Brown could not help smiling, whilst he said:

"Of course, you will instantly dismiss this abandoned creature."

He started up and exclaimed, "Cog's 'ounds, what am I about?" He instantly rang the bell, and a footman attended. "John, desire that wench Herbert to come here."

"Do you mean Miss Herbert, sir?"

"I do—*Miss* Herbert—egad, you've hit it; be quick, sirra."

John bowed and withdrew, and in a few minutes Miss Herbert entered.

"Miss Herbert," said the squire, "leave this house as fast as the devil can drive you; and he has driven you to some purpose before now; ay, and, I dare say, will again. I say, then, as fast as he can drive you, pack up your luggage, and begone about your business. I'll just give you ten minutes to disappear."

"What's all this about, master?"

"Master!—why, curse your brazen impudence, how dare you call me master? Begone, you jade of perdition."

"No more a jade of perdition, sir, than you are; nor I shan't begone till I gets a quarter's wages—I tell you that."

"You shall get whatever's coming to you; not another penny. The house-steward will pay you—begone, I say!"

"No, sir, I shan't begone till I gets a quarter's salary in full. You broke your agreement with me, wich is wat no man as is a gentleman would do; and you are puttin' me away, too, without no cause."

"Cause, you vagabond! you'll find the cause squalling, I suppose, in Mary Mahon's cottage, somewhere near Sir Robert Whitecraft's; and when you see him, tell him I have a crow to pluck with him. Off, I say."

"Oh, I suppose you mean the love-child I had by him—ha, he! is that all? But I never had a hankerin' after a rebel and a Papist, which is far worser; and I now tell you you're no gentleman, you nasty old Hirish squire. You brought me here, and Sir Robert sent me here, to watch your daughter. Now, what kind of a young lady must she be as requires watching? *I* was never watched; because as how I was well conducted, and nothing could ever be laid to my charge but a love-child."

"By the great Boyne," he exclaimed, running to the window and throwing up the sash—"yes, by the great Boyne, there is Tom Steeple, and if he doesn't bring you and the pump acquainted, I'm rather mistaken. Here, Tom, I have a job for you. Do you wish to earn a bully dinner, my boy?"

Miss Herbert, on hearing Tom's name mentioned, disappeared like lightning, and set about packing her things immediately. The steward, by his master's desire, paid her exactly what was due to her, which she

received without making a single observation. In truth, she entertained such a terror of Tom Steeple, who had been pointed out to her as a wild Irishman, not long caught in the mountains, that she stole out by the back way, and came, by making a circuit, out upon the road that led to Sir Robert Whitecraft's house, which she passed without entering, but went directly to Mary Mahon's, who had provided a nurse for her illegitimate child in the neighborhood. She had not been there long when she sent her trusty friend, Mary, to acquaint Sir Robert with what had happened. He was from home, engaged in an expedition of which we feel called upon to give some account to the reader.

At this period, when the persecution ran high against the Catholics, but with peculiar bitterness against their priesthood, it is but justice to a great number of the Protestant magistracy and gentry—nay, and many of the nobility besides—to state that their conduct was both liberal and generous to the unfortunate victims of those cruel laws. It is a well known fact that many Protestant justices of the peace were imprisoned for refusing to execute such oppressive edicts as had gone abroad through the country. Many of them resigned their commissions, and many more were deprived of them. Amongst the latter were several liberal noblemen—Protestants—who had sufficient courage to denounce the spirit in which the country was governed and depopulated at the same time. One of the latter—a nobleman of the highest rank and acquirements, and of the most amiable disposition, a warm friend to civil freedom, and a firm antagonist to persecution and oppression of every hue—this nobleman, we say, married a French lady of rank and fortune, who was a Catholic, and with whom he lived in the tenderest love, and the utmost domestic felicity. The lady being a Catholic, as we said, brought over with her, from France, a learned, pious, and venerable ecclesiastic, as her domestic chaplain and confessor. This man had been professor of divinity for several years in the college of Louvain; but having lost his health, he accepted a small living near the chateau of ——, the residence of Marquis De ——, in whose establishment he was domesticated as chaplain. In short, he accompanied Lord —— and his lady to Ireland, where he acted in the same capacity, but so far only as the lady was concerned; for, as we have already said, her husband, though a liberal man, was a firm but not a bigoted Protestant. This harmless old man, as was very natural, kept up a correspondence with several Irish and French clergymen, his friends, who, as he had done, held professorships in the same college. Many of the Irish clergymen, knowing the dearth of religious instruction which, in consequence of the severe state of the laws, then existed in Ireland, were naturally anxious to know the condition of the country, and whether or not any relaxation in their severity had taken place, with a hope that they might be able with safety to return to the mission here, and bestow spiritual aid and consolation to the suffering and necessarily neglected folds of their own persuasion. On this harmless and pious old man the eye of Hennessy rested. In point of fact he *set* him for Sir Robert Whitecraft, to whom he represented him as a spy from France, and an active agent of the Catholic priesthood, both here and on the Continent; in fact, an incendiary, who, feeling himself sheltered by the protection of the nobleman in question and his countess, was looked upon as a safe man with whom to hold correspondence. The *Abbé*, as they termed him, was in the habit, by his lordship's desire, and that of his lady, of attending the Catholic sick of his large estates, administering to them religious instruction, and the ordinance of their Church, at a time when they could obtain them from no other source. He also acted as their almoner, and distributed relief to the sick, the poor, and the distressed, and thus passed his pious, harmless, and inoffensive, but useful, life. Now all these circumstances were noted by Hennessy, who had been on the lookout, to make a present of this good old man to his new patron, Sir Robert. At length having discovered—by what means it is impossible to conjecture—that the *Abbé* was to go on the day in question to relieve a poor sick family, at about a distance of two miles from Castle ——, the intelligence was communicated by Hennessy to Sir Robert, who immediately set out for the place, attended by a party of his myrmidons, conducted to it by the Red Rapparee, who, as we have said, was now one of Whitecraft's band. There is often a stupid infatuation in villany which amounts to what they call in Scotland *fey*—that is, when a man goes on doggedly to commit some act of wickedness, or rush upon some impracticable enterprise, the danger and folly of which must be evident to every person but himself, and that it will end in the loss of his life. Sir Robert, however, had run a long and prosperous career of persecution—a career by which he enriched himself by the spoils he had torn, and the property he had wrested from his victims, generally under the sanction of Government, but very frequently under no other sanction than his own. At all events

the party, consisting of about thirty men, remained in a deep and narrow lane, surrounded by high whitethorn hedges, which prevented the horsemen—for they were all dragoons—from being noticed by the country people. Alas, for the poor *Abbé!* they had not remained there more than twenty minutes when he was seen approaching them, reading his breviary as he came along. They did not move, however, nor seem to notice him, until he had got into the midst of them, when they formed a circle round him, and the loud voice of Whitecraft commanded him to stand. The poor old priest closed his breviary, and looked around him; but he felt no alarm, because he was conscious of no offence, and imagined himself safe under the protection of a distinguished Protestant nobleman.

"Gentlemen," said he, calmly and meekly, but without fear, "what is the cause of this conduct towards an inoffensive old man? It is true I am a Catholic priest, but I am under the protection of the Marquis of ——. He is a Protestant nobleman, and I am sure the very mention of his name will satisfy you, that I cannot be the object either of your suspicion or your enmity."

"But, my dear sir," replied Sir Robert, "the nobleman you mention is a suspected man himself, and I have reported him as such to the Government. He is married to a Popish wife, and you are a seminary priest and harbored by her and her husband."

"But what is your object in stopping and surrounding me," asked the priest, "as if I were some public delinquent who had violated the laws? Allow me, sir, to pass, and prevent me at your peril; and permit me, before I proceed, to ask your name?" and the old man's eyes flashed with an indignant sense of the treatment he was receiving.

"Did you ever hear of Sir Robert Whitecraft?"

"The priest-hunter, the persecutor, the robber, the murderer? I did, with disgust, with horror, with execration. If you are he, I say to you that I am, as you see, an old man, and a priest, and have but one life; take it, you will anticipate my death only by a short period; but I look by the light of an innocent conscience into the future, and I now tell you that a woful and a terrible retribution is hanging over your head."

"In the meantime," said Sir Robert, very calmly, as he dismounted from his horse, which he desired one of the men to hold, "I have a warrant from Government to arrest you, and send you back again to your own country without delay. You are here as a spy, an incendiary, and must go on your travels forthwith. In this, I am acting as your friend and protector, and so is Government, who do not wish to be severe upon you, as you are not a natural subject. See, sir, here is another warrant for your arrest and imprisonment. The fact is, it was left to my own discretion, either to imprison you, or send you out of the country. Now, sir, from a principle of lenity, I am determined on the latter course."

"But," replied the priest, after casting his eye over both documents, "as I am conscious of no offence, either against your laws or your Government, I decline to fly like a criminal, and I will not; put me in prison, if you wish, but I certainly shall not criminate myself, knowing as I do that I am innocent. In the meantime, I request that you will accompany me to the castle of my patron, that I may acquaint him with the charges against me, and the cause of my being forced to leave his family for a time."

"No, sir," replied Whitecraft, "I cannot do so, unless I betray the trust which Government reposes in me. I cannot permit you to hold any intercourse whatever with your patron, as you call him, who is justly suspected of being a Papist at heart. Sir, you have been going abroad through the country, under pretence of administering consolation to the sick, and bestowing alms upon the poor; but the fact is, you have been stirring them up to sedition, if not to open rebellion. You must, therefore, come along with us, this instant. You proceed with us to Sligo, from whence we shall ship you off in a vessel bound for France, which vessel is commanded by a friend of mine, who will treat you kindly, for my sake. What shall we do for a horse for him?" he asked, looking at his men for information on that point.

"That, your honor, we'll provide in a crack," replied the Red Rapparee, looking up the road; "here comes Sterling, the gauger, very well mounted, and, by all the stills he ever seized, he must walk home upon shank's mare, if it was only to give him exercise and improve his appetite."

We need not detail this open robbery on the king's officer, and on the king's highway besides. It is enough to say that the Rapparee, confident of protection and impunity, with the connivance, although not by the express orders of the baronet, deprived the man of his horse, and, in a few minutes, the poor old priest was placed upon the saddle, and the whole cavalcade proceeded on their way to Sligo, the priest in the centre of them. Fortunately for Sir Robert's project, they reached the quay just as the vessel alluded to was about to sail; and as there was, at that period, no novelty in seeing a priest shipped out of the country, the loungers

about the place, whatever they might have thought in their hearts, seemed to take no particular notice of the transaction.

"Your honor," said the Red Rapparee, approaching and giving a military salute to his patron, "will you allow me to remain in town for an hour or two? I have a scheme in my head that may come to something. I will tell your honor what it is when I get home."

"Very well, O'Donnel," replied Sir Robert; "but I'd advise you not to ride late, if you can avoid it. You know that every man in your uniform is a mark for the vindictive resentment of these Popish rebels."

"Ah! maybe I don't know that, your honor; but you may take my word for it that I will lose little time."

He then rode down a by-street, very coolly, taking the gauger's horse along with him. The reader may remember the fable of the cat that had been transformed into a lady, and the unfortunate mouse. The Rapparee, whose original propensities were strong as ever, could not, for the soul of him, resist the temptation of selling the horse and pocketing the amount. He did so, and very deliberately proceeded home to his barracks, but took care to avoid any private communication with his patron for some days, lest he might question him as to what he had done with the animal.

In the meantime, this monstrous outrage upon an unoffending priest, who was a natural subject of France, perpetrated, as it was, in the open face of day, and witnessed by so many, could not, as the reader may expect, be long concealed. It soon reached the ears of the Marquis of —— and his lady, who were deeply distressed at the disappearance of their aged and revered friend. The Marquis, on satisfying himself of the truth of the report, did not, as might have been expected, wait upon Sir Robert Whitecraft; but without loss of time set sail for London, to wait upon the French Ambassador, to whom he detailed the whole circumstances of the outrage. And here we shall not further proceed with an account of those circumstances, as they will necessarily intermingle with that portion of the narrative which is to follow.

CHAPTER XVI.

Sir Robert ingeniously extricates Himself out of a great Difficulty.

On the day after the outrage we have described, the indignant old squire's carriage stopped at the hall-door of Sir Robert Whitecraft, whom he found at home. As yet, the latter gentleman had heard nothing of the contumelious dismissal of Miss Herbert; but the old squire was not ignorant of the felonious abduction of the priest. At any other time, that is to say, in some of his peculiar stretches of loyalty, the act might have been a feather in the cap of the loyal baronet; but, at present, he looked both at him and his exploits through the medium of the insult he had offered to his daughter. Accordingly, when he entered the baronet's library, where he found him literally sunk in papers, anonymous letters, warrants, reports to Government, and a vast variety of other documents, the worthy Sir Robert rose, and in the most cordial manner, and with the most extraordinary suavity of aspect, held out his hand, saying:

"How much obliged am I, Mr. Folliard, at the kindness of this visit, especially from one who keeps at home so much as you do."

The squire instantly repulsed him, and replied:

"No, sir; I am an honest, and, I trust, an honorable man. My hand, therefore, shall never touch that of a villain."

"A villain!—why, Mr. Folliard, these are hard and harsh words, and they surprise me, indeed, as proceeding from *your* lips. May I beg, my friend, that you will explain yourself?"

"I will, sir. How durst you take the liberty of sending one of your cast-off strumpets to attend personally upon my pure and virtuous daughter? For that insult I come this day to demand that satisfaction which is due to the outraged feelings of my daughter—to my own also, as her father and natural protector, and also as an Irish gentleman, who will brook no insult either to his family or himself. I say, then, name your time and place, and your weapon—sword or pistol, I don't care which, I am ready."

"But, my good sir, there is some mystery here; I certainly engaged a female of that name to attend on Miss Folliard, but most assuredly she was a well-conducted person."

"What! Madam Herbert well conducted! Do you imagine, sir, that I am a fool? Did she not admit that you debauched her?"

"It could not be, Mr. Folliard; I know nothing whatsoever about her, except that she was daughter to one of my tenants, who is besides a sergeant of dragoons."

"Ay, yes, sir," replied the squire sarcastically; "and I tell you it was not for killing and eating the enemy that he was promoted to his sergeantship. But I see your manœuvre, Sir Robert; you wish to shift the conversation, and sleep in a whole skin. I

say now, I have provided myself with a friend, and I ask, will you fight?"

"And why not have sent your friend, Mr. Folliard, as is usual upon such occasions?"

"Because he is knocked up, after a fit of drink, and I cannot be just so cool, under such an insult, as to command patience to wait. My friend, however, will attend us on the ground; but, I ask again, will you fight?"

"Most assuredly not, sir; I am an enemy to duelling on principle; but in your case I could not think of it, even if I were not. What! raise my hand against the life of Helen's father!—no, sir, I'd sooner die than do so. Besides, Mr. Folliard, I am, so to speak, not my own property, but that of my King, my Government, and my country; and under these circumstances not at liberty to dispose of my life, unless in their quarrel."

"I see," replied the squire bitterly; "it is certainly an admirable description of loyalty that enables a man, who is base enough to insult the very woman who was about to become his wife, and to involve her own father in the insult, to ensconce himself, like a coward, behind his loyalty, and refuse to give the satisfaction of a man, or a gentleman."

"But, Mr. Folliard, will you hear me? there must, as I said, be some mystery here; I certainly did recommend a young female named Herbert to you, but I was utterly ignorant of what you mention."

Here the footman entered, and whispered something to Sir Robert, who apologized to the squire for leaving him two or three minutes. "Here is the last paper," said he, "and I trust that before you go I will be able to remove clearly and fully the prejudices which you entertain against me, and which originate, so far as I am concerned, in a mystery which I am unable to penetrate."

He then followed the servant, who conducted him to Hennessy, whom he found in the back parlor.

"Well, Mr. Hennessy," said he, impatiently, "what is the matter now?"

"Why," replied the other, "I have one as good as bagged, Sir Robert."

"One what?"

"Why, a priest, sir."

"Well, Mr. Hennessy, I am particularly engaged now; but as to Reilly, can you not come upon *his* trail? I would rather have him than a dozen priests; however, remain here for about twenty minutes, or say half an hour, and I will talk with you at more length. For the present I am most particularly engaged."

"Very well, Sir Robert, I shall await your leisure; but, as to Reilly, I have every reason to think that he has left the country."

Sir Robert, on going into the hall, saw the porter open the door, and Miss Herbert presented herself.

"Oh," said he, "is this you? I am glad you came; follow me into the front parlor."

She accordingly did so; and after he had shut the door he addressed her as follows:

"Now, tell me how the devil you were discovered; or were you accessory yourself to the discovery, by your egregious folly and vanity?"

"Oh, la, Sir Robert, do you think I am a fool?"

"I fear you are little short of it," he replied; "at all events, you have succeeded in knocking up my marriage with Miss Folliard. How did it happen that they found you out?"

She then detailed to him the circumstances exactly as the reader is acquainted with them.

He paused for some time, and then said, "There is some mystery at the bottom of this which I must fathom. Have you any reason to know how the family became acquainted with your history?"

"No, sir; not in the least."

"Do you think Miss Folliard meets any person privately?"

"Not, sir, while I was with her."

"Did she ever attempt to go out by herself?"

"Not, sir, while I was with her."

"Very well, then, I'll tell you what you must do; her father is above with me now, in a perfect hurricane of indignation. Now you must say that the girl Herbert, whom I recommended to the squire, was a friend of yours; that she gave you the letter of recommendation which I gave her to Mr. Folliard; that having married her sweetheart and left the country with him, you were tempted to present yourself in her stead, and to assume her name. I will call you up by and by; but what name will you take?"

"My mother's name, sir, was Wilson."

"Very good; what was her Christian name?"

"Catherine, sir."

"And you must say that I know nothing whatsoever of the imposture you were guilty of. I shall make it worth your while; and if you don't get well through with it, and enable me to bamboozle the old fellow, I have done with you. I shall send for you by and by."

He then rejoined the squire, who was walking impatiently about the room.

"Mr. Folliard," said he, "I have to apol-

ogize to you for this seeming neglect; I had most important business to transact, and I merely went downstairs to tell the gentleman that I could not possibly attend to it now, and to request him to come in a couple of hours hence; pray excuse me, for no business could be so important as that in which I am now engaged with you."

"Yes, but in the name of an outraged father, I demand again to know whether you will give me satisfaction or not?"

"I have already answered you, my dear sir, and if you will reflect upon the reasons I have given you, I am certain you will admit that I have the laws both of God and man on my side, and I feel it my duty to regulate my conduct by both. As to the charge you bring against me, about the girl Herbert, I am both ignorant and innocent of it."

"Why, sir, how can you say so? how have you the face to say so? did you not give her a letter of recommendation to me, pledging yourself for her moral character and fidelity?"

"I grant it, but still I pledge you my honor that I looked upon her as an extremely proper person to be about your daughter; you know, sir, that you as well as I have had—and have still—apprehensions as to Reilly's conduct and influence over her; and I did fear, and so did you, that the maid who then attended her, and to whom I was told she was attached with such unusual affection, might have availed herself of her position, and either attempted to seduce her from her faith, or connive at private meetings with Reilly."

"Sir Robert, I know your plausibility—and, upon my soul, I pay it a high compliment when I say it is equal to your cowardice."

"Mr. Folliard, I can bear all this with patience, especially from you—What's this?" he exclaimed, addressing the footman, who rushed into the room in a state of considerable excitement.

"Why, Sir Robert, there is a young woman below, who is crying and lamenting, and saying she must see Mr. Folliard."

"Damnation, sir," exclaimed Sir Robert, "what is this? why am I interrupted in such a manner? I cannot have a gentleman ten minutes in my study, engaged upon private and important business, but in bolts some of you, to interrupt and disturb us. What does the girl want with *me?*"

"It is not you she wants, sir," replied the footman, "but his honor, Mr. Folliard."

"Well, tell her to wait until he is disengaged."

"No," replied Mr. Folliard, "send her up at once; what the devil can this be? but you shall witness it."

The baronet smiled knowingly. "Well," said he, "Mr. Folliard, upon my honor, I thought you had sown your wild oats many a year ago; and, by the way, according to all accounts—hem—but no matter; this, to be sure, will be rather a late crop."

"No, sir, I sowed my wild oats in the right season, when I was hot, young, and impetuous; but long before your age, sir, that field had been allowed to lie barren."

He had scarcely concluded when Miss Herbert, acting upon a plan of her own, which, were not the baronet a man of the most imperturbable coolness, might have staggered, if not altogether confounded him, entered the room.

"Oh, sir!" she exclaimed, with a flood of tears, kneeling before Mr. Folliard, "can you forgive and pardon me?"

"It is not against you, foolish girl, that my resentment is or shall be directed, but against the man who employed you—and there he sits."

"Oh, sir!" she exclaimed, again turning to that worthy gentleman, who seemed filled with astonishment.

"In God's name!" said he, interrupting his accomplice, "what can this mean? Who are you, my good girl?"

"My name's Catherine Wilson, sir."

"Catherine Wilson!" exclaimed the squire—"why, confound your brazen face, are you not the person who styled yourself Miss Herbert, and who lived, thank God, but for a short time only, in my family?"

"I lived in your family, sir, but I am not the Miss Herbert that Sir Robert Whitecraft recommended to you."

"I certainly know nothing about you, my good girl," replied Sir Robert, "nor do I recollect having ever seen you before; but proceed with what you have to say, and let us hear it at once."

"Yes, sir; but perhaps you are not the gentleman as is known to be Sir Robert Whitecraft—him as hunts the priests. Oh, la, I'll surely be sent to jail. Gentlemen, if you promise not to send me to jail, I'll tell you everything."

"Well, then, proceed," said the squire; "I will not send you to jail, provided you tell the truth."

"Nor I, my good girl," added Sir Robert, "but upon the same conditions."

"Well, then, gentlemen, I was acquainted with Miss Herbert—she is Hirish, but I'm English. This gentleman gave her a letter to you, Mr. Folliard, to get her as maid to Miss Helen—she told me—oh, my goodness, I shall surely be sent to jail."

"Go on, girl," said the baronet somewhat sternly, by which tone of voice he intimated

to her that she was pursuing the right course, and she was quick enough to understand as much.

"Well," she proceeded, "after Miss Herbert had got the letter, she told her sweetheart, who wouldn't by no means allow her to take service, because as why, he wanted to marry her; well, she consented, and they did get married, and both of them left the country because her father wasn't consenting. As the letter was of no use to her then, I asked her for it, and offered myself in her name to you, sir, and that was the way I came into your family for a short time."

The baronet rose up, in well-feigned agitation, and exclaimed, "Unfortunate girl! whoever you may be, you know not the serious mischief and unhappiness that your imposture was nearly entailing upon me."

"But did you not say that you bore an illegitimate child to this gentleman?" asked the squire.

"Oh, la! no, sir; you know I denied that; I never bore an illegitimate child; I bore a love-child, but not to him; and there is no harm in that, sure."

"Well, she certainly has exculpated you, Sir Robert."

"Gentlemen, will you excuse and pardon me? and will you promise not to send me to jail?"

"Go about your business," said Sir Robert, "you unfortunate girl, and be guilty of no such impostures in future. Your conduct has nearly been the means of putting enmity between two families of rank; or rather of alienating one of them from the confidence and good-will of the other. Go."

She then courtesied to each, shedding, at the same time, what seemed to be bitter tears of remorse—and took her departure, each of them looking after her, and then at the other, with surprise and wonder.

"Now, Mr. Folliard," said Sir Robert solemnly, "I have one question to ask you, and it is this: could I possibly, or by any earthly natural means, have been apprised of the honor of your visit to me this day? I ask you in a serious—yes, and in a solemn spirit; because the happiness of my future life depends on your reply."

"Why, no," replied the credulous squire, "hang it, no, man—no, Sir Robert; I'll do you that justice; I never mentioned my intention of coming to call you out, to any individual but one, and that on my way hither; he was unwell, too, after a hard night's drinking; but he said he would shake himself up, and be ready to attend me as soon as the place of meeting should be settled on. In point of fact, I did not intend to see you to-day, but to send him with the message; but, as I said, he was knocked up for a time, and you know my natural impatience. No, certainly not, it was in every sense impossible that you could have expected me: yes, if the devil was in it, I will do you that justice."

"Well, I have another question to ask, my dear friend, equally important with, if not more so than, the other. Do you hold me free from all blame in what has happened through the imposture of that wretched girl?"

"Why, after what has occurred just now, I certainly must, Sir Robert. As you had no anticipation of my visit, you certainly could not, nor had you time to get up a scene."

"Well, now, Mr. Folliard, you have taken a load off my heart; and I will candidly confess to you that I have had my frailties like other men, sown my wild oats like other men; but, unlike those who are not ashamed to boast of such exploits, I did not think it necessary to trumpet my own feelings. I do not say, my dear friend, that I have always been a saint."

"Why, now, that's manly and candid, Sir Robert, and I like you the better for it. Yes, I do exonerate you from blame in this. There certainly was sincerity in that wench's tears, and be hanged to her; for, as you properly said, she was devilish near putting between our families, and knocking up our intimacy. It is a delightful thing to think that I shall be able to disabuse poor Helen's mind upon the subject; for, I give you my honor, it caused her the greatest distress, and excited her mind to a high pitch of indignation against you; but I shall set all to rights."

"And now that the matter is settled, Mr. Folliard, we must have lunch. I will give you a glass of Burgundy, which, I am sure, you will like."

"With all my heart," replied the placable and hearty old squire; "after the agitation of the day a good glass of Burgundy will serve me certainly."

Lunch was accordingly ordered, and the squire, after taking half a dozen bumpers of excellent wine, got into fine spirits, shook hands as cordially as ever with the baronet, and drove home completely relieved from the suspicions which he had entertained.

The squire, on his return home, immediately called for his daughter, but for some time to no purpose. The old man began to get alarmed, and had not only Helen's room searched, but every room in the house. At length a servant informed him that she was tending and arranging the green-house flowers in the garden.

"Oh, ay!" said he, after he had dismissed the servants, "Thank God—thank God! I

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"I SAY, HELEN, LOOK AT THAT OLD CHAP; ISN'T HE A NICE BIT OF GOODS TO RUN AWAY WITH A PRETTY GIRL? AND WHAT A BEAUTIFUL TASTE SHE MUST HAVE HAD TO GO WITH HIM!"—*p.* 116.

will go out to the dear girl; for she is a dear girl, and it is a sin to suspect her. I wish to heaven that that scoundrel Reilly would turn Protestant, and he should have her with all the veins of my heart. Upon my soul, putting religion out of the question, one would think that, in other respects, they were made for each other. But it's all this cursed pride of his that prevents him; as if it signified what any person's religion is, provided he's an honest man, and a loyal subject."

He thus proceeded with his soliloquy until he reached the garden, where he found Reilly and her arranging the plants and flowers in a superb green-house.

"Well, Helen, my love, how is the green-house doing? Eh! why, what is this?"

At this exclamation the lovers started, but the old fellow was admiring the improvement, which even he couldn't but notice.

"Why, what is this?" he proceeded; "by the light of day, Helen, you have made this a little paradise of flowers."

"It was not I, papa," she replied; "all that I have been able to contribute to the order and beauty of the place has been very slight indeed. It is all the result of this poor man's taste and skill. He's an admirable botanist."

"By the great Boyne, my girl, I think he could lick Malcomson himself, as a botanist."

"Shir," observed Reilly, "the young lady is underwaluin' herself; sure, miss, it was yourself directed me what to do, and how to do it."

"Look at that old chap, Helen," said her father, who felt in great good humor; first, because he found that Helen was safe; and again, because Sir Robert, as the unsuspecting old man thought, had cleared up the circumstances of Miss Herbert's imposture; "I say, Helen, look at that old chap: isn't he a nice bit of goods to run away with a pretty girl? and what a taste she must have had to go with him! Upon my soul, it beats cock-fighting—confound me, but it does."

Helen's face became crimson as he spoke; and yet, such was the ludicrous appearance which Reilly made, when put in connection with the false scent on which her father was proceeding at such a rate, and the act of gallantry imputed to him, that a strong feeling of humor overcame her, and she burst into a loud ringing laugh, which she could not, for some time, restrain; in this she was heartily joined by her father, who laughed till the tears came down his cheeks.

"And yet, Helen—ha—ha—ha, he's a stalwart old rogue still, and must have been a devil of a tyke when he was young."

After another fit of laughter from both father and daughter, the squire said:

"Now, Helen, my love, go in. I have good news for you, which I will acquaint you with by and by."

When she left the garden, her father addressed Reilly as follows:

"Now, my good fellow, will you tell me how you came to know about Miss Herbert having been seduced by Sir Robert Whitecraft?"

"Fwhy, shir, from common report, shir."

"Is that all? But don't you think," he replied, "that common report is a common liar, as it mostly has been, and is, in this case. That's all I have to say upon the subject. I have traced the affair, and find it to be a falsehood from beginning to ending. I have. And now, go on as you're doing, and I will make Malcomson raise your wages."

"Thank you, shir," and he touched his nondescript with an air of great thankfulness and humility.

"Helen, my darling," said her father, on entering her own sitting-room, "I said I had good news for you."

Helen looked at him with a doubtful face, and simply said, "I hope it *is* good, papa."

"Why, my child, I won't enter into particulars; it is enough to say that I discovered from an accidental meeting with that wretched girl we had here that she was not Miss Herbert, as she called herself, at all, but another, named Catherine Wilson, who, having got from Herbert the letter of recommendation which I read to you, had the effrontery to pass herself for her; but the other report was false. The girl Wilson, apprehensive that either I or Sir Robert might send her to jail, having seen my carriage stop at Sir Robert's house, came, with tears in her eyes, to beg that if we would not punish her she would tell us the truth, and she did so."

Helen mused for some time, and seemed to decide instantly upon the course of action she should pursue, or, rather, the course which she had previously proposed to herself. She saw clearly, and had long known, that in the tactics and stratagems of life, her blunt but honest father was no match at all for the deep hypocrisy and deceitful plausibility of Sir Robert Whitecraft. The consequence was, that she allowed her father to take his own way, without either remonstrance or contradiction. She knew very well that on this occasion, as on every other where their wits and wishes came in opposition, Sir Robert was always able to outgeneral and overreach him; she therefore resolved to agitate herself as little as possible, and to allow matters to flow on tranquilly, until the crisis—the moment for action came.

"Papa," she replied, "this intelligence

must make your mind very easy; I hope, however, you will restore poor faithful Connor to me. I never had such an affectionate and kind creature; and, besides, not one of them could dress me with such skill and taste as she could. Will you allow me to have her back, sir?"

"I will, Helen; but take care she doesn't make a Papist of you."

"Indeed, papa, that is a strange whim: why, the poor girl never opened her lips to me on the subject of religion during her life; nor, if I saw that she attempted it, would I permit her. I am no theologian, papa, and detest polemics, because I have always heard that those who are most addicted to polemical controversy have least religion."

"Well, my love, you shall have back poor Connor; and now I must go and look over some papers in my study. Good-by, my love; and observe, Helen, don't stay out too late in the garden, lest the chill of the air might injure your health."

"But you know *I* never do, and never did, papa."

"Well, good-by again, my love."

He then left her, and withdrew to his study to sign some papers, and transact some business, which he had allowed to run into arrear. When he had been there better than an hour, he rang the bell, and desired that Malcomson, the gardener, should be sent to him, and that self-sufficient and pedantic person made his appearance accordingly.

"Well, Malcomson," said he, "how do you like the bearded fellow in the garden?"

"Ou, yer honor, weel eneugh; he does ken something o' the sceence o' buttany, an' 'am thinkin' he must hae been a gude spell in Scotland, for I canna guess whare else he could hae become acquent wi' it."

"I see Malcomson, you'll still persist in your confounded pedantry about your science. Now, what the devil has science to do with botany or gardening?"

"Weel, your honor, it wadna just become me to dispute wi' ye upon that or any ither subjeck; but for a' that, it required profoond sceence, and vera extensive learnin' to classify an' arrange a' the plants o' the yearth, an' to gie them names, by whilk they can be known throughout a' the nations o' the warld."

"Well, well—I suppose I must let you have your way."

"Why, your honor," replied Malcomson, "'am sure it mair becomes me to let you hae yours; but regarding this ould carl, I winna say, but he has been weel indoctrinated in the sceence."

"Ahem! well, well, go on."

"An' it's no easy to guess whare he could hae gotten it. Indeed, 'am of opinion that he's no without a hantle o' book lair; for, to do him justice, de'il a question I spier at him, anent the learned names o' the rare plants, that he hasna at his finger ends, and gies to me off-hand. Naebody but a man that has gotten book lair could do yon."

"Book lair, what is that?"

"Ou, just a correck knowledge o' the learned names of the plants. I dinna say, and I winna say, but he's a velliable assistant to me, an' I shouldna wish to pairt wi' him. If he'd only shave off yon beard, an' let himsel' be decently happed in good claiths, why he might pass in ony gentleman's gerden for a skeelful buttanist."

"Is he as good a kitchen gardener as he is in the green-house, and among the flowers?"

"Weel, your honor, guid troth, 'am sairly puzzled there; hoot, no, sir; de'il a thing almost he kens about the kitchen gerden—a' his strength lies among the flowers and in the green-house."

"Well, well, that's where we principally want him. I sent for you, Malcomson, to desire you'd raise his wages—the laborer is worthy of his hire; and a good laborer of good hire. Let him have four shillings a week additional."

"Troth, your honor, 'am no sayin' but he weel deserves it; but, Lord haud a care o' us, he's a queer one, yon."

"Why, what do you mean?"

"Why, de'il heat he seems to care about siller any mair than if it was sklate stains. On Saturday last, when he was paid his weekly wages by the steward, he met a puir sickly-lookin' auld wife, wi' a string o' sickly-looking weans at the body's heels; shé didna ask him for charity, foi, in troth, he appeared, binna it wearna for the weans, as great an objeck as hersel'; noo, what wad yer honor think? he gaes ower and gies till her a hale crown o' siller out o' his ain wage. Was ever onything heard like yon?"

"Well, I know the cause of it, Malcomson. He's under a penance, and can neither shave nor change his dress till his silly penance is out; and I suppose it was to wash off a part of it that he gave this foolish charity to the poor woman and her children. Come, although I condemn the folly of it, I don't like him the worse for it."

"Hout awa', your honor, what is it but rank Papistry, and a dependence upon filthy works. The doited auld carl, to throw aff his siller that gate;· but that's Papistry a' ower—substituting works for grace and faith—a' Papistry, a' Papistry! Well, your honor, I sal be conform to your wushes—it's my duty, that."

CHAPTER XVII.

Awful Conduct of Squire Folliard—Fergus Reilly begins to Contravene the Red Rapparee.

After Malcomson quitted him, the squire, with his golden-headed cane, went to saunter about his beautiful grounds and his noble demesne, proud, certainly, of his property, nor insensible to the beautiful scenery which it presented from so many points of observation. He had not been long here when a poor-looking peasant, dressed in shabby frieze, approached him at as fast a pace as he could accomplish; and the squire, after looking at him, exclaimed, in an angry tone:

"Well, you rascal, what the devil brings you here?"

The man stood for a little, and seemed so much exhausted and out of breath that he could not speak.

"I say, you unfortunate old vagrant," repeated the squire, "what brought you here?"

"It is a case of either life or death, sir," replied the poor peasant.

"Why," said the squire, "what crime did you commit? Or, perhaps, you broke prison, and are flying from the officers of justice; eh! is that it? And you come to ask a magistrate to protect you!"

"I am flying from the agents of persecution, sir, and know not where to hide my head in order to avoid them."

The hard-pressed but amiable priest—for such he was—adopted this language of truth, because he knew the squire's character, and felt that it would serve him more effectually than if he had attempted to conceal his profession. "I am a Catholic priest, sir, and felt from bitter experience that this disguise was necessary to the preservation of my life. I throw myself upon your honor and generosity, for although hasty, sir, you are reported to have a good and kind heart."

"You are disposed to place confidence in me, then?"

"I am, sir; my being before you now, and putting myself in your power, is a proof of it."

"Who are pursuing you? Sir Robert Whitecraft—eh?"

"No, sir, Captain Smellpriest and *his* gang."

"Ay, out of the frying pan into the fire; although I don't know that, either. They say Smellpriest can do a generous thing sometimes—but the other, when priest-hunting, never. What's your name?"

"I'll tell you, without hesitation, sir—Macguire; I'm of the Macguires of Fermanagh."

"Ay! ay! why, then, you have good blood in your veins. But what offence were you guilty of that you—but I need not ask; it is enough, in the present state of the laws, that you are a Catholic priest. In the meantime, are you aware that I myself transported a Catholic priest, and that he would have swung only for my daughter, who went to the viceroy, and, with much difficulty, got his sentence commuted to transportation for life? I myself had already tried it, and failed; but she succeeded, God bless her!"

"Yes, God bless her!" replied the priest, "she succeeded, and her fame has gone far and near, in consequence; yes, may God of his mercy bless and guard her from all evil!" and as the poor hunted priest spoke, the tears came to his eyes. This symptom of respect and affection, prompted by the generous and heroic conduct of the far-famed *Cooleen Bawn*, touched her father, and saved the priest.

"Well," said he, after musing for a while, "so you say Smellpriest is after you?"

"He is, sir; they saw me at a distance, across the country, scrambling over the park wall, and indeed I was near falling into their hands by the difficulty I had in getting over it."

"Well, come," replied the squire, "since you have had the courage to place confidence in me, I won't abuse it; come along, I will both conceal and protect you. I presume there is little time to be lost, for those priest hounds will be apt to ride round to the entrance gate, which I will desire the porter to close and lock, and then leave the lodge."

On their way home he did so, and ordered the porter up to the house. The magnificent avenue was a serpentine one, and our friends had barely time to get out of sight of the lodge, by a turn in it, when they heard the voices of the pursuers, hallooing for the porter, and thundering at the gate.

"Ay, thunder away, only don't injure my gate, Smellpriest, or I'll make you replace it; bawl yourselves hoarse—you are on the wrong side for once!"

When they were approaching the hall-door, which generally lay open—

"Confound me," said the squire, "if I know what to do with you; I trust in God I won't get into odium by this. At all events, let us steal upstairs as quietly as we can, and, if possible, without any one seeing us."

To the necessity of this the priest assented, and they had reached the first landing of the staircase when out popped right in their teeth two housemaids each with brush in hand. Now it instantly occurred to the

squire that in this unlucky crisis bribery was the safest resource. He accordingly addressed them:

"Come here, you jades, don't say a word about this man's presence here—don't breathe it; here's five shillings apiece for you, and let one of you go and bring me up, secretly, the key of the green-room in the garret; it has not been opened for some time. Be quick now; or stay, desire Lanigan to fetch it, and refreshment also; there's cold venison and roast beef, and a bottle of wine; tell Lanigan I'm going to lunch, and to lay the table in my study. Lanigan can be depended on," he added, after the chambermaid had gone, "for when I concealed another priest here once, he was entrusted with the secret, and was faithful."

Now it so happened that one of those maids, who was a bitter Protestant, at once recognized Father Maguire, notwithstanding his disguise. She had been a servant for four or five years in the house of a wealthy farmer who lived adjoining him, and with whom he had been in the habit of frequently dining when no danger was to be apprehended from the operation of the laws. Indeed, she and Malcomson, the gardener, were the only two individuals in the squire's establishment who were not Catholics. Malcomson was a manœuvrer, and, as is pretty usual with individuals of his class and country, he looked upon "Papistry" as an abomination that ought to be removed from the land. Still, he was cautious and shrewd, and seldom or never permitted those opinions to interfere with or obstruct his own interests. Be this as it may, the secret was not long kept. Esther Wilson impeached her master's loyalty, and she herself was indignantly assailed for her treachery by Molly Finigan, who hoped in her soul that her master and young mistress would both die in the true Church yet.

The whole kitchen was in a buzz; in fact, a regular scene ensued. Every one spoke, except Lanigan, who, from former experience, understood the case perfectly; but, as for Malcomson, whose zeal on this occasion certainly got the better of his discretion, he seemed thunderstruck.

"Eh, sirs! did ony one ever hear the like o' this?—to hide a rebel priest frae the offended laws! But it canna be that this puir man is athegether right in his head. Lord ha'e a care o' us! the man surely must be demented, or he wouldna venture to bring such a person into his ain house—into the vara house. I think, Maisther Lanigan, it wad be just a precious bit o' service to religion and our laws to gang and tell the next magistrate. Gude guide us! what an example he is settin' to his loyal neighbors, and his hail connections! That ever we suld see the like o' this waefu' backsliding at his years! Lord ha'e a care o' us, I say ance mair."

"Oh, but there's more to come," said one of them, for, in the turmoil produced by this shocking intelligence, they had forgotten to deliver the message to Lanigan.

"Mr. Lanigan," said Esther, and her breath was checked by a hysteric hiccup, "Mr. Lanigan, you are to bring up the key of the green-room, and plenty of venison, roast beef, and a bottle of wine! There!"

"Saul, Maisther Lanigan, I winna stay langer under this roof; it's nae cannie; I'll e'en gang out, and ha'e some nonsense clavers wi' yon queer auld carl i' the gerden. The Lord ha'e a care o' us!—what will the warld come to next!"

He accordingly repaired to the garden, where the first thing he did was to give a fearful account to Reilly of their master's political profligacy. The latter felt surprised, but not at all at Malcomson's narrative. The fact was, he knew the exact circumstances of the case, because he knew the squire's character, which was sometimes good, and sometimes the reverse—just according to the humor he might be in: and in reply observed to Malcomson, that—

"As his honor done a great dale o' good to the poor o' the counthry, I think it wouldn't be daicent in us, Misther Malcomson, to go for to publish this generous act to the poor priesht; if he is wrong, let us lave him to Gad, shir."

"Ou ay, weel I dinna but you're richt; the mair that we won't hae to answer for his transgressions; sae e'en let every herring hang by its ain tail."

In the meantime, Lanigan, who understood the affair well enough, addressed the audience in the kitchen to the following effect:

"Now," said he, "what a devil of a hubbub you all make about nothing! Pray, young lady," addressing Esther Wilson, who alone had divulged the circumstance, "did his honor desire you to keep what you seen saicret?"

"He did, cook, he did," replied Esther; "and gave us money not to speak about it, which is a proof of his guilt."

"And the first thing you did was to blaze it to the whole kitchen! I'll tell you what it is now—if he ever hears that you breathed a syllable of it to mortal man, you won't be under his roof two hours."

"Oh, but, surely, cook—"

"Oh, but, surely, madam," replied Lanigan, "you talk of what you don't under-

stand; his honor knows very well what he's about, and has authority for it."

This sobered her to some purpose; and Lanigan proceeded to execute his master's orders.

It is true Miss Esther and Malcomson were now silent, for their own sakes; but it did not remove their indignation; so far from that, Lanigan himself came in for a share of it, and was secretly looked upon in the light of the squire's confidant in the transaction.

Whilst matters were in this position, the Red Rapparee began gradually to lose the confidence of his unscrupulous employer. He had promised that worthy gentleman to betray his former gang, and deliver them up to justice, in requital for the protection which he received from him. This he would certainly have done, were it not for Fergus, who, happening to meet one of them a day or two after the Rapparee had taken service with Whitecraft upon the aforesaid condition, informed the robber of that fact, and advised him, if he wished to provide for his own safety and that of his companions, to desire them forthwith to leave the country, and, if possible, the kingdom. They accordingly took the hint; some of them retired to distant and remote places, and others went beyond seas for their security. The promise, therefore, which the Rapparee had made to the baronet as a proof of gratitude for his protection, he now found himself incapable of fulfilling, in consequence of the dispersion and disappearance of his band. When he stated this fact to Sir Robert, he gained little credit from him; and the consequence was that his patron felt disposed to think that he was not a man to be depended on. Still, what he had advanced in his own defence *might* be true; and although his confidence in him was shaken, he resolved to maintain him yet in his service, and that for two reasons—one of which was, that by having him under his eye, and within his grasp, he could pounce upon him at any moment; the other was, that, as he knew, from the previous shifts and necessities of his own lawless life, all those dens and recesses and caverns to which the Catholic priesthood, and a good number of the people, were obliged to fly and conceal themselves, he must necessarily be a useful guide to him as a priest-hunter. It is true he assured him that he had procured his pardon from Government, principally, he said, in consequence of his own influence, and because, in all his robberies, it had not been known that he ever took away human life. In general, however, this was the policy of the Rapparees, unless when they identified themselves with political contests and outrages, and on those occasions they were savage and cruel as fiends. In simple robbery on the king's highway, or in burglaries in houses, they seldom, almost never, committed murder, unless when resisted, and in defence of their lives. On the contrary, they were quite gallant to females, whom they treated with a kind of rude courtesy, not unfrequently returning the lady of the house her gold watch—but this only on occasions when they had secured a large booty of plate and money. The Threshers of 1805-6 and '7, so far as cruelty goes, were a thousand times worse; for they spared neither man nor woman in their infamous and nocturnal visits; and it is enough to say, besides, that their cowardice was equal to their cruelty. It has been proved, at special commissions held about those periods, that four or five men, with red coats on them, have made between two or three hundred of the miscreants run for their lives, and they tolerably well-armed. Whether Sir Robert's account of the Rapparee's pardon was true or false will appear in due time; for the truth is, that Whitecraft was one of those men who, in consequence of his staunch loyalty and burning zeal in carrying out the inhuman measures of the then Government, was permitted with impunity to run into a licentiousness of action, as a useful public man, which no modern government would, or dare, permit. At the period of which we write, there was no press, so to speak, in Ireland, and consequently no opportunity of at once bringing the acts of the Irish Government, or of public men, to the test of public opinion. Such men, therefore, as Whitecraft, looked upon themselves as invested with irresponsible power; and almost in every instance their conduct was approved of, recognized, and, in general, rewarded by the Government of the day. The Beresford family enjoyed something like this unenviable privilege, during the rebellion of '98, and for some time afterwards. We have alluded to Mrs. Oxley, the sheriff's fat wife; whether fortunately or unfortunately for the poor sheriff, who had some generous touches of character about him, it so happened that at this period of our narrative she popped off one day, in a fit of apoplexy, and he found himself a widower. Now, our acquaintance, Fergus Reilly, who was as deeply disguised as our hero, had made his mind up, if possible, to bring the Rapparee into trouble. This man had led his patron to several places where it was likely that the persecuted priests might be found; and, for this reason, Fergus knew that he was serious in his object to betray them. This unnatural treachery of the robber envenomed his heart against him,

and he resolved to run a risk in watching his motions. He had no earthly doubt that it was he who robbed the sheriff. He knew, from furtive observations, as well as from general report, that a discreditable intimacy existed between him and Mary Mahon. This woman's little house was very convenient to that of Whitecraft, to whom she was very useful in a certain capacity. She had now given up her trade of fortune-telling—a trade which, at that period, in consequence of the ignorance of the people, was very general in Ireland. She was now more beneficially employed. Fergus, therefore, confident in his disguise, resolved upon a bold and hazardous stroke. He began to apprehend that if ever Tom Steeple, fool though he was, kept too much about the haunts and resorts of the Rapparee, that cunning scoundrel, who was an adept in all the various schemes and forms of detection, might take the alarm, and, aided probably by Whitecraft, make his escape out of the country. At best, the fool could only assure him of his whereabouts; but he felt it necessary, in addition to this, to procure, if the matter were possible, such evidence of his guilt as might render his conviction of the robbery of the sheriff complete and certain. One evening a wretched-looking old man, repeating his prayers, with beads in hand, entered her cottage, which consisted of two rooms and a kitchen; and after having presented himself, and put on his hat—for we need scarcely say that no Catholic ever prays covered—he asked lodging in Irish, for the night, and at this time it was dusk.

"Well, good man," she replied, "you can have lodgings here for this night. God forbid I'd put a poor wandherer out, an' it nearly dark."

Fergus stared at her as if he did not understand what she said; she, however, could speak Irish right well, and asked him in that language if he could speak no English—"*Wuil Bearlha agud?*" (Have you English?)

"*Ha neil focal vaun Beartha agum.*" (I haven't one word of English.)

"Well," said she, proceeding with the following short conversation in Irish, "you can sleep here, and I will bring you in a wap o' straw from the garden, when I have it to feed my cow, which his honor, Sir Robert, gives me grass for; he would be a very kind man if he was a little more generous—ha! ha! ha!"

"Ay, but doesn't he hunt an' hang, an' transport our priests?"

"Why, indeed, I believe he doesn't like a bone in a priest's body; but then he's of a different religion—and it isn't for you or me to construe him after our own way."

"Well, well," said Fergus, "it isn't him I'm thinking of; but if I had a mouthful or two of something to ait I'd go to sleep—for dear knows I'm tired and hungry."

"Why, then, of coorse you'll have something to ait, poor man, and while you're eatin' it I'll fetch in a good bunch of straw, and make a comfortable shake-down for you."

"God mark you to grace, avourneen!"

She then furnished him with plenty of oaten bread and mixed milk, and while he was helping himself she brought in a large bunch of straw, which she shook out and settled for him.

"I see," said she, "that you have your own blankets."

"I have, acushla. Cheerna, but this is darlin' bread! Arra was this baked upon a griddle or against the *muddhia arran?*"*

"A griddle! Why, then, is it the likes o' me would have a griddle? that indeed! No; but, any how, sure a griddle only scalds the bread; but you'll find that this is not too much done; bekaise you know the ould proverb, 'a raw dad makes a fat lad.'"

"Troth," replied Fergus, "it's good bread, and fills the *boast*† of a man's body; but now that I've made a good supper, I'll throw myself on the straw, for I feel as if my eyelids had a millstone apiece upon them. I never shtrip at night, but just throws my blanket over me, an' sleeps like a top. Glory be to God! Oh, then, there's nothing like the health ma'am: may God spare it to us! Amin, this night!"

He accordingly threw himself on the shake-down, and in a short time, as was evident by his snoring, fell into a profound sleep.

This was an experiment, though a hazardous one, as we have said; but so far it was successful. In the course of half an hour the Red Rapparee came in, dressed in his uniform. On looking about him he exclaimed, with an oath,

"Who the hell is here?"

"Why," replied Mary Mahon, "a poor ould man that axed for charity an' lodgin' for the night."

"And why did you give it to him?"

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* The *muddhia arran* was a forked branch, cut from a tree, and shaped exactly like a letter A—with a small stick behind to support it. A piece of hoop iron was nailed to it at the bottom, on which the cake rested—not horizontally, but opposite the fire. When one side was done the other was turned, and thus it was baked.

† *Boast*—a figurative term, taken from a braggadocio or boaster; it applies to any thing that is hollow or deceitful: for instance, when some potatoes that grow unusually large are cut in two, an empty space is found in the centre, and that potato is termed *boast*, or empty.

"Bekaise my charity to him may take away some of my sins."

"Some of your devils!" replied the savage, "and I think you have enough of them about you. Didn't you know I was to come here to-night, as I do almost every night, for an hour or two?"

"You was drinkin'," she replied, "and you're drunk."

"I am drunk, and I will be drunk as often as I can. It's a good man's case. Why did you give a lodgin' to this ould vagabone?"

"I tould you the raison," she replied; "but you needn't care about him, for there's not a word of English in his cheek."

"Faith, but he may have something in his purse, for all that. Is he ould?"

"A poor ould man."

"So much the betther; be the livin' I'll try whether he has any ould coins about him. Many a time—no, I don't say *many* a time—but twic't I did it, and found it well worth my while, too. Some of these ould scamers die wid a purse o' goolden guineas under their head, and won't confess it till the last moment. Who knows what this ould lad may have about him? I'll thry anyhow," said the drunken ruffian; "It's not aisy to give up an ould custom, Molly—the sheriff, my darlin', for that. I aised him of his fines, and was near strikin' a double blow—I secured his pocket-book, and made a good attempt to hang Willy Reilly for the robbery into the bargain. Now, hang it, Molly, didn't I look a gentleman in his clothes, shoes, silver buckles, and all; wasn't it well we secured them before the house was burned? Here," he added, "take a sneeshin of this," pulling at the same time a pint bottle of whiskey out of his pocket; "it'll rise your spirits, an' I'll see what cash this ould codger has about him; an', by the way, how the devil do we know that he doesn't understand every word we say. Suppose, now—(hiccup)—that he heard me say I robbed the sheriff, wouldn't I be in a nice pickle? But, tell me, can *you* get no trace of *Reilly?*"

"Devil a trace; they say he has left the country."

"If I had what that scoundrel has promised me for findin' him out or securin' him—here's—here's—here's to you—I say, if I had, you and I would"—Here he pointed with his thumb over his shoulder, as much as to say they would try another climate.

"And now," he proceeded, "for a search on the shake-down. Who knows but the ould fellow has the yellow boys (guineas) about him?"—and he was proceeding to search Fergus, when Mary flew at him like a tigress.

"Stop, you cowardly robber!" she exclaimed; "would you bring down the curse and the vengeance of God upon both of us. We have enough and too much to answer for, let alone to rob the ould an' the poor."

"Be aisy now," said he, "I'll make the search; sure I'm undher the scoundrel Whitecraft's protection."

"Yes, you are, and you're undher my protection too; and I tell you, if you lay a hand upon him it'll be worse for you."

"What—what do you mane?"

"It's no matther what I mane; find it out."

"How do I know but he has heard us?"

We must now observe that Fergus's style of sleeping was admirably adapted for his purpose. It was not accompanied by a loud and unbroken snore; on the contrary, after it had risen to the highest and most disagreeable intonations, it stopped short, with a loud and indescribable backsnort in his nose, and then, after a lull of some length, during which he groaned and muttered to himself, he again resumed his sternutations in a manner so natural as would have imposed upon Satan himself, if he had been present, as there is little doubt he was, though not exactly visible to the eyes of his two precious agents.

"Listen to that," replied the woman; "do you think, now, he's not asleep? and even if he was sitting at the fire beside us, devil a syllable we said he could understand. I spoke to him in English when he came in, but he didn't know a word I said."

"Well, then, let the ould fellow sleep away; I won't touch him."

"Why, now, that's a good boy; go home to your barracks, and take a good sleep yourself."

"Ay, yes, certainly; but have you Reilly's clothes safe—shoes, silver buckles, and all?"

"Ay, as safe as the head on your shoulders; and, upon my soul, a great dale safer, if you rob any more sheriffs."

"Where are they, then?"

"Why, they're in my flat box, behind the bed, where nobody could see them."

"Very well, Molly, that will do; I may want them wanst more," he replied, pointing again with his thumb over his shoulder towards Whitecraft's residence; "so good-night; be a good girl, and take care of yourself."

"No," she replied, "but do you be a good boy, and take care of yourself." And so they parted for the night.

The next day Fergus, possessed of very important evidence against the Rapparee, was travelling along the public road, not more than half a mile from the residence of Sir Robert Whitecraft, when whom should

ne meet but the identical sheriff, on horseback, that the Rapparee had robbed. He put his hand to his hat, and asked him for charity.

"Help a poor ould man, for the love and honor of God."

"Why don't you go to work—why don't you go to work?" replied the sheriff.

"I am not able, sir," returned Fergus; "it wouldn't be good for my health, your honor."

"Well, pass on and don't trouble me; I have nothing for you."

"Ah! thin, sir, if you'd give me a trifle, maybe I'd make it worth your while."

"What do you mean?" asked the sheriff, who knew that persons like him had opportunities of hearing and knowing more about local circumstances, in consequence of their vagrant life, than any other class of persons in society.

"What do you mean by what you have just said?"

"Aren't you the sheriff, sir, that was robbed some time ago?"

"I am."

"Ah, sir, I see you are dressed in black; and I heard of the death of the misthress, sir."

"Well, but what has that to do with what you have just now said—that you would make it worth my while if I gave you alms?"

"I said so, sir; and I can, if you will be guided by me."

"Speak out; I don't understand you."

"Would you like to see the man that robbed you, sir, and would you know him if you did see him?"

"Unquestionably I would know him. They say it was Reilly, but I have seen Reilly since; and although the dress was the same which Reilly usually wears, yet the faces were different."

"Is your honor going far?" asked Fergus.

"No, I am going over to that farm-house, Tom Brady's; two or three of his family are ill of fever, and I wish to do something for him; I am about to make him my land bailiff."

"What stay will you make there, your honor?"

"A very short one—not more than ten or fifteen minutes."

"Would it be inconvenient for your honor to remain there, or somewhere about the house, for an hour, or may be a little longer?"

"For what purpose? You are a mysterious old fellow."

"Bekaise, if you'd wish to see the man that robbed you, I'll undhertake to show him to you, face to face, within that time. Will your honor promise this?"

The sheriff paused upon this proposal, coming as it did from such an equivocal authority. What, thought he, if it should be a plot for my life, in consequence of the fines which I have been forced to levy upon the Catholic priests and bishops in my official capacity. God knows I feel it to be a painful duty.

"What is your religion?" he asked, "and why should a gentleman in my condition of life place any confidence upon the word of a common vagrant like you, who must necessarily be imbued with all the prejudices of your creed—for I suppose you are a Catholic?"

"I am, sir; but, for all that, in half an hour's time I'll be a rank Protestant."

The sheriff smiled and asked, "How the devil's that?"

"You are dressed in black, sir, in murnin' for your wife. I have seen you go into Tom Brady's to give the sick creatures the rites of their Church. I give notice to Sir Robert Whitecraft that a priest is there; and my word to you, he and his hounds will soon be upon you. The man that robbed you will be among them—no, but the foremost of them; and if you don't know him, I can't help it—that's all, your honor."

"Well," replied the sheriff, "I shall give you nothing now; because I know not whether what you say can be relied upon or not. In the meantime, I shall remain an hour or better, in Brady's house; and if your words are not made good, I shall send to Sir Robert Whitecraft for a military party to escort me home."

"I know, your honor," replied Fergus, "that Sir Robert and his men are at home to-day; and if I don't fulfil my words, I'll give your honor lave to whip me through the county."

"Well," said the sheriff, "I shall remain an hour or so in Brady's; but I tell you that if you are deceiving me you shall not escape me; so look to it, and think if what you propose to me is honest or not—if it be not, woe betide you."

Fergus immediately repaired to Sir Robert Whitecraft, to whom he represented himself as a poor Protestant of the name of Bingham, and informed him that a Popish priest was then in Tom Brady's house, administering the rites of Popery to those who were sick in the family.

"I seen him, your honor, go into the house; and he's there this minute. If your honor makes haste you'll catch him."

In less than a quarter of an hour Sir Robert and his crew were in stirrups, and on their way to Tom Brady's; and in the meantime, too, the sheriff, dressed as he was, in black, came outside the door, from time to time, more in apprehension of a plot against his life than of a visit from Whitecraft, which

he knew must end in nothing. Now, Whitecraft and his followers, on approaching Brady's house, caught a glimpse of him—a circumstance which not only confirmed the baronet in the correctness of the information he had received, but also satisfied the sheriff that the mendicant had not deceived him. Rapid was the rush they made to Brady's house, and the very first that entered it was the Red Rapparee. He was about to seize the sheriff, whom he pretended not to know; but in a moment Sir Robert and the rest entered, when, on recognizing each other, an explanation took place, with all due apologies to the functionary, who said:

"The mistake, Sir Robert, is very natural. I certainly have a clerical appearance, as I am in mourning for my wife. I trust you will neither hang nor transport me."

"I am very sorry indeed, Mr. Oxley; but I only acted on information received."

"And I don't doubt, Sir Robert," replied the sheriff, "that the person who gave you the information may have been deceived himself by my ecclesiastical looking dress. I am sorry you have had so much trouble for nothing; but, upon my word, I feel extremely delighted that I am not a priest."

In the meantime the sheriff had recognized the Rapparee, by a single glance, as the man that had robbed him. He was now certain; but he took care not to bestow the least sign of recognition upon him; so far from that, he appeared to pay no attention whatsoever to the men; but chatted with Sir Robert for some time, who returned home deeply disappointed, though without imputing blame to his informant, who, he thought, was very naturally misled by the dress of the sheriff. Fergus, however, apprehensive of being involved in the prosecution of the Rapparee, and thus discovered, made a point to avoid the sheriff, whose cross-examination a consciousness of his previous life led him to dread. Still, he had, to a certain extent, though not definitely, resolved to become evidence against him; but only, as we have said, on the condition of previously receiving a full pardon for his own misdeeds, which was granted. For upwards of a month, however, the sheriff was confined to his bed, having caught, whilst in Brady's, the malignant fever which then raged throughout the country.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Something not very Pleasant for all Parties.

The position of England at this period was any thing but an easy one. The Rebellion of '45 had commenced, and the young Pretender had gained some signal victories. Independently of this, she was alarmed by the rumor of a French invasion on her southern coast. Apprehensive lest the Irish Catholics, galled and goaded as they were by the influence of the penal laws, and the dreadful persecution which they caused them to suffer, should flock to the standard of Prince Charles, himself a Catholic, she deemed it expedient, in due time, to relax a little, and accordingly she "checked her hand, and changed her pride." Milder measures were soon resorted to, during this crisis, in order that by a more liberal administration of justice the resentment of the suffering Catholics might be conciliated, and their loyalty secured. This, however, was a proceeding less of justice than expediency, and resulted more from the actual and impending difficulties of England than from any sincere wish on her part to give civil and religious freedom to her Catholic subjects, or prosperity to the country in which, even then, their numbers largely predominated. Yet, singular to say, when the Rebellion first broke out, all the chapels in Dublin were closed, and the Administration, as if guided by some unintelligible infatuation, issued a proclamation, commanding the Catholic priesthood to depart from the city. Those who refused this senseless and impolitic edict were threatened with the utmost severity of the law. Harsh as that law was, the Catholics obeyed it; yet even this obedience did not satisfy the Protestant party, or rather that portion of them who were active agents in carrying out this imprudent and unjustifiable rigor at such a period. They were seized by a kind of panic, and imagined forsooth that a broken down and disarmed people might engage in a general massacre of the Irish Protestants. Whether this incomprehensible terror was real, is a matter of doubt and uncertainty; or whether it was assumed as a justification for assailing the Catholics in a general massacre, similar to that which they apprehended, or pretended to apprehend, is also a matter of question; yet certain it is, that a proposal to massacre them in cold blood was made in the Privy Council. "But," says O'Connor, "the humanity of the members rejected this barbarous proposal, and crushed in its infancy a conspiracy hatched in Lurgan to extirpate the Catholics of that town and vicinity."

In the meantime, so active was the persecuting spirit of such men as Whitecraft and Smellpriest that a great number of the unfortunate priests fled to the metropolis, where, in a large and populous city, they had a better chance of remaining *incognito*

than when living in the country, exposed and likely to be more marked by spies and informers. A very dreadful catastrophe took place about this time. A congregation of Catholic people had heard mass upon an old loft, which had for many years been decayed —in fact, actually rotten. Mass was over, and the priest was about to give them the parting benediction, when the floor went down with a terrific crash. The result was dreadful. The priest and a great many of the congregation were killed on the spot, and a vast number of them wounded and maimed for life. The Protestant inhabitants of Dublin sympathized deeply with the sufferers, whom they relieved and succored as far as in them lay, and, by their remonstrances, Government was shamed into a more human administration of the laws.

In order to satisfy our readers that we have not overdrawn our picture of what the Catholics suffered in those unhappy times, we shall give a quotation from the Messrs. Chambers, of Edinburgh, themselves fair and liberal men, and as impartial as they are able and well informed :

"Since the pacification of Limerick, Ireland had been ruled exclusively by the Protestant party, who, under the influence of feelings arising from local and religious antipathies, had visited the Catholics with many severities. The oath which had excluded the Catholics from office had been followed, in 1698, by an Act of the Irish Parliament, commanding all Romish priests to leave the kingdom, under the penalty of transportation, a return from which was to be punishable by death. Another law decreed forfeiture of property and civil rights to all who should send their children abroad to be educated in the Catholic faith."*

Can any reasonable person be in doubt for a moment that those laws were laws of extermination? In the meantime, let us hear the Messrs. Chambers further :

"After the death of William, who was much opposed to severities on account of religion, Acts of still greater rigor were passed for preventing the growth of Popery. Any child of a Roman Catholic who should declare himself a Protestant was entitled to become the heir of his estate, the father merely holding it for his lifetime, and having no command over it. Catholics were made incapable of succeeding to Protestants, and lands, passing over them, were to go to the next Protestant heir. Catholic parents were prevented from being guardians to their own children ; no Protestant possessing property was to be permitted to marry a Catholic ; and Catholics were rendered incapable of purchasing landed property or enjoying long leases. These measures naturally rendered the Catholics discontented subjects, and led to much turbulence. The common people of that persuasion, being denied all access to justice, took it into their own hands, and acquired all those lawless habits for which they have since been remarkable. Treachery, cruelty, and all the lower passions, were called into vigorous exercise. Even the Protestants, for their own sakes, were often obliged to connive at the evasion of laws so extremely severe, and which introduced much difficulty in their dealings with Catholics ; but, when any Protestant wished to be revenged upon a Catholic, or to extort money from him, he found in these laws a ready instrument for his purpose. By an additional Act, in 1726, it was ordained that a Roman Catholic priest, marrying a Protestant to a Catholic, should suffer death ; and in order that legal redress might be still less accessible to the Catholics, it was enacted, in 1728, that no one should be entitled to practise as an attorney who had not been two years a Protestant."

This is a clear and succinct epitome of the penal laws ; true, much more might be added ; but it is enough to say that those who sow the wind will reap the whirlwind. It is not by placing restrictions upon creeds or ceremonies that religion can ever be checked, much less extinguished. Like the camomile plant, the more it is trampled on the more it will spread and grow ; as the rude winds and the inclemency of the elements only harden and make more vigorous the constitutions of those who are exposed to them. In our state of the world, those who have the administration of political laws in their hands, if they ever read history, or can avail themselves of the experiences of ages, ought to know that it is not by severity or persecution that the affections of their fellow-subjects can be conciliated. We ourselves once knew a brutal ruffian, who was a dealer in fruit in the little town of Maynooth, and whose principle of correcting his children was to continue whipping the poor things until they were forced *to laugh!* A person was one day present when he commenced chastising one of them—a child of about seven—upon this barbarous principle. This individual was then young and strong, and something besides of a pugilist ; but on witnessing the affecting efforts of the little fellow to do that which was not within the compass of any natural effort, he deliberately knocked the ruffian down, after having first remonstrated with him to no purpose. He

* "History and Present State of the British Empire." Edinburgh, W. and R. Chambers.

arose, however, and attacked the other, but, thanks to a good arm and a quick eye, he prostrated him again, and again, and again; he then caught him by the throat, for he was already subdued, and squeezing his windpipe to some purpose, the fellow said, in a choking voice, "Are you going to kill me?"

"No," replied the other, "I only want to see the length of your tongue; don't be alarmed, the whole thing will end merrily; come, now, give three of the heartiest laughs you ever gave in your life, or down goes your apple-cart—you know what that means?"

"I—I c—a—n'—t," said he.

"Yes, you can," replied his castigator; "nothing's more easy; come, be merry."

The caitiff, for he was a coward, and wanted bottom, upon getting a little wind, whilst the other held him by the throat, gave three of the most ludicrous, but disastrous, howls that ever were witnessed. On his opponent letting him go, he took to his heels, but got a kick on going out that was rather calculated to accelerate his flight. Legislators, therefore, ought to know that no political whipping will ever make a people *laugh* at the pleasure of it.

But to resume our narrative. England, now apprehensive, as we have said, of a descent of the French upon her southern coast, and startled by the successes of the young Pretender, who had cut Cope's army to pieces, deemed it expedient to send over the celebrated Earl of Chesterfield as Viceroy, with instructions to relax the rigor of the laws, and conciliate the Catholics, as well as he could, so, at least, as to prevent them from joining the Pretender, whose object it was understood to be to cross the frontier and march upon London. Lord Chesterfield's policy afforded great gratification to the Catholics, who were now restored to their usual privileges; and its political object was so far successful that, as we have said, not a single man of them ever joined the Pretender. Still, the liberal Protestants, or, as they were termed, the patriotic party, were not satisfied with the mere removal of the Catholic restrictions. Ireland, at that time, was studded with men, or rather with monsters, like Smellpriest and Whitecraft, who were stained with the blood of their fellow-subjects and fellow-Christians. Sir Robert Whitecraft, especially, was now in a bad position, although he himself was ignorant of it. The French Ambassador demanded satisfaction, in the name of his Court and the French nation, for the outrage that had been committed upon a French subject, and by which international law was so grossly violated. We must say here that Whitecraft, in the abundance of his loyalty and zeal, was in the habit, in his searches after priests, and suspected lay Catholics, to pay domiciliary visits to the houses of many Protestant magistrates, clergymen, and even gentlemen of wealth and distinction, who were suspected, from their known enmity to persecution, of harboring Catholic priests and others of that persuasion; so that, in point of fact, he had created more enemies in the country than any man living. The Marquis of ——, Mr. Hastings, Mr. Brown, together with a great number of the patriotic party, had already transmitted a petition to the Lord Lieutenant, under the former Administration; but it was not attended to, the only answer they got having been a simple acknowledgment of its receipt. This, on coming to Sir Robert's ears, which it did from one of the underlings of the Castle, only gave a spur to his insolence, and still more fiercely stimulated his persecuting spirit. He felt conscious that Government would protect him, or rather reward him, for any acts of violence which he might commit against the Catholic party, and so far, under his own pet Administration, he was right.

The petition we have alluded to having been treated with studied contempt, the persons and party already mentioned came to the determination of transmitting another, still more full and urgent, to the new Viceroy, whose feeling it was, for the reasons we have stated, to reverse the policy of his predecessor.

His liberal administration encouraged them, therefore, to send him a clear statement of the barbarous outrages committed by such men as Smellpriest and Sir Robert Whitecraft, not only against his Majesty's Roman Catholic subjects, but against many loyal Protestant magistrates, and other Protestants of distinction and property, merely because they were supposed to entertain a natural sympathy for their persecuted fellow-subjects and fellow-countrymen. They said that the conduct of those men and of the Government that had countenanced and encouraged them had destroyed the prosperity of the country by interrupting and annulling all *bona fide* commercial transactions between Protestants and Catholics. That those men had not only transgressed the instructions they received from his predecessor, but all those laws that go to the security of life and property. That they were guilty of several cruel and atrocious murders, arsons, and false imprisonments, for which they were never brought to account; and that, in fine, they were steeped in crime and blood, because they knew that his predecessor, igno-

rant, perhaps, of the extent of their guilt, threw his shield over them, and held them irresponsible to the laws for those savage outrages.

They then stated that, in their humble judgment, a mere relaxation in the operation of the severe and penal laws against Catholics would not be an act of sufficient atonement to them for all they had previously suffered; that to overlook, or connive at, or protect those great criminals would be at variance, not only with all principles of justice, but with the spirit of the British Constitution itself, which never recognizes, much less encourages, a wicked and deliberate violation of its own laws. That the present was a critical moment, which demanded great judgment and equal humanity in the administration of the laws in Ireland. A rebellion was successfully progressing in Scotland, and it appeared to them that not only common justice but sound policy ought to prompt the Government to attract and conciliate the Catholic population of Ireland by allowing them to participate in the benefits of the Constitution, which hitherto existed not for them, thousands of whom, finding their country but a bed of thorns, might, from a mere sense of relief, or, what was more to be dreaded, a spirit of natural vengeance, flock to the standard of the Pretender.

His excellency, already aware of the startling but just demand which had been made by the French Ambassador, for the national insult by Whitecraft to his country, was himself startled and shocked by the atrocities of those blood-stained delinquents.

His reply, however, was brief, but to the purpose.

His secretary acknowledged the receipt of the memorial, and stated that the object of his Excellency was not to administer the laws in cruelty, but in mercy; that he considered all classes of his Majesty's subjects equally entitled to their protection; and that with respect to the persons against whom such serious charges and allegations had been made, he had only to say, that if they were substantiated against them in a court of justice, they must suffer like other criminals—if they can be proved, Government will leave them, as it would any common felons, to the laws of the country. His Excellency is determined to administer those laws with the strictest impartiality, and without leaning to any particular class or creed. So far as the laws will allow him, their protection shall be extended, on just and equal principles to the poor and to the rich, to the Catholic and to the Protestant.

This communication, which was kept strictly secret, reached the Marquis of—— at a critical period of our narrative. Whitecraft, who was ignorant of it, but sufficiently aware of the milder measures which the new Administration had adopted, finding that the trade of priest-hunting and persecution was, for the present, at an end, resolved to accelerate his marriage with Miss Folliard, and for this purpose he waited upon her father, in order to secure his consent. His object was to retire to his English estates, and there pass the remainder of his life with his beautiful but reluctant bride. He paid his visit about two o'clock, and was told that Miss Folliard and her father were in the garden. Hither he accordingly repaired, and found the squire, his daughter, and Reilly, in the green-house. When the squire saw him he cried out, with something of a malicious triumph:

"Hallo, Sir Robert! 'why art thou so pale, young lover? why art thou so pale?' —and why does thy lip hang, Sir Robert?—new men, new measures, Sir Robert—and so, 'Othello's occupation's gone,' and the Earl of Chesterfield goes to mass every Sunday, and is now able to repeat his *padareens* in Irish."

"I am glad to find you so pleasant, Mr. Folliard; but I'm delighted to see the beautiful state of your green-house—oh, Miss Folliard!—excuse me. Your back was to me, and you were engaged in trailing that beautiful shrub; allow me the honor of shaking hands with you."

"Sir Robert, I bid you good-day, but you see that I have my garden gloves on; you will excuse me."

"Oh, Miss Folliard," he replied, "your will is the spirit of the British Constitution to me."

"A spirit which, I fear, you have too frequently violated, Sir Robert; but, as papa says, I believe your cruel occupation is gone—at least I hope so."

"'Gad, you got it there, Sir Robert," replied her father, laughing.

"I must confess it," replied the baronet; "but I think, in order to ingratiate myself with Miss Folliard, I shall take whatever side she recommends me. How, Mr. Folliard," he proceeded, fixing his eyes upon Reilly—"what the deuce is this? Have you got Robinson Crusoe here?"

"We have," replied the squire; "but his man Friday has got married to a Tipperary woman, and he's now in quest of a desert island for him and her to settle in."

"I think, papa," said Helen, "that if the principles of Sir Robert and his class were carried out, he would not have far to go to look for one."

"Another hit, Bob, you dog—another hit. Well said, Helen—well said, I say. Crusoe,

you villain, hold up your head, and thank God you're christened."

"Wid de help o' Gad, shir, I was christhened afwhore, sure, by de priesht."

This visit occurred about six weeks after the appointment of the new Viceroy to the Government of Ireland, and about five after the sheriff's illness.

"Come, Whitecraft," said the squire, "come and let us have lunch: I'll hold a crown I give you as good a glass of Burgundy as you gave me the other day, and will say done first."

"Won't Miss Folliard join us at lunch?" asked Whitecraft, looking to her for an assent.

"Why, I suppose so," replied her father; "won't you come, Helen?"

"You know, papa, I never lunch."

"'Gad, and neither you do, Helen. Come, Sir Robert, we will have a mouthful to eat, and something good to wash it down; come along, man, what the devil are you scrutinizing poor old Robinson Crusoe for? Come along, I say, the old chap is making the green-house thrive; he beats Malcomson. Here, Malcomson, you know Sir Robert Whitecraft, don't you?"

"Hout, your honor, wha' disna ken Sir Robert Whitecraft? Isn't his name far and near, as a braw defender o' the faith, and a putter down o' Papistry?"

"By the way, Malcomson," said Sir Robert, "where did you get Robinson Crusoe, by which I mean that wild-looking man in the green-house?"

"Saul, sir, it's a question I never speered at him. He cam' here as a gaberlunzie, and on stating that he was indoctrinated in the sceence o' buttany, his honor garred me employ him. De'il hae't but the truth I'll tell —he's a clever buttanist, and knows a' the sceentific names aff hand."

"So that's all you know about him?" said Sir Robert. "He has a devil of a beard, and is shockingly dressed. Why doesn't he shave?"

"Ou, just some Papistry nonsense," replied the gardener; "but we hae naething to do wi' that, sae lang's we get the worth o' our siller out o' him."

"Here's a shilling, Malcomson," said Sir Robert.

"Na, na, your honor; a shilling's no for a man that understands the sceence o' buttany: a shilling's for a flunky in livery; but as for me, I couldna conscientiously condescend upon less than ten o' them, or may be a pund British, but I'm feart that's contrair to your honor's habits."

"Well, then," said Sir Robert, "I have no more silver, and so I leave you to the agreeable society of Robinson Crusoe."

Reilly had watched Sir Robert's motions, as well as his countenance, in a manner as furtively as possible. Sometimes, indeed, he stared at him broadly, and with a stupid, oafish look, and again placed himself in such a position behind the range of flower-pots which were placed upon the ledges, that he could observe him without being perceived himself. The force of habit, however, is extraordinary. Our hero was a man exceedingly remarkable for personal cleanliness, and consequently made a point to wash his hands morning and evening with peculiar care. Be this as it may, the lynx eye of Sir Robert observed their whiteness, and he instantly said to himself, "This is no common laborer; I know that he is not, from the whiteness of his hands. Besides, he is disguised; it is evident from the length of his beard, and the unnecessary coarseness of his apparel. Then his figure, the symmetry and size of which no disguise can conceal; this, and everything else, assures me that he *is* disguised, and that he is, besides, no other individual than the man I want, William Reilly, who has been hitherto my evil genius; but it shall go hard with me, or I shall be his now." Such were his meditations as he passed along with the squire to join him at lunch.

When they had left the garden, Reilly addressed his *Cooleen Bawn* as follows:

"Helen, I am discovered."

"Discovered! O my God, no!"

"Unquestionably, there is no doubt of it; it is certain."

"But how do you know that it is certain?"

"Because I observed that Whitecraft's eyes were never off my hands; he knew that a common laborer could not possibly have such hands. Helen, I am discovered, and must fly."

"But you know that there is a change of Administration, and that the severity of the laws has been relaxed against Catholics."

"Yes, you told me so, and I have no fear for myself; but what I apprehend is that this discovery, of which I feel certain, will precipitate your marriage with that miscreant; they will entrap you into it, and then I am miserable for ever."

"Then, William, we must fly this very night; we will proceed to the Continent, to some Protestant state, where we can get married without any danger to the clergyman who may unite us."

"It is all that is left for us," replied Reilly; "I should sooner lose life than you, my beloved Helen; and now, what is to be done? fly we must; and in anticipation of the necessity of this step I left a suit of clothes with Lanigan: or rather with a poor widow, who was a pensioner of mine—a Mrs. Buck-

ley, from whom Lanigan got them, and has them. I could not think of accompanying you in this vile dress. On your way in, try to see Lanigan, and desire him to come out to me. There is not a moment to be lost; and, my dear Helen, show no marks of agitation; be calm and firm, or we are undone."

"Rely on me, dear Reilly, rely on me; I shall send Lanigan to you."

She left him, and went to her room, when she rang the bell, and her maid, the faithful Connor, who had been restored to her service, came to her.

"Connor," said she, "I shall not be able to dine with papa to-day, especially as that wretch Whitecraft is likely to dine with him. Go to Lanigan, and tell him to come to me, for I wish to know if he has any thing light and delicate that he could send to my room; Connor, I am very unhappy."

"But, miss, sure they say that the laws are changed, and that Mr. Reilly may go at large if he wishes."

"I know that, Connor; but send Lanigan to me immediately."

When Lanigan entered he found the *Cooleen Bawn* in tears.

"My God, Miss Folliard," said he, "what is the matter with you? why are you crying, or what have they done to you?"

"Lanigan," she replied, wiping her eyes, "you and Connor only are in our secret; we must fly this night."

"This night, Miss Folliard!"

"This night, Lanigan; and you must assist us."

"To the last drop of my blood, I will."

"Lanigan, Reilly is discovered."

"Discovered, miss! good God, how was he discovered?"

"By his hands—by the whiteness of his beautiful hands. Now, Lanigan, Sir Robert, aware that he cannot act the tyrant at present, as he used to do, will instigate my father to some act of outrage against him; for you know, Lanigan, how cowardly, how cruel, how vindictive, the detestable villain is; and most assuredly he will make my credulous and generous, but hot-tempered, father the instrument of his vengeance upon Reilly; and, besides, he will certainly urge him to bring about an immediate marriage between himself and me, to which, it is true, I would, and will die, sooner than consent. I will dine here, Lanigan, for I cannot bear to look upon my dear father, whom I am about to—" Here her tears interrupted her, and she could proceed no farther; at length she recovered herself, and resumed: "I know," she added, "that Whitecraft is now detailing his discovery and his plans. Oh! that, for Reilly's sake, I could become acquainted with them!"

"What would you wish for dinner, Miss Folliard?" asked Lanigan calmly.

"For dinner? oh, any thing, any thing; I care not what; but see Reilly, tell him I have a second key for the back gate in the garden, and also for the front; and, Lanigan—"

"Well, Miss Folliard; but, for God's sake, don't cry so; your eyes will get red, and your father may notice it."

"True, thank you, Lanigan; and Reilly, besides, told me to keep myself calm; but how can I, Lanigan? Oh, my father! my beloved father! how can I abandon—desert him? No, Lanigan, I will not go; say to Reilly—say I have changed my mind; tell him that my affection for my father has overcome my love for him; say I will never marry—that my heart is his, and never will or can be another's. But then again—he, the noble-minded, the brave, the generous, the disinterested—alas! I know not what to do, Lanigan, nor how to act. If I remain here, they will strive to force this odious marriage on me; and then some fearful catastrophe will happen; for, sooner than marry Whitecraft, I would stab either him or myself. Either that, Lanigan, or I should go mad; for do you know, Lanigan, that there is insanity in our family, by my father's side?"

"Unfortunately I know it, Miss Folliard; your uncle died in a mad-house, and it was in that way the estate came to your father. But remember what you say Mr. Reilly told you; be calm; I will send up some light nourishing dinner to you, at the usual hour: and in the meantime I will see him before then, and forge some excuse for bringing it up myself."

"Stay, Lanigan, I am sadly perplexed; I scarcely know what I say; I am in a state of inconceivable distraction. Suppose I should change my mind; it is not unlikely; I am whirled about by a crowd of contending emotions; but—well—let me see—oh, yes—it will be as well, Lanigan, to have two horses ready saddled; that is no crime, I hope, if we should go. I must, of course, put on my riding habit."

"Begging your pardon, Miss Folliard, you'll do no such thing; would you wish to have yourself discovered in the first inn you might put up at? No: dress yourself in one of Connor's dresses so that you may appear as humble as possible, and any thing but a lady of rank; otherwise, it will be difficult for you to escape observation."

"Well, Lanigan, all I can say is, that he and I shall place ourselves under your advice

and guidance. But my father—oh, my dear father!" And again she wrung her hands and wept bitterly.

"Miss Helen," said he, "as sure as the Lord's in heaven, you will discover yourself; and, after all, how do you know that Sir Robert *has* found out Mr. Reilly? Sure it's nothing but bare suspicion on both your parts. At any rate, I'll saddle Paudeen O'Rafferty wid my own hands, and I'll put on Molly Crudden's big pillion, for you know she's too fat to walk to mass, and you will feel yourself quite easy and comfortable in it."

"No, no, Lanigan; I know not why the impression is on me; but I feel as if I were never to experience comfort more. Go to Mr. Reilly; make what arrangements he and you may think proper, and afterwards you can acquaint me with them. You see, Lanigan, in what a state of excitement and uncertainty I am. But tell Reilly that, *rather than be forced into a marriage with Whitecraft—rather than go distracted*—RATHER THAN DIE—I shall fly with him."

CHAPTER XIX.

Reilly's Disguise Penetrated—He Escapes—Fergus Reilly is on the Trail of the Rapparee—Sir Robert begins to feel Confident of Success.

LANIGAN, on passing the dining parlor, heard what he conceived to be loud and angry voices inside the room, and as the coast was clear he deliberately put his ear to the key-hole, which ear drank in the following conversation:

"I say, Sir Robert, I'll shoot the villain. Do not hold me. My pistols are unloaded and loaded every day in the year; and ever since I transported that rebel priest I never go without them. But are you sure, Sir Robert? Is it not possible you may be mistaken? I know you are a suspicious fellow; but still, as I said, you are, for that very reason, the more liable to be wrong. But, if it is he, what's to be done, unless I shoot him?"

"Under the last Administration, sir, I could have answered your question; but you know that if you shoot him now you will be hanged. All that's left for us is simply to effect this marriage the day after to-morrow; the documents are all ready, and in the course of to-morrow the license can be procured. In the meantime, you must dispatch him to-night."

"What do you mean, Sir Robert?"

"I say you must send him about his business. In point of fact, I think the fellow knows that he is discovered, and it is not unlikely that he may make an effort to carry off your daughter this very night."

"But, Sir Robert, can we not seize him and surrender him to the authorities? Is he not an outlaw?"

"Unfortunately, Mr. Folliard, he is *not* an outlaw; I stretched a little too far there. It is true I got his name put into the *Hue-and-Cry*, but upon representations which I cannot prove."

"And why did you do so, Sir Robert?"

"Why, Mr. Folliard, to save your daughter."

The old man paused.

"Ah," he exclaimed, "that is a bad business—I mean for you, Sir Robert; but we will talk it over. You shall stop and dine with me; I want some one to talk with—some one who will support me and keep me in spirits;" and as he spoke he sobbed bitterly. "I wish to God," he exclaimed, "that neither I nor Helen—my dear Helen—had ever seen that fellow's face. You will dine with me, Bob?"

"I will, upon the strict condition thet you keep yourself quiet, and won't seem to understand any thing."

"Would you recommend me to lock her up?"

"By no means; that would only make matters worse. I shall dine with you, but you must be calm and quiet, and not seem to entertain any suspicions."

"Very well, I shall; but what has become of our lunch? Touch the bell."

This hint sent Lanigan downstairs, who met the butler coming up with it.

"Why, Pat," said he, "what kept you so long with the lunch?"

"I was just thinking," replied Pat, "how it would be possible to poison that ugly, ill-made, long-legged scoundrel, without poisoning my master. What's to be done, Lanigan? He will marry this darlin' in spite of us. And sure, now we have our privileges once more, since this great Earl came to rule over us; and sure, they say, he's a greater gentleman than the king himself. All I can say is, that if this same Sir Robert forces the *Cooleen Bawn* to such an unnatural marriage, I'll try a dose, hit or miss, for a cowheel anyway."

Lanigan laughed, and the butler passed on with the lunch.

We may state here that the squire, notwithstanding his outspoken manner against Popery, like a terrible reverend baronet not long deceased, who, notwithstanding his discovery of the most awful Popish plots, and

notwithstanding the most extravagant denunciations against Popery, like him, we say, the old squire seldom had more than one or two Protestant servants under his roof. Pat hated Longshanks, as he termed him, as did all the household, which, indeed, was very natural, as he was such a notorious persecutor of their religion and their clergy.

Lanigan lost no time in acquainting Reilly with what he had heard, and the heart of the latter palpitated with alarm on hearing that the next day but one was likely to join his *Cooleen Bawn*, by violent and unnatural proceedings, to the man whom she so much detested. He felt that it was now time to act in order to save her. Arrangements were consequently made between them as to the time and manner of their escape, and those arrangements, together with the dialogue he had overheard, Lanigan communicated to the *Cooleen Bawn*.

The squire on that day experienced strange alternations of feeling. His spirits seemed to rise and sink, as the quicksilver in the glass is affected by the state of the atmosphere. He looked into the future with terror, and again became, to the astonishment of his guest—we now talk of their conduct after dinner—actuated by some thought or impulse that put him into high spirits. Whitecraft, cool and cautious, resolved to let him have his way; for the squire was drinking deeply, and the Burgundy was good and strong.

"Bob, my boy," said he, "you don't drink, and that is a bad sign. You have either a bad head *of late*, or a bad heart, which is worse. Hang you, sir, why don't you drink? I have seen you lay lots of my guests under the table when you were quite cool; but now, what are you at? They can't run away to-night. Helen doesn't know that the discovery has been made. And now, Bob, you dog, listen to me, I say—would *you* have had the manliness and courage to expose yourself for the sake of a pretty girl as he did?—that is—here's a bumper to Helen! Curse you, will nothing make you drink? No, faith, he hadn't seen Helen at the time; it was for a worthless old fellow like me that he exposed himself; but no matter, you may be right; perhaps it *was* a plot to get acquainted with her. Still, I'm not sure of that; but if it was, I'll make him smart."

After dinner the squire drank deeply—so deeply, indeed, that Whitecraft was obliged to call up some of the male servants to carry him to his chamber and put him to bed. In this task Lanigan assisted, and thanked his stars that he was incapacitated from watching the lovers, or taking any means to prevent their escape. As for Whitecraft, thought he, I will soon send him about his business. Now, this gentleman's suspicions were the more deeply excited, in consequence of Helen's refusal to meet him at either lunch or dinner, a refusal which she gave on the plea of indisposition. He had therefore made up his mind to watch the motions of *Cooleen Bawn*, and he would have included Reilly in his *surveillance* were it not that Lanigan informed him of what he termed the mysterious disappearance of the under-gardener.

"What!" exclaimed Whitecraft, "is he gone?"

"He has gone, Sir Robert, and he left his week's wages behind him, for he never came to the steward to ask it. And now, Sir Robert, to tell you the truth, I'm not sorry he's gone; he was a disagreeable old fellow, that nobody could make either head or tail of; but, Sir Robert, listen—wait, sir, till I shut the door—it will soon be getting dusk: you know you're not liked in the country, and now that *we*—I mean the Catholics—have the countenance of Government, I think that riding late won't be for your health. The night air, you know, isn't wholesome to some people. I am merely givin' you a hint, Sir Robert, bekaise you are a friend of my masther's, and I hope for your own sake you'll take it. The sooner you mount your horse the better; and if you be guided by me, you'll try and reach your own house before the darkness sets in. Who knows what Reilly may be plotting? *You* know he doesn't like a bone in your honor's skin; and the Reillys are cruel and desperate."

"But, Lanigan, are you aware of any plot or conspiracy that has been got up against my life?"

"Not at all, your honor; but I put it to yourself, sir, whether you don't feel that I'm speaking the truth."

"I certainly know very well," replied the baronet, "that I am exceedingly unpopular with the Popish party; but, in my conduct towards them, I only carried out the laws that had been passed against them."

"I know that, Sir Robert, and, as a Catholic, I am sorry that you and others were supported and egged on by such laws. Why, sir, a hangman could give the same excuse, because if he put a rope about your neck, and tied his cursed knot nately under your left ear, what was he doin' but fulfillin' the law as you did? And now, Sir Robert, who would shake hands with a hangman, unless some unfortunate highway robber or murderer, that gives him his hand because he knows that he will never see his purty face again. This discourse is all folly, however—

you haven't a minute to lose—shall I order your horse?"

"Yes, you had better, Lanigan," replied the other, with a dogged appearance of cowardice and revenge. He could not forgive Lanigan the illustration that involved the comparison of the hangman; still his conscience and his cowardice both whispered to him that the cook was in the right.

This night was an eventful one. The course of our narrative brings us and our readers to the house of Captain Smellpriest, who had for his next-door neighbor the stalwart curate of the parish, the Rev. Samson Strong, to whom some allusion has been already made in these pages. Now the difference between Smellpriest and Whitecraft was this—Smellpriest was not a magistrate, as Whitecraft was, and in his priest-hunting expeditions only acted upon warrants issued by some bigoted and persecuting magistrate or other who lived in the district. But as his propensity to hunt those unfortunate persons was known, the execution of the warrants was almost in every instance entrusted to his hands. It was not so with Sir Robert, who, being himself a magistrate, might be said to have been in the position at once of judge and executioner. At all events, the race of blood was pretty equal between them; so far as the clergy was concerned; but in general enmity to the Catholic community at large, Whitecraft was far more cruel and comprehensive in his vengeance. It is indeed an observation founded upon truth and experience, that in all creeds, in proportion to his ignorance and bigotry, so is the violence of the persecutor. Whitecraft, the self-constituted champion of Protestantism, had about as much religion as Satan himself—or indeed less, for we are told that he believes and trembles, while Whitecraft, on the contrary, neither believed nor trembled. But if he did not fear God, he certainly feared man, and on the night in question went home with as craven a heart—thanks to Lanigan—as ever beat in a coward's bosom. Smellpriest, however, differed from Whitecraft in many points; he was brave, though cruel, and addicted to deep potations. Whitecraft, it is true, drank more deeply still than he did; but, by some idiosyncrasy of stomach or constitution, it had no more effect upon him than it had upon the cask from which it had been drawn, unless, indeed, to reduce him to greater sobriety and sharpen his prejudices.

Be this as it may, the Rev. Samson Strong made his appearance in Smellpriest's house with a warrant, or something in the shape of one, which he placed in the gallant captain's hands, who was drunk.

"What's this, oh, Samson the Strong?" said Smellpriest, laughing and hiccuping both at the same time.

"It's a hunt, my dear friend. One of those priests of Baal has united in unholy bands a Protestant subject with a subject of the harlot of abominations."

"Samson, my buck," said Smellpriest. "I hope this Popish priest of yours will not turn out to be a wild-goose. You know you have sent me upon many a wild-goose chase before; in—in—in fact, you nev—never sent me upon any other. You're a blockhead, oh, divine Samson; and that—that thick head of yours would flatten a cannon-ball. But what is it?—an intermarriage between the two P's—Popish and Protestant?"

"My dear," said his wife, "you must be aware that the Popishers have only got liberty to clatter their beads in public; but not to marry a Popisher to a Protestanter. This is a glorious opportunity for you to come home with a feather in your cap, my dear. Has he far to go, Mr. Strong? because he never goes out after the *black game*, as you call them, sir, that I don't feel as if I—but I can't express what I feel at his dear absence."

Now we have said that Smellpriest was drunk, which, in point of fact, was true; but not *so* drunk but that he observed some intelligent glances pass between his wife and the broad-shouldered curate.

"No, madam, only about two miles. Smellpriest, you know Jack Houlaghan's stripe?"

"Yes—I know Jack Houlaghan's stripe, in Kilrudden."

"Well, when you get to the centre of the stripe, look a little to your right, and—as the night is light enough—you will see a house—a cottage rather; to this cottage bring your men, and there you will find your game. I would not, captain, under other circumstances, advise you to recruit your spirits with an additional glass or two of liquor; but, as the night is cold, I really do recommend you to fortify yourself with a little refreshment."

He was easily induced to do so, and he accordingly took a couple of glasses of punch, and when about to mount his horse, it was found that he could not do so without the assistance of his men who were on duty, in all about six, every one of whom, as well as the captain himself, was well armed. It is unnecessary to state to the reader that the pursuit was a vain one. They searched the house to no purpose; neither priest or friar was there, and he, consequently, had the satisfaction of performing another wild-goose chase with his usual success, whenever the Rev. Samson

Strong sent him in pursuit. In the meantime the moon went down, and the night became exceedingly dark; but the captain's spirits were high and boisterous, so much so that they began to put themselves forth in song, the song in question being the once celebrated satire upon James the Second and Tyrconnell, called "Lillibullero," now "The Protestant Boys." How this song gained so much popularity it is difficult to guess, for we are bound to say that a more pointless and stupid production never came from the brain of man. Be this as it may, we must leave the gallant captain and his gang singing it in full chorus, and request our readers to accompany us to another locality.

The sheriff had now recovered from a dreadful attack of the prevailing epidemic, and was able to resume his duties. In the meantime he had heard of the change which had taken place in the administration of affairs at headquarters—a change at which he felt no regret, but rather a good deal of satisfaction, as it relieved him from the performance of very disagreeable and invidious duties, and the execution of many severe and inhuman laws. He was now looking over and signing some papers, when he rang the bell, and a servant entered.

"Tom," said he, "there is an old man, a poor mendicant, to call here, who was once a servant in our family; when he comes show him into the office. I expect some important family information from him respecting the property which we are disputing about in the Court of Chancery."

"Very well, sir," replied the servant, "I shall do so."

This occurred on the day of Whitecraft's visit to Squire Folliard, and it was on the evening of the same that Smellpriest was sent upon the usual chase, on the information of the Rev. Samson Strong; so that the events to which we have alluded occurred, as if by some secret relation to each other, on the same day.

At length our friend Fergus entered the office, in his usual garb of an aged and confirmed mendicant.

"Well, Reilly," said the sheriff, "I am glad you have come. I could have taken up this ruffian, this Red Rapparee, as he is properly called, upon suspicion; but that would have occasioned delay; and it is my object to lodge him in jail this night, so as to give him no chance of escape unless he breaks prison; but in order to prevent that, I shall give strict injunctions, in consequence of the danger to be apprehended from so powerful and desperate a character, that he be kept in strong irons."

"If it be within the strength of man, sir, to break prison, he will; he done it twice before; and he's under the notion that he never was born to be hanged; some of the ould prophecy men, and Mary Mahon, it seems, tould him so."

"In the meantime, Reilly, we shall test the truth of such prophecies. But listen. What is your wish that I should do for you, in addition to what I have already done. You know what I have promised you, and that for some time past, and that I have the Secretary's letter stating that you are free, and have to dread neither arrest nor punishment; but that is upon the condition that you shall give all the evidence against this man that you are possessed of. In that case the Government will also bountifully reward you besides."

"The Government need not think of any such thing, your honor," replied Reilly; "a penny of Government money will never cross my pocket. It isn't for any reward I come against this man, but because he joined the blood-hounds of Sir Robert Whitecraft against his own priests and his own religion; or at laste against the religion he professed, for I don't think he ever had any."

"Well, then, I can make you one of my officers."

"Is it to go among the poor and distressed, sir, and help, maybe, to take the bed from undher the sick father or the sick mother, and to leave them without a stick undher the ould roof or naked walls? No, sir; sooner than do that I'd take to the highway once more, and rob like a man in the face of danger. That I may never see to-morrow," he proceeded, with vehemence, "but I'd rather rob ten rich men than harish one poor family. It was that work that druv me to the coorse I left—that an' the persecution that was upon us. Take my word, sir, that in nineteen cases out of twenty it was the laws themselves, and the poverty they brought upon the country, that made the robbers."

"But could you not give evidence against some others of the gang?"

"No, sir; there is not one of them in this part of the kingdom, and I believe the most of them all are out of it altogether. But, even if they were not, I, sir, am not the man to betray them; the Red Rapparee would, if he could get at them; but, thank God, I've put every man of them beyond his reach."

"You did! and pray, now, why, may I ask, did that happen?"

"Bekaise it came to my ears that it was his intention to inform against them, and to surrender them all to the Government."

"Well, Reilly, after all, I believe you to be

an honest fellow, even although you were once a robber; but the question now is, what is to be done? Are you sure of his whereabouts?"

"I think so, sir; or, if I am not, I know one that is. But I have an observation to make. You know, sir, I would a' gone abroad, a freeman before this time, only that it's necessary I should still keep on my disguise, in ordher that I may move about as I wish until I secure this Red Rapparee. After that, sir, please God, I'll taste a mouthful of freedom. In the meantime I know one, as I said, that will enable us to make sure of him."

"Pray, who is that?"

"Tom Steeple, sir."

"Do you mean the poor fool of that name —or rather, I believe, of that nickname?"

"I do, sir; and in many things he's less of a fool than wiser men. He has been dodgin' him for the last two or three days; and *he's* a person that no one would ever suspect, unless, indeed, the cautious and practised Rapparees; but in ordher to meet any such suspicion, I have got upon the right trail myself —we're sure of him now, I think."

"Well, Reilly," proceeded the sheriff, "I leave the management of the capture of this man to yourself. You shall have a strong and determined party to support you. Do you only show them the man, and, take my word for it, they will secure the robber. After this affair is over you must throw off those rags. I will furnish you with decent clothes, and you can go out at large without fear or risk, and that under your own name too. I took your hint, and declined swearing the informations against him before the old squire, as I had intended, from an apprehension that he might possibly blab the fact to Whitecraft, who, if your information be correct, would have given him notice to fly, or otherwise concealed him from justice."

"Well, sir," said Reilly, "it's my opinion that the Rapparee will lodge in Sligo jail before to-morrow mornin'; and it's a thousand pities that Whitecraft shouldn't be sent there to keep him company."

"He certainly is the most unpopular man living. In the exuberance of his loyalty he has contrived to offend almost every liberal Protestant in the county, and that with an unjustifiable degree of wanton and overbearing insolence, arising from his consciousness of impunity. However, thank God, his day is gone by. But, mark me, Reilly—I had almost forgotten—don't neglect to secure the clothes in which the villain robbed me; they will be important."

"I had no intention of forgetting them, sir; and that scheme for throwing the guilt of his own villany on Mr. Reilly is another reason why I appear against him."

It was not, indeed, very easy for the Rapparee to escape. Whitecraft got home safe, a little before dusk, after putting his unfortunate horse to more than his natural speed. On his arrival he ordered wine to be brought, and sat down to meditate upon the most feasible plan for reinstating himself in the good graces of the new Government. After pondering over many speculations to that effect, it occurred to him that to secure the Rapparee, now that he could, as an agent and a guide, be of no further use to him, was the most likely procedure to effect his purpose. He accordingly rang for his usual attendant, and asked him if he knew where O'Donnel was. The man replied that he was generally in or about Mary Mahon's.

"Then," proceeded his master, "let him be with me to-morrow morning at eleven o'clock."

"If I see him, sir, I shall tell him."

"And say that I have something to his advantage to mention to him."

"Yes, sir; I shan't forget it."

"Now," said he, after the servant had withdrawn, and taking a bumper of wine, "I know not how it is, but I feel very uncomfortable somehow. I certainly did not expect a change in the Administration, nor a relaxation in the carrying out of the laws against Papists; and, under this impression, I fear I have gone too far, and that I may be brought over the coals for my conduct. I understand that the old French *Abbé* is returned, and once more a resident in the family of that cursed marquis. I think, by the way, I should go and apologize to both the marquis and the *Abbé*, and throw the blame of my own violence upon the conduct and instructions of the last Government; that, and the giving up of this ruffianly Rapparee to the present, may do something for me. This country, however, now that matters have taken such an unexpected turn, shall not long be my place of residence. As for Reilly, my marriage on the day after to-morrow with that stubborn beauty, Helen Folliard, will place an impassable barrier between him and her. I am glad he has escaped, for he will not be in our way, and we shall start for my English estates immediately after the ceremony. To-morrow, however, I shall secure the Rapparee, and hand him over to the authorities. I could have wished to hang Reilly, but now it is impossible; still, we shall start for England immediately after the nuptial knot is tied, for I don't think I could consider myself safe, now that he is at large, and at liberty to appear in his proper name and person,

especially after all the mischief I have done him, in addition to the fact of my bearing away his *Cooleen Bawn*, as she is called."

In fact, the man's mind was a turbid chaos of reflections upon the past and the future, in which selfishness, disappointed vengeance, terror, hypocritical policy, and every feeling that could fill the imagination of a man possessed of a vacillating, cowardly, and cruel heart, with the exception only of any thing that could border upon penitence or remorse. That Miss Folliard was not indifferent to him is true; but the feeling which he experienced towards her contained only two elements—sensuality and avarice. Of love, in its purest, highest, and holiest sense, he was utterly incapable; and he was not ignorant himself that, in the foul attachment which he bore her, he was only carrying into effect the principles of his previous life—those of a private debauchee, and a miser. That amiable, but unhappy and distracted, lady spent that whole evening in making preparations for her flight with Reilly. Her manner was wild and excited; indeed, so much so that the presence of mind and cool good sense, for which her maid Connor was remarkable, were scarcely sufficient to guide and direct her in this distressing emergency. She seemed to be absorbed by but one thought, and that was of her father. His affection for her enlarged and expanded itself in her loving heart, with a force and tenderness that nearly drove her into delirium. Connor, in the meantime, got all things ready, she herself having entrusted the management of every thing to her. The unhappy girl paced to and fro her room, sobbing and weeping bitterly, wringing her hands, and exclaiming from time to time:

"Oh, my father! my dear and loving father! is this the return I am making you for your tenderness and affection? what am I about to do? what steps am I going to take? to leave you desolate, with no heart for yours to repose upon! Alas! there was but *one* heart that you cared for, and in the duty and affection of *that* all your hopes for my happiness lay; and now, when you awake, you will find that that heart, the very heart on which you rested, has deserted you! When you come down to breakfast in the morning, and find that your own Helen, your only one, has gone—oh! who will sustain, or soothe, or calm you in the frenzi d grief of your desolation? But alas! what can I do but escape from that cowardly and vindictive villain—the very incarnation of oppression and persecution; the hypocrite, the secret debauchee, the mean, the dastardly, whose inhuman ambition was based upon and nurtured by blood? Alas! I have but the one remedy—flight with my noble-minded lover, whom that dastardly villain would have hunted, even to his murder, or an ignominious death, which would have been worse. This flight is not spontaneously mine; I am forced to it, and of two evils I will choose the least; surely I am not bound to seal my own misery forever."

Connor had by this time attempted, as far as she could, to disguise her in one of her own dresses; but nothing could conceal the elegance and exquisite proportion of her figure, nor the ladylike harmony and grace of her motions. She then went to the oaken cabinet, mentioned by her father in the opening of our narrative, and as she always had the key of that portion of it which contained her own diamonds, and other property, she took a casket of jewels of immense value from it, and returned to her room, where she found Connor before her.

"Mr. Reilly is ready, miss," she said, "and is waiting for you behind the garden; the only one I dread in the house is Andy Cummiskey; he is so much attached to the master that I think if he knew you were about to escape he would tell him."

"Well, Connor, we must only avoid him as well as we can; but where, or how, shall I carry these jewels? in these slight pockets of yours, Connor, they could not be safe."

"Well, then, can't you give them to *him* to keep, and they'll be safe?"

"True, Connor, so they will; but I give him a heart which he prizes above them all. But, alas! my father! oh! Connor, shall I abandon *him?*"

"Do not distress yourself, my dear Miss Folliard; your father loves you too much to hold out his anger against you long. Did you not tell me that if Reilly was a Protestant your father said he would rather marry you to him than to Sir Robert, the villain, with all his wealth?"

"I did, Connor, and my father certainly said so; but the serpent, Connor, entwined himself about the poor credulous man, and succeeded in embittering him against Reilly, who would rather go to the scaffold—yes, and—which he would consider a greater sacrifice—rather abandon even me than his religion. And do you think, Connor, that I do not love my noble-minded Reilly the more deeply for this? I tell you, Connor, that if he renounced his religion upon no other principle than his love for me, I should despise him as a dishonorable man, to whom it would not be safe for me to entrust my happiness."

"Well, well; but now it is time to start, and Reilly, as I said, is waiting for you behind the garden."

"Oh, Connor, and is it come to this? my dear papa! but I cannot go until I see him; no, Connor, I could not; I shall go quietly into his room, and take one look at him; probably it may be the *last*. Oh, my God! what am I about to do! Connor, keep this casket until I return; I shall not be long."

She then went to his chamber. The blinds and curtains of the windows had not been drawn, and it occurred to her that as her dress was so different from any which her father had ever seen on her, some suspicion might be created should he observe it. She therefore left the candlestick which she had brought with her on the inside sill of a lobby window, having observed at the door that the moonlight streamed in through the windows upon his bed. Judge of her consternation, however, when, on entering the room, her father, turning himself in the bed, asked:

"Is that Helen?"

"It is, papa; I thought you had been asleep, and I came up to steal my good-night kiss without any intention of awakening you."

"I drank too much, Helen, with Whitecraft, whom wine—my Burgundy—instead of warming, seems to turn into an icicle. However, he is a devilish shrewd fellow. Helen, darling, there's a jug of water on the table there; will you hand it to me; I'm all in a flame and a fever."

She did so, and her hand trembled so much that she was near spilling it. He took a long draught, after which he smacked his lips, and seemed to breathe more freely.

"Helen," said he.

"Well, dear papa."

"Helen, I had something to mention to you, but—"

"Don't disturb yourself to-night, papa; you are somewhat feverish," she added, feeling his pulse; if you will excuse me, papa, I think you drank too much; your pulse is very quick; if you could fall into rest again it would be better for you."

"Yes, it would; but my mind is uneasy and sorrowful. Helen, I thought you loved me, my darling."

"Oh, could you doubt it, papa? You see I am come as usual—no, not as usual, either—to kiss you; I will place my cheek against yours, as I used to do, dear papa, and you will allow me to weep—to weep—and to say that never father deserved the love of a daughter as you have deserved mine; and never did daughter love an affectionate and indulgent father more tenderly than your *Cooleen Bawn* does you."

"I know it, Helen, I know it; your whole life has been a proof of it, and will be a proof of it; I know you have no other object in this world than to make papa happy; I know I feel that you are great-minded enough to sacrifice everything to that."

"Well, but, papa," she continued, "for all my former offences against you will you pity and forgive me?"

"I do both, you foolish darling; but what makes you speak so?"

"Because I feel melancholy to-night, papa; and now, papa, if ever I should do any thing wrong, won't you pity and forgive your own *Cooleen Bawn?*"

"Get along, you gipsy—don't be crying. What could you do that papa wouldn't forgive you, unless to run away with Reilly? Don't you know that you can wind me round your finger?"

"Farewell, papa," she said, weeping all the time, for, in truth, she found it impossible to control herself; "farewell—good night! and remember that you may have a great deal to forgive your own *Cooleen Bawn* some of these days."

On leaving the bedroom, where she was hurried by her feelings into this indiscreet dialogue, she found herself nearly incapable of walking without support. The contending affections for her father and her lover had nearly overcome her. By the aid of the staircase she got to her own room, where she was met by Connor, into whose arms she fell almost helpless.

"Ah, Connor," she said, alluding to her father, whom she could not trust herself to name, "to-morrow morning what will become of him when he finds that I am gone? But I know his affectionate heart. He will relent—he will relent for the sake of his own *Cooleen Bawn*. The laws against Catholics are now relaxed, and I am glad of it. But I have one consolation, my dear girl, that I am trusting myself to a man of honor. We will proceed directly to the Continent—that is, if no calamitous occurrence should take place to prevent us; and there, after our nuptials shall have been duly celebrated, I will live happy with Reilly—that is, Connor, as happy as absence from my dear father will permit me—and Reilly will live happy, and, at least, free from the persecution of bad laws, and such villains as base and vindictive Whitecraft. You, Connor, must accompany me to the back of the garden, and see me off. Take this purse, Connor, as some compensation for your truth and the loss of your situation."

It was now, when the moment of separation approached, that Connor's tears began to flow, far less at the generosity of her mistress than her affection, and that which she looked upon as probably their final separation.

"Dear Connor," said her mistress, "I would expect that support to my breaking

heart which I have hitherto experienced from you. Be firm now, for you see *I* am not firm, and your tears only render me less adequate to encounter the unknown vicissitudes which lie before me."

"Well, then, I *will* be firm, my dear mistress; and I tell you that if there is a God in heaven that rewards virtue and goodness like yours, you will be happy yet. Come, now, *he* is waiting for you, and the less time we lose the better. We shall go out by the back way—it is the safest."

They accordingly did so, and had nearly reached the back wall of the garden when they met Malcomson and Cummiskey, on their way into the kitchen, in order to have a mug of strong ale together. The two men, on seeing the females approach, withdrew to the shelter of a clump of trees, but not until they were known by Connor.

"Come, my dear mistress," she whispered, "there is not one second of time to be lost. Cummiskey, who is a Catholic, might overlook our being here at this hour; because, although he is rather in the light of a friend than a servant to your father, still he is a friend to Reilly as well; but as for that ugly Scotchman, that is nothing but bone and skin, I would place no dependence whatever upon him."

We will not describe the meeting between Reilly and the *Cooleen Bawn*. They had no time to lose in the tender expressions of their feelings. Each shook hands with, and bid farewell to, poor affectionate Connor, who was now drowned in tears; and thus they set off, with a view of leaving the kingdom, and getting themselves legally married in Holland, where they intended to reside.

CHAPTER XX.

The Rapparee Secured—Reilly and the Cooleen Bawn Escape, and are Captured.

Cummiskey had a private and comfortable room of his own, to which he and the canny Scotchman proceeded, after having ordered from the butler a tankard of strong ale. There was a cheerful fire in the grate, and when the tankard and glasses were placed upon the table the Scotchman observed:

"De'il be frae my saul, maisther Cummiskey, but ye're vera comfortable here."

"Why, in troth, I can't complain, Mr. Malcomson; here's your health, sir, and after that we must drink another."

"Mony thanks, Andrew."

"Hang it, I'm not Andrew; that sounds like Scotch; I'm Andy, man alive."

"Weel, mony thanks, Andy; but for the maitter o' that, what the de'il waur wad it be gin it were Scotch?"

"Bekaise I wouldn't like to be considered a Scotchman, somehow."

"Weel, Andrew—Andy—I do just suppose as muckle; gin ye war considered Scotch, muckle more might be expeck' frae you than, being an Irisher as you are, you could be prepared to answer to; whereas—"

"Why, hang it, man alive, we can give three answers for your one."

"Weel, but how is that now, Andy? Here's to ye in the meantime; and 'am no sayin' but this yill is just richt gude drink; it warms the pit o' the stamach, man."

"You mane by that the pit o' the *stom*ach, I suppose."

"Ay, just that."

"Troth, Mr. Malcomson, you Scotchers bring everything to the pit o' the stomach—no, begad, I ax your pardon, for although you take care of the pratie bag, you don't forget the pocket."

"And what for no, Andy? why the de'il war pockets made, gin they warna to be filled? but how hae ye Irishers three answers for our ane?"

"Why, first with our tongue; and even with that we bate ye—flog you hollow. You Scotchmen take so much time in givin' an answer that an Irishman could say his patherin aves before you spake. You think first and spake aftherwards, and come out in sich a way that one would suppose you say grace for every word you *do* spake; but it isn't 'for what we are to receive' you ought to say 'may the Lord make us thankful,' but for what we are to lose—that is, your Scotch nonsense; and, in troth, we ought to be thankful for losin' it."

"Weel, man, here's to ye, Andy—ou, man, but this yill is extraordinar' gude."

"Why," replied Andy, who, by the way, seldom went sober to bed, and who was even now nearly three sheets in the wind, "it is, Mr. Malcomson, the right stuff. But, as I was sayin', you Scotchmen think first and spake afther—one of the most unlucky practices that ever anybody had. Now, don't you see the advantage that the Irishman has over you; he spakes first and thinks aftherwards, and then, you know, it gives him plenty of time to think—here's God bless us all, anyhow—but that's the way an Irishman bates a Scotchman in givin' an answer; for if he fails by word o' mouth, why, whatever he's deficient in he makes up by the fist or cudgel: and there's our three Irish answers for one Scotch."

"Weel, man, a' richt—a' richt—we winna quarrel aboot it; but I thocht ye promised

to gie us another toast—de'il be frae my saul, man, but I'll drink as mony as you like wisiccan liquor as this."

"Ay, troth, I did say so, and devil a thing but your Scotch nonsense put it out o' my head. And now, Mr. Malcomson, let me advise you, as a friend, never to attempt to have the whole conversation to yourself; it isn't daicent."

"Weel, but the toast, man?"

"Oh, ay; troth, your nonsense would put any thing out of a man's head. Well, you see this comfortable room?"

"Ou, ay; an vara comfortable it is; ma faith, I wuss I had ane like it. The auld squire, however, talks o' buildin' a new gerden-hoose."

"Well, then, fill your bumper. Here's to her that got me this room, and had it furnished as you see, in order that I might be at my aise in it for the remaindher o' my life—I mane the *Cooleen Bawn*—the Lily of the Pluins of Boyle. Come, now, off with it; and if you take it from your lantern jaws till it's finished, divil a wet lip ever I'll give you."

The Scotchman was not indisposed to honor the toast; first, because the ale was both strong and mellow, and secondly, because the *Cooleen Bawn* was a great favorite of his, in consequence of the deference she paid to him as a botanist.

"Eh, sirs," he exclaimed, after finishing his bumper, "but she's a bonnie lassie that, and as gude as she's bonnie—and de'il a higher compliment she could get, I think. But, Andy, man, don't they talk some clash and havers anent her predilection for that weel-farrant callan, Reilly?"

"Ah, my poor girl," replied Cummiskey, shaking his head sorrowfully; "I pity her there; but the thing's impossible—they can't be married—the law is against them."

"Weel, Andy, they must e'en thole it; but 'am thinkin' they'll just break bounds at last, an' tak' the law, as you Irish do, into their ain hands."

"What do you mane by that?" asked Andy, whose temper began to get warm by the observation.

"Ah, man," replied the Scotchman, "dinna let your birses rise at that gate. Noo, there's the filbert trees, ma friend, of whilk ane is male and the tither female; and the upshot e'en is, Andy, that de'il a pickle o' fruit ever the female produces until there's a braw halesome male tree planted in the same gerden. But, ou, man, Andy, wasna you she and that bonnie jaud, Connor, that we met the noo? De'il be frae my saul, but I jalouse she's aff wi' him this vara nicht."

"Oh, dear, no!" replied Cummiskey, starting; "that would kill her father; and yet there must be something in it, or what would bring them there at such an hour? He and she may love one another as much as they like, but *I* must think of my masther."

"In that case, then, our best plan is to gie the alarm."

"Hould," replied Andy; "let us be cautious. They wouldn't go on foot, I think; and before we rise a ruction in the house, let us find out whether she *has* made off or not. Sit you here, and I'll try to see Connor, her maid."

"Ah, but, Andy, man, it's no just that pleasant to sit here dry-lipped; the tankard's oot, ye ken."

"Divil tankard the Scotch sowl o' you—who do you suppose could think of a tankard, or any thing else, if what we suspect has happened? It will kill him."

He then proceeded to look for Connor, whom he met in tears, which she was utterly unable to conceal.

"Well, Miss Connor," he asked, "what's the matther? You're cryin', I persave."

"Ah, Cummiskey, my mistress is unwell."

"Unwell! why she wasn't unwell a while ago, when the gardener and I met her and you on your way to the back o' the garden."

"Oh, yes," replied Connor; "I forced her to come out, to try what a little cool air might do for her."

"Ay, but, Connor, did you force her to come in again?"

"Force! there was no force necessary, Cummiskey. She's now in her own room, quite ill."

"Oh, then, if she's quite ill, it's right that her father should know it, in ordher that a docther may be sent for."

"Ah, but she's now asleep, Cummiskey—that sleep may set her to rights; she may waken quite recovered; but you know it might be dangerous to disturb her."

"Ah, I believe you," he replied, dissembling; for he saw at once, by Connor's agitated manner, that every word she uttered was a lie; "the sleep will be good for her, the darlin'; but take care of her, Connor, for the masther's sake; for what would become of him if any thing happened her? You know that if *she* died *he* wouldn't live a week."

"That's true, indeed," she replied; "and if she get's worse, Cummiskey, I'll let the master know."

"That's a good girl; *ma gragal* that you war—good-by, acushla," and he immediately returned to his own room, after having observed that Connor went down to the kitchen.

"Now, Mr. Malcomson," said he, "there is a good fire before you. I ax your pardon —just sit in the light of it for a minute or so; I want this candle."

"'Am sayin', Andy, gin ye haud awa to the kitchen, it wadna be a crime to send up anither tankard o' that yill."

To this the other made no reply, but walked out of the room, and very deliberately proceeded to that of Helen. The door was open, the bed unslept upon, the window-curtains undrawn; in fact, the room was tenantless, Connor a liar and an accomplice, and the suspicions of himself and Malcomson well founded. He then followed Connor to the kitchen; but she too had disappeared, or at least hid herself from him. He then desired the other female servants to ascertain whether Miss Folliard was within or not, giving it as his opinion that she had eloped with Willy Reilly. The uproar then commenced, the house was searched, but no *Cooleen Bawn* was found. Cummiskey himself remained comparatively tranquil, but his tranquillity was neither more nor less than an inexpressible sorrow for what he knew the affectionate old man must suffer for the idol of his heart, upon whom he doted with such unexampled tenderness and affection. On ascertaining that she was not in the house, he went upstairs to his master's bedroom, having the candlestick in his hand, and tapped at the door. There was no reply from within, and on his entering he found the old man asleep. The case, however, was one that admitted of no delay; but he felt that to communicate the melancholy tidings was a fearful task, and he scarcely knew in what words to shape the event which had occurred. At length he stirred him gently, and the old man, half asleep, exclaimed:

"Good-night, Helen — good-night, darling! I am not well; I had something to tell you about the discovery of—but I will let you know it to-morrow at breakfast. For *your* sake I shall let him escape: there now, go to bed, my love."

"Sir," said Cummiskey, "I hope you'll excuse me for disturbing you."

"What? who? who's there? I thought it was my daughter."

"No, sir, I wish it was; I'm come to tell you that Miss Folliard can't be found: we have searched every nook and corner of the house to no purpose: wherever she is, she's not undher this roof. I came to tell you so, and to bid you get up, that we may see what's to be done."

"What," he exclaimed, starting up, "my child!—my child—my child gone! God of heaven! God of heaven, support me!—my darling! my treasure! my delight!—Oh, Cummiskey!—but it can't be—to desert me! —to leave me in misery and sorrow, broken-hearted, distracted!—she that was the prop of my age, that loved me as never child loved a father! Begone, Cummiskey, it is not so, it can't be, I say: search again; she is somewhere in the house; you don't know, sirra, how she loved me: why, it was only this night that, on taking her good-night kiss, she—ha—what? what?—she wept, she wept bitterly, and bade me *farewell!* and said—Here, Cummiskey, assist me to dress. Oh, I see it, Cummiskey, I see it! she is gone! she is gone! yes, she bade me farewell; but I was unsteady and unsettled after too much drink, and did not comprehend her meaning."

It is impossible to describe the almost frantic distraction of that loving father, who, as he said, had no prop to lean upon but his *Cooleen Bawn*, for he himself often loved to call her by that appellation.

"Cummiskey," he proceeded, "we will pursue them—we must have my darling back: yes, and I will forgive her, for what is she but a child, Cummiskey, not yet twenty. But in the meantime I will shoot him dead—dead—dead—if he had a thousand lives; and from this night out I shall pursue Popery, in all its shapes and disguises; I will imprison it, transport it, hang it—hang it, Cummiskey, as round as a hoop. Ring the bell, and let Lanigan unload, and then reload my pistols; he always does it; his father was my grandfather's gamekeeper, and he understands fire-arms. Here, though, help me on with my boots first, and then I will be dressed immediately. After giving the pistols to Lanigan, desire the grooms and hostlers to saddle all the horses in the stables. We must set out and pursue them. It is possible we may overtake them yet. I will not level a pistol against my child; but, by the great Boyne! if we meet them, come up with them, overtake them, his guilty spirit will stand before the throne of judgment this night. Go now, give the pistols to Lanigan, and tell him to reload them steadily."

We leave them now, in order that we may follow the sheriff and his party, who went to secure the body of the Red Rapparee. This worthy person, not at all aware of the friendly office which his patron, Sir Robert, intended to discharge towards him, felt himself quite safe, and consequently took very little pains to secure his concealment. Indeed, it could hardly be expected that he should, inasmuch as Whitecraft had led him to understand, as we have said, that Government had pardoned him his social trangressions, as a *per contra* for those political ones which they still ex-

pected from him. Such was his own view of the case, although he was not altogether free from misgiving, and a certain vague apprehension. Be this as it may, he had yet to learn a lesson which his employer was not disposed to teach him by any other means than handing him over to the authorities on the following day. How matters might have terminated between him and the baronet it is out of our power to detail. The man was at all times desperate and dreadful, where either revenge or anger was excited, especially as he labored under the superstitious impression that he was never to be hanged or perish by a violent death, a sentiment then by no means uncommon among persons of his outrageous and desperate life. It has been observed, and with truth, that the Irish Rapparees seldom indulged in the habit of intoxication or intemperance, and this is not at all to be wondered at. The meshes of authority were always spread for them, and the very consciousness of this fact sharpened their wits, and kept them perpetually on their guard against the possibility of arrest. Nor was this all. The very nature of the lawless and outrageous life they led, and their frequent exposure to danger, rendered habits of caution necessary—and those were altogether incompatible with habits of intemperance. Self-preservation rendered this policy necessary, and we believe there are but few instances on record of a Rapparee having been arrested in a state of intoxication. Their laws, in fact, however barbarous they were in other matters, rendered *three* cases of drunkenness a cause of expulsion from the gang. O'Donnel, however, had now relaxed from the rigid observation of his own rules, principally for the reasons we have already stated—by which we mean, a conviction of his own impunity, as falsely communicated to him by Sir Robert Whitecraft. The sheriff had not at first intended to be personally present at his capture; but upon second consideration he came to the determination of heading the party who were authorized to secure him. This resolution of Oxley's had, as will presently be seen, a serious effect upon the fate and fortunes of the *Cooleen Bawn* and her lover. The party, who were guided by Tom Steeple, did not go to Mary Mahon's, but to a neighboring cottage, which was inhabited by a distant relative of O'Donnel. A quarrel had taken place between the fortune-teller and him, arising from his jealousy of Sir Robert, which caused such an estrangement as prevented him for some time from visiting her house. Tom Steeple, however, had haunted him as his shadow, without ever coming in contact with him personally, and on this night he had him set as a soho man has a hare in her form. Guided, therefore, by the intelligent idiot and Fergus, the party reached the cottage in which the Rapparee resided. The house was instantly surrounded and the door knocked at, for the party knew that the man was inside.

"Who is there?" asked the old woman who kept the cottage.

"Open the door instantly," said the sheriff, "or we shall smash it in."

"No, I won't," she replied; "no, I won't, you bosthoon, whoever you are. I never did nothin' agin the laws, bad luck to them, and I won't open my door to any strolling vagabone like you."

"Produce the man we want," said the sheriff, "or we shall arrest you for harboring an outlaw and a murderer. Your house is now surrounded by military, acting under the king's orders."

"Give me time," said the crone; "I was at my prayers when you came to disturb me, and I'll finish them before I open the door, if you were to burn the house over my head, and myself in it. Up," said she to the Rapparee, "through the roof—get that ould table undher your feet—the thatch is thin—slip out and lie on the roof till they go, and then let them whistle jigs to the larks if they like."

The habits of escape peculiar to the Rapparees were well known to Fergus, who cautioned those who surrounded the house to watch the roof. It was well they did so, for in less time than we have taken to describe it the body of the Rapparee was seen projecting itself upwards through the thin thatch, and in an instant several muskets were levelled at him, accompanied by instant orders to surrender on pain of being shot. Under such circumstances there was no alternative, and in a few minutes he was handcuffed and a prisoner. The party then proceeded along the road on which some of the adventures already recorded in this narrative had taken place, when they were met, at a sharp angle of it, by Reilly and his *Cooleen Bawn*, both of whom were almost instantly recognized by the sheriff and his party. Their arrest was immediate.

"Mr. Reilly," said the sheriff, "I am sorry for this. You must feel aware that I neither am or ever was disposed to be your enemy; but I now find you carrying away a Protestant heiress, the daughter of my friend, contrary to the laws of the land, a fact which in itself gives me the power and authority to take you into custody, which I accordingly do in his Majesty's name. I owe you no ill will, but in the meantime you must return with me to Squire Folliard's house. Miss

Folliard, you must, as you know me to be your father's friend, consider that I feel it my duty to restore you to him."

"I am not without means of defence," replied Reilly, "but the exercise of such means would be useless. Two of your lives I might take; but *yours*, Mr. Sheriff, could not be one of them, and that you must feel."

"I feel, Mr. Reilly, that you are a man of honor; and, in point of fact, there is ample apology for your conduct in the exquisite beauty of the young lady who accompanies you; but I must also feel for her father, whose bereavement, occasioned by her loss, would most assuredly break his heart."

Here a deep panting of the bosom, accompanied by violent sobs, was heard by the party, and *Coleen Bawn* whispered to Reilly, in a voice nearly stifled by grief and excitement:

"Dear Reilly, I love you; but it was madness in us to take this step; let me return to my father—only let me see *him* safe?"

"But Whitecraft?"

"Death sooner. Reilly, I am ill, I am ill; this struggle is too much for me. What shall I do? My head is swimming."

She had scarcely uttered these words when her father, accompanied by his servants, dashed rapidly up, and Cummiskey, the old huntsman, instantly seized Reilly, exclaiming, "Mr. Reilly, we have you now;" and whilst he spoke, his impetuous old master dashed his horse to one side, and discharged a pistol at our hero, and this failing, he discharged another. Thanks to Lanigan, however, they were both harmless, that worthy man having forgotten to put in bullets, or even as much powder as would singe an ordinary whisker.

"Forbear, sir," exclaimed the sheriff, addressing Cummiskey; "unhand Mr. Reilly. He is already in custody, and you, Mr. Folliard, may thank God that you are not a murderer this night. As a father, I grant that an apology may be made for your resentment, but not to the shedding of blood."

"Lanigan! villain! treacherous and deceitful villain!" shouted the squire, "it was your perfidy that deprived me of my revenge. Begone, you sneaking old profligate, and never let me see your face again. You did not load my pistols as you ought."

"No, sir," replied Lanigan, "and I thank God that I did not. It wasn't my intention to see your honor hanged for murder."

"Mr. Folliard," observed the sheriff, you ought to bless God that gave you a prudent servant, who had too much conscience to become the instrument of your vengeance. Restrain your resentment for the present, and leave Mr. Reilly to the laws of his country. We shall now proceed to your house, where, as a magistrate, you can commit him to prison, and I will see the warrant executed this night. We have also another prisoner of some celebrity, the Red Rapparee."

"By sun and moon, I'll go bail for him," replied the infuriated squire. "I like that fellow because Reilly does not. Sir Robert spoke to me in his favor. Yes, I shall go bail for him, to any amount."

"His offence is not a bailable one," said the cool sheriff; "nor, if the thing were possible, would it be creditable in you, as a magistrate, to offer yourself as bail for a common robber, one of the most notorious highwaymen of the day."

"Well, but come along," replied the squire; "I have changed my mind; we shall hang them both; Sir Robert will assist and support me. I could overlook the offence of a man who only took my purse; yes, I *could* overlook that, but the man who would rob me of my child—of the solace and prop of my heart and life—of—of—of—"

Here the tears came down his cheeks so copiously that his sobs prevented him from proceeding. He recovered himself, however, for indeed he was yet scarcely sober after the evening's indulgence, and the two parties returned to his house, where, after having two or three glasses of Burgundy to make his hand steady, he prepared himself to take the sheriff's informations and sign unfortunate Reilly's committal to Sligo jail. The vindictive tenacity of resentment by which the heart of the ruffian Rapparee was animated against that young man was evinced, on this occasion, by a satanic ingenuity of malice that was completely in keeping with the ruffian's character. It was quite clear, from the circumstances we are about to relate, that the red miscreant had intended to rob Folliard's house on the night of his attack upon it, in addition to the violent abduction of his daughter. We must premise here that Reilly and the Rapparee were each strongly guarded in different rooms, and the first thing the latter did was to get some one to inform Mr. Folliard that he had a matter of importance concerning Reilly to mention to him. This was immediately on their return, and before the informations against Reilly were drawn up. Folliard, who knew not what to think, paused for some time, and at last, taking the sheriff along with him, went to hear what O'Donnel had to say.

"Is that ruffian safe?" he asked, before entering the room; "have you so secured him that he can't be mischievous?"

"Quite safe, your honor, and as harmless as a lamb."

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"MR. REILLY, WE HAVE YOU NOW;" AND WHILST HE SPOKE, HIS IMPETUOUS OLD MASTER DASHED HIS HORSE TO ONE SIDE, AND DISCHARGED A PISTOL AT OUR HERO, AND THIS FAILING, HE DISCHARGED ANOTHER.—*p.* 140.

He and the sheriff then entered, and found the huge savage champing his teeth and churning with his jaws, until a line of white froth encircled his mouth, rendering him a hideous and fearful object to look at.

"What is this you want with me, you misbegotten villain," said the squire. "Stand between the ruffian and me, fellows, in the meantime—what is it, sirra?"

"Who's the robber now, Mr. Folliard?" he asked, with something, however, of a doubtful triumph in his red glaring eye. "Your daughter had jewels in a black cabinet, and I'd have secured the same jewels and your daughter along with them, on a certain night, only for Reilly; and it was very natural he should out-general me, which he did; but it was only to get both for himself. Let him be searched at wanst, and, although I don't say he has them, yet I'd give a hundred to one he has; *she* would never carry them while *he* was with her."

The old squire, who would now, with peculiar pleasure, have acted in the capacity of hangman in Reilly's case, had that unfortunate young man been doomed to undergo the penalty of the law, and that no person in the shape of Jack Ketch was forthcoming—he, we say—the squire—started at once to the room where Reilly was secured, accompanied also by the sheriff, and, after rushing in with a countenance inflamed by passion, shouted out:

"Seize and examine that villain; he has robbed me—examine him instantly: he has stolen the family jewels."

Reilly's countenance fell, for he knew his fearful position; but that which weighed heaviest upon his heart was a consciousness of the misinterpretations which the world might put upon the motives of his conduct in this elopement, imputing it to selfishness and a mercenary spirit. When about to be searched, he said:

"You need not; I will not submit to the indignity of such an examination. I have and hold the jewels for Miss Folliard, whose individual property I believe they are; nay, I am certain of it, because she told me so, and requested me to keep them for her. Let her be sent for, and I shall hand them back to her at once, but to no other person without violence."

"But she is not in a condition to receive them," replied the sheriff (which was a fact); "I pledge my honor she is not."

"Well, then, Mr. Sheriff, I place them in your hands; you can do with them as you wish—that is, either return them to Miss Folliard, the legal owner of them, or to her father."

The sheriff received the casket which contained them, and immediately handed it to Mr. Folliard, who put it in his pocket, exclaiming:

"Now, Reilly, if we can hang you for nothing else, we can hang you for this; and we will, sir."

"You, sir," said Reilly, with melancholy indignation, "are privileged to insult me; so, alas! is every man now; but I can retire into the integrity of my own heart and find a consolation there of which you cannot deprive me. My life is now a consideration of no importance to myself since I shall die with the consciousness that your daughter loved me. You do not hear this for the first time, for that daughter avowed it to yourself! and if I had been mean and unprincipled enough to have abandoned my religion, and that of my persecuted forefathers, I might ere this have been her husband."

"Come," said Folliard, who was not prepared with an answer to this, "come," said he, addressing the sheriff, "come, till we make out his *mittimus*, and give him the first shove to the gallows."

They then left him.

CHAPTER XXI.

Sir Robert Accepts of an Invitation.

The next morning rumor had, as they say, her hands and tongues very full of business. Reilly and the Red Rapparee were lodged in Sligo jail that night, and the next morning the fact was carried by the aforesaid rumor far and wide over the whole country. One of the first whose ears it reached was the gallant and virtuous Sir Robert Whitecraft, who no sooner heard it than he ordered his horse and rode at a rapid rate to see Mr. Folliard, in order, now that Reilly was out of the way, to propose an instant marriage with the *Cooleen Bawn*. He found the old man in a state very difficult to be described, for he had only just returned to the drawing-room from the strongly sentinelled chamber of his daughter. Indignation against Reilly seemed now nearly lost in the melancholy situation of the wretched *Cooleen Bawn*. He had just seen her, but, somehow, the interview had saddened and depressed his heart. Her position and the state of her feelings would have been pitiable, even to the eye of a stranger; what, then, must they not have been to a father who loved her as he did?

"Helen," said he, as he took a chair in her room, after her guards had been desired to withdraw for a time, "Helen, are you aware that you have eternally disgraced your own

name, and that of your father and your family?"

Helen, who was as pale as death, looked at him with vacant and unrecognizing eyes, but made no reply, for it was evident that she either had not heard, or did not understand, a word he said.

"Helen," said he, "did you hear me?"

She looked upon him with a long look of distress and misery, but there was the vacancy still, and no recognition.

This, I suppose, thought the father, is just the case with every love-sick girl in her condition, who will not be allowed to have her own way; but of what use is a father unless he puts all this nonsense down, and substitutes his own judgment for that of a silly girl. I will say something now that will startle her, and I will say nothing but what I will bring about.

"Helen, my darling," he said, "are you both deaf and blind, that you can neither see nor hear your father, and to-morrow your wedding-day? Sir Robert Whitecraft will be here early; the special license is procured, and after marriage you and he start for his English estates to spend the honeymoon there, after which you both must return and live with me, for I need scarcely say, Helen, that I could not live without you. Now I think you ought to be a happy girl to get a husband possessed of such immense property."

She started and looked at him with something like returning consciousness. "But where is Willy Reilly?" she asked.

"The villain that would have robbed me of my property and my daughter is now safe in Sligo jail."

A flash of something like joy—at least the father took it as such—sparkled in a strange kind of triumph from her eyes.

"Ha," said she, "is that villain safe at last? Dear papa, I am tired of all this—this—yes, I am tired of it, and it is time I should; but you talked about something else, did you not? Something about Sir Robert Whitecraft and a marriage. And what is my reply to that? why, it is this, papa: *I have but one life, sir.* Now begone, and leave me, or, upon my honor, I will push you out of the room. Have I not consented to all your terms. Let Sir Robert come to-morrow and he shall call me his wife before the sun reaches his meridian. Now, leave me; leave me, I say."

In this uncertain state her father found himself compelled to retire to the drawing-room, where Sir Robert and he met.

"Mr. Folliard," said the baronet, "is this true?"

"Is what true, Sir Robert?" said he sharply.

"Why, that Reilly and the Red Rapparee are both in Sligo jail?"

"It *is* true, Sir Robert; and it must be a cursed thing to be in jail for a capital crime."

"Are you becoming penitent," asked the other, "for bringing the laws of the land to bear upon the villain that would have disgraced, and might have ruined, your only daughter?"

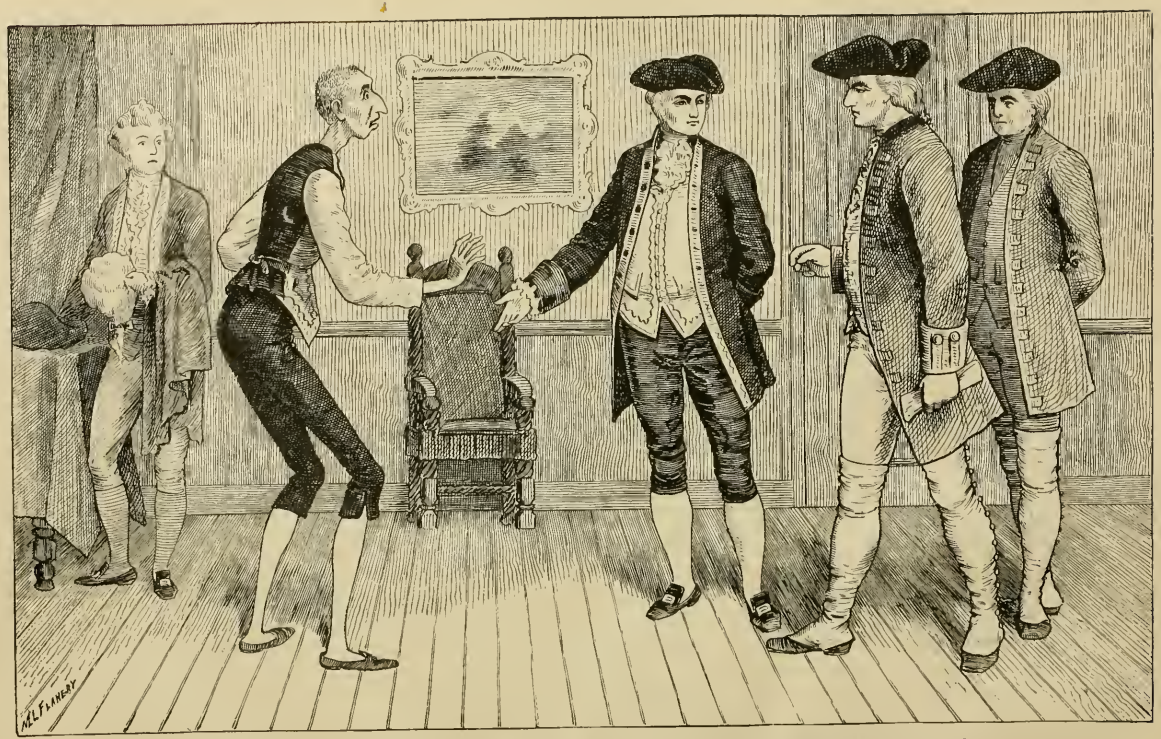
The father's heart was stung by the diabolical pungency of this question.

"Sir Robert," said he, "we will hang him, if it was only to get the villain out of the way; and if you will be here to-morrow at ten o'clock, the marriage must take place. I'll suffer no further nonsense about it; but, mark me, after the honeymoon shall have passed, you and she must come and reside here; to think that I could live without her is impossible. Be here, then, at ten o'clock; the special license is ready, and I have asked the Rev. Samson Strong to perform the ceremony. A couple of my neighbor Ashford's daughters will act as bridesmaids, and I myself will give her away: the marriage articles are drawn up, as you know, and there will be little time lost in signing them; and yet, it's a pity to—but no matter—be here at ten."

Whitecraft took his leave in high spirits. The arrest and imprisonment of Reilly had removed the great impediment that had hitherto lain in the way of his marriage; but not so the imprisonment of the Red Rapparee. The baronet regretted that that public and notorious malefactor had been taken out of his own hands, because he wished, as the reader knows, to make the delivering of him up to the Government one of the elements of his reconciliation to it. Still, as matters stood, he felt on the whole gratified at what had happened.

Folliard, after the baronet had gone, knew not exactly how to dispose of himself. The truth is, the man's heart was an anomaly—a series of contradictions, in which one feeling opposed another for a brief space, and then was obliged to make way for a new prejudice equally transitory and evanescent. Whitecraft he never heartily liked; for though the man was blunt, he could look through a knave, and appreciate a man of honor, with a great deal of shrewd accuracy. To be sure, Whitecraft was enormously rich, but then he was penurious and inhospitable, two vices strongly and decidedly opposed to the national feeling.

"Curse the long-legged scoundrel," he exclaimed; "if he should beget me a young breed of Whitecrafts like himself I would rather my daughter were dead than marry



"NO, SIR ROBERT, I CANNOT TAKE YOUR HAND, NOR THE HAND OF ANY MAN THAT IS RED WITH THE BLOOD OF MURDER."—D. 143

him. Then, on the other hand, Reilly; hang the fellow, had he only recanted his nonsensical creed, I could—but then, again, he might, after marriage, bring her over to the Papists, and then, by the Boyne, all my immense property would become Roman Catholic. By Strongbow, he'd teach the very rivers that run through it to sing Popish psalms in Latin: he would. However, the best way is to hang him out of the way, and when Jack Ketch has done with him, so has Helen. Curse Whitecraft, at all events!"

We may as well hint here that he had touched the Burgundy to some purpose; he was now in that state of mental imbecility where reason, baffled and prostrated by severe mental suffering and agitation, was incapable of sustaining him without having recourse to the bottle. In the due progress of the night he was helped to bed, and had scarcely been placed and covered up there when he fell fast asleep.

Whitecraft, in the meantime, suspected, of course, or rather he was perfectly aware of the fact, that unless by some ingenious manœuvre, of which he could form no conception, a marriage with the *Cooleen Bawn* would be a matter of surpassing difficulty; but he cared not, provided it could be effected by any means, whether foul or fair. The attachment of this scoundrel to the fair and beautiful *Cooleen Bawn* was composed of two of the worst principles of the heart—sensuality and avarice; but, in this instance, avarice came in to support sensuality. What the licentious passions of the debauchee might have failed to tempt him to, the consideration of her large fortune accomplished. And such was the sordid and abominable union of the motives which spurred him on to the marriage.

The next morning, being that which was fixed for his wedding-day, he was roused at an early hour by a loud rapping at his hall-door. He started on his elbow in the bed, and ringing the bell for his valet, asked, when that gentleman entered his apartment half dressed, "What was the matter? what cursed knocking was that? Don't they know I can hunt neither priest nor Papist now, since this polite viceroy came here."

"I don't know what the matter is, Sir Robert; they are at it again; shall I open the door, sir?"

"Certainly; open the door immediately."

"I think you had better dress, Sir Robert, and see what they want."

The baronet threw his long fleshless shanks out of the bed, and began to get on his clothes as fast as he could.

"Ha!" said he, when he was nearly dressed, "what if this should be a Government prosecution for what I have undertaken to do on my own responsibility during the last Administration? But no, surely it cannot be; they would have given me some intimation of their proceedings. This was due to my rank and station in the country, and to my exertions, a zealous Protestant, to sustain the existence of Church and State. Curse Church and State if it be! I have got myself, perhaps, into a pretty mess by them."

He had scarcely uttered the last words when Mr. Hastings, accompanied by two or three officers of justice, entered his bedroom.

"Ah, Hastings, my dear friend, what is the matter? Is there any thing wrong, or can I be of any assistance to you? if so, command me. But we are out of power now, you know. Still, show me how I can assist you. How do you do?" and as he spoke he put his hand out to shake hands with Mr. Hastings.

"No, Sir Robert, I cannot take your hand, nor the hand of any man that is red with the blood of murder. This," said he, turning to the officers, "is Sir Robert Whitecraft; arrest him for murder and arson."

"Why, bless me, Mr. Hastings, are you mad? Surely, I did nothing, unless under the sanction and by the instructions of the last Government?"

"That remains to be seen, Sir Robert; but, at all events, I cannot enter into any discussion with you at present. I am here as a magistrate. Informations have been sworn against you by several parties, and you must now consider yourself our prisoner and come along with us. There is a party of cavalry below to escort you to Sligo jail."

"But how am I to be conveyed there? I hope I will be allowed my own carriage?"

"Unquestionably," replied Mr. Hastings; "I was about to have proposed it myself. You shall be treated with every respect, sir."

"May I not breakfast before I go?"

"Certainly, sir; we wish to discharge our duty in the mildest possible manner."

"Thank you, Hastings, thank you; you were always a good-hearted, gentlemanly fellow. You will, of course, breakfast with me; and these men must be attended to."

And he rang the bell.

"I have already breakfasted, Sir Robert; but even if I had not, it would not become me, as your prosecutor, to do so; but perhaps the men—"

"What," exclaimed the baronet, interrupting him, "you my prosecutor! For what, pray?"

"That will come in time," replied the other; "and you may rest assured that I would not be here now were I not made

aware that you were about to be married to that sweet girl whom you have persecuted with such a mean and unmanly spirit, and designed to start with her for England this day."

Whitecraft, now that he felt the dreadful consequences of the awful position in which he was placed, became the very picture of despair and pusillanimity; his complexion turned haggard, his eyes wild, and his hands trembled so much that he was not able to bring the tea or bread and butter to his lips; in fact, such an impersonation of rank and unmanly cowardice could not be witnessed. He rose up, exclaiming, in a faint and hollow voice, that echoed no other sensation than that of horror:

"I cannot breakfast; I can eat nothing. What a fate is this! on the very day, too, which I thought would have consummated my happiness! Oh, it is dreadful!"

His servant then, by Mr. Hastings' orders, packed up changes of linen and apparel in his trunk, for he saw that he himself had not the presence of mind to pay attention to any thing. In the course of a few minutes the carriage was ready, and with tottering steps he went down the stairs, and was obliged to be assisted into it by two constables, who took their places beside him. Mr. Hastings bowed to him coldly, but said nothing; the coachman smacked his whip, and was about to start, when he turned round and said:

"Where am I to drive, Sir Robert?"

"To Sligo jail," replied one of the constables, "as quick as you can too."

The horses got a lash or two, and bounded on, whilst an escort of cavalry, with swords drawn, attended the coach until it reached its gloomy destination, where we will leave it for the present.

The next morning, as matters approached to a crisis, the unsteady old squire began to feel less comfortable in his mind than he could have expected. To say truth, he had often felt it rather an unnatural process to marry so lovely a girl to "such an ugly stork of a man as Whitecraft was, and a knave to boot. I cannot forget how he took me in by the 'Hop-and-go-constant' affair. But then he's a good Protestant—not that I mean he has a single spark of religion in his nondescript carcass; but in those times it's not canting and psalm-singing we want, but good political Protestantism, that will enable us to maintain our ascendancy by other means than praying. Curse the hound that keeps him? Is this a day for him to be late on? and it now half past ten o'clock; however, he must come soon; but, upon my honor, I dread what will happen when he does. A scene there will be no doubt of it; however, we must only struggle through it as well as we can. I'll go and see Helen, and try to reconcile her to this chap, or, at all events, to let her know at once that, be the consequences what they may, she *must* marry him, if I were myself to hold her at the altar."

When he had concluded this soliloquy, Ellen Connor, without whose society Helen could now scarcely live, and who, on this account, had not been discharged after her elopement, she, we say, entered the room, her eye resolute with determination, and sparkling with a feeling which evinced an indignant sense of his cruelty in enforcing this odious match. The old man looked at her with surprise, for it was the first time she had ever ventured to obtrude her conversation upon him, or to speak, unless when spoken to.

"Well, madam," said he, "what do you want? Have you any message from your mistress? if not, what brings you here?"

"I have no message from my mistress," she replied in a loud, if not in a vehement, voice; "I don't think my mistress is capable of sending a message; but I came to tell you that the God of heaven will soon send you a message, and a black one too, if you allow this cursed marriage to go on."

"Get out, you jade—leave the room; how is it your affair?"

"Because I have what you want—a heart of pity and affection in my breast. Do you want to drive your daughter mad, or to take her life?"

"Begone, you impudent hussy; why do you dare to come here on such an occasion, only to annoy me?"

"I will *not* begone," she replied, with a glowing cheek, "unless I am put out by force—until I point out the consequences of your selfish tyranny and weakness. I don't come to annoy you, but I come to warn you, and to tell you, that I know your daughter better than you do yourself. This marriage must not go on; or, if it does, send without delay to a lunatic asylum for a keeper for that only daughter. I know her well, and I tell you that that's what it'll come to."

The squire had never been in the habit of being thus addressed by any of his servants; and the consequence was that the thing was new to him; so much so that he felt not only annoyed, but so much astounded, that he absolutely lost, for a brief period, the use of his speech. He looked at her with astonishment—then about the room—then up at the ceiling, and at length spoke:

"What the deuce does all this mean? What are you driving at? Prevent the marriage, you say?"

"If the man," proceeded Connor, not even waiting to give him an answer—"if the man had but one good point—one good quality—one virtue in his whole composition to redeem him from contempt and hatred—if he had but one feature in his face only as handsome as the worst you could find in the devil's—yes, if he had but one good thought, or one good feature in either his soul or body, why—vile as it would be—and barbarous as it would be—and shameful and cruel as it would be—still, it would have the one good thought, and the one good feature to justify it. But here, in this deep and wretched villain, there is nothing but one mass of vice and crime and deformity; all that the eye can see, or the heart discover, in his soul or body, is as black, odious, and repulsive as could be conceived of the worst imp of perdition. And this is the man—the persecutor—the miser—the debauchee—the hypocrite—the murderer, and the coward, that you are going to join your good—virtuous—spotless—and beautiful daughter to! Oh, shame upon you, you heartless old man; don't dare to say, or pretend, that you love her as a father ought, when you would sacrifice her to so base and damnable a villain as that. And again, and what is more, I tell you not to prosecute Reilly; for, as sure as the Lord above is in heaven, your daughter is lost, and you'll not only curse Whitecraft, but the day and hour in which you were born—black and hopeless will be your doom if you do. And now, sir, I have done; I felt it to be my duty to tell you this, and to warn you against what I know will happen unless you go back upon the steps you have taken."

She then courtesied to him respectfully, and left the room in a burst of grief which seized her when she had concluded.

Ellen Connor was a girl by no means deficient in education—thanks to the care and kindness of the *Cooleen Bawn*, who had herself instructed her. 'Tis true, she had in ordinary and familiar conversation a touch of the brogue; but, when excited, or holding converse with respectable persons, her language was such as would have done no discredit to many persons in a much higher rank of life.

After she had left the room, Folliard looked towards the door by which she had taken her exit, as if he had her still in his vision. He paused—he meditated—he walked about, and seemed taken thoroughly aback.

"By earth and sky," he exclaimed, "but that's the most comical affair I have seen yet. Comical! no, not a touch of comicality in it. Zounds, is it possible that the jade has coerced and beaten me?—dared to beard the lion in his own den—to strip him, as it were, of his claws, and to pull the very fangs out of his jaws, and, after all, to walk away in triumph? Hang me, but I must have a strong touch of the coward in me or I would not have knuckled as I did to the jade. Yet, hold—can I, or ought I to be angry with her, when I know that this hellish racket all proceeded from her love to Helen. Hang me, but she's a precious bit of goods, and I'll contrive to make her a present, somehow, for her courage. Beat me! by sun and sky she did."

He then proceeded to Helen's chamber, and ordered her attendants out of the room; but, on looking at her, he felt surprised to perceive that her complexion, instead of being pale, was quite flushed, and her eyes flashing with a strange wild light that he had never seen in them before.

"Helen," said he, "what's the matter, love? are you unwell?"

She placed her two snowy hands on her temples, and pressed them tightly, as if striving to compress her brain and bring it within the influence of reason.

"I fear you are unwell, darling," he continued; "you look flushed and feverish. Don't, however, be alarmed; if you're not well, I'd see that knave of a fellow hanged before I'd marry you to him, and you in that state. The thing's out of the question, my darling Helen, and must not be done. No: God forbid that I should be the means of murdering my own child."

So much, we may fairly presume, proceeded from the pithy lecture of Ellen Connor; but the truth was, that the undefinable old squire was the greatest parental coward in the world. In the absence of his daughter he would rant and swear and vapor, strike the ground with his staff, and give other indications of the most extraordinary resolution, combined with fiery passion, that seemed alarming. No sooner, however, did he go into her presence, and contemplate not only her wonderful beauty, but her goodness, her tenderness and affection for himself, than the bluster departed from him, his resolution fell, his courage oozed away, and he felt that he was fairly subdued, under which circumstances he generally entered into a new treaty of friendship and affection with the enemy.

Helen's head was aching dreadfully, and she felt feverish and distracted. Her father's words, however, and the affection which they expressed, went to her heart; she threw her arms about him, kissed him, and was relieved by a copious flood of tears.

"Papa," she said, "you are both kind and good; surely you wouldn't kill your poor Helen?"

"Me kill you, Helen!—oh, no, faith. If Whitecraft were hanged to-morrow it wouldn't give me half so much pain as if your little finger ached."

Just at this progress of the dialogue a smart and impatient knock came to the door.

"Who is that?" said the squire; "come in—or, stay till I see who you are." He then opened the door and exclaimed, "What! Lanigan!—why, you infernal old scoundrel! how dare you have the assurance to look me in the face, or to come under my roof at all, after what I said to you about the pistols?"

"Ay, but you don't know the good news I have for you and Miss Helen."

"Oh, Lanigan, is Reilly safe?—is he set at large? Oh, I am sure he must be. Never was so noble, so pure, and so innocent a heart."

"Curse him, look at the eye of him," said her father, pointing his cane at Lanigan; "it's like the eye of a sharp-shooter. What are you grinning at, you old scoundrel?"

"Didn't you expect Sir Robert Whitecraft here to-day to marry Miss Folliard, sir?"

"I did, sirra, and I do; he'll be here immediately."

"Devil a foot he'll come to-day, I can tell you; and that's the way he treats your daughter!"

"What does this old idiot mean, Helen? Have you been drinking, sirra?"

"Not yet, sir, but plaise the Lord I'll soon be at it."

"Lanigan," said Helen, "will you state at once what you have to say?"

"I will, miss; but first and foremost, I must show you how to dance the 'Little House under the Hill,'" and as he spoke he commenced whistling that celebrated air and dancing to it with considerable alacrity and vigor, making allowances for his age.

The father and daughter looked at each other, and Helen, notwithstanding her broken spirits, could not avoid smiling. Lanigan continued the dance, kept wheeling about to all parts of the room, like an old madcap, cutting, capering, and knocking up his heels against his ham, with a vivacity that was a perfect mystery to his two spectators, as was his whole conduct.

"Now, you drunken old scoundrel," said his master, catching him by the collar and flourishing the cane over his head, "if you don't give a direct answer I will cane you within an inch of your life. What do you mean when you say that Sir Robert Whitecraft won't come here to-day?"

"Bekaise, sir, it isn't convanient to him."

"Why isn't it convenient, you scoundrel?"

"Bekaise, sir, he took it into his head to try a change of air for the benefit of his health before he starts upon his journey; and as he got a very friendly *invitation* to spend some time in Sligo jail he *accepted* it, and if you go there you will find him before you. It seems he started this morning in great state, with two nice men belonging to the law in the carriage with him, to see that he should want for nothing, and a party of cavalry surroundin' his honor's coach, as if he was one of the judges, or the Lord Lieutenant."

The figurative style of his narrative would unquestionably have caused him to catch the weight of the cane aforesaid had not Helen interfered and saved him for the nonce.

"Let me at him, Helen, let me at him—the drunken old rip; why does he dare to humbug us in this manner?"

"Well, then, sir, if you wish to hear the good news, and especially you, Miss Folliard, it will probably relieve your heart when I tell you that Sir Robert Whitecraft is, before this time, in the jail of Sligo, for a charge of murdher, and for burnin' Mr. Reilly's house and premises, which it now seems aren't Mr. Reilly's at all—nor ever were—but belong to Mr. Hastings."

"Good heavens!" exclaimed the squire, "this is dreadful: but is it true, sirra?"

"Why, sir, if you go to his house you'll find it so."

"Oh, papa," said Helen, "surely they wouldn't hang him?"

"Hang him, Helen; why, Helen, the tide's turned; they want to make him an example for the outrages that he and others have committed against the unfortunate Papists. Hang him!—as I live, he and the Red Rapparee will both swing from the same gallows; but there is one thing I say—if he hangs I shall take care that that obstinate scoundrel, Reilly, shall also swing along with him."

Helen became as pale as ashes, the flush had disappeared from her countenance, and she burst again into tears.

"Oh, papa," she exclaimed, "spare Reilly: *he* is innocent."

"I'll hang him," he replied, "if it should cost me ten thousand pounds. Go you, sirra, and desire one of the grooms to saddle me Black Tom; he is the fastest horse in my stables; I cannot rest till I ascertain the truth of this."

On passing the drawing-room he looked in, and found Mr. Strong and the two Misses Ashford waiting, the one to perform, and the others to attend, at the ceremony.

"Mr. Strong and ladies," said he, with looks of great distraction, "I fear there will

be no marriage here to-day. An accident, I believe, has happened to Sir Robert Whitecraft that will prevent his being a party in the ceremony, for this day at least."

"An accident!" exclaimed the ladies and the clergyman. "Pray, Mr. Folliard, what is it? how did it happen?"

"I am just going to ride over to Sir Robert's to learn everything about it," he replied; "I will be but a short time absent. But how!" he added, "here's his butler, and I will get everything from him. Oh, Thomas, is this you? follow me to my study, Thomas."

As the reader already knows all that Thomas could tell him, it is only necessary to say that he returned to the drawing-room with a sad and melancholy aspect.

"There is no use," said he, addressing them, "in concealing what will soon be known to the world. Sir Robert Whitecraft has been arrested on a charge of murder and arson, and is now a prisoner in the county jail."

This was startling intelligence to them all, especially to the parson, who found that the hangman was likely to cut him out of his fees. The ladies screamed, and said, "it was a shocking thing to have that delightful man hanged;" and then asked if the bride-elect had heard it.

"She has heard it," replied her father, and I have just left her in tears; but upon my soul, I don't think there is one of them shed for *him*. Well, Mr. Strong, I believe, after all, there is likely to be no marriage, but that is not your fault; you came here to do your duty, and I think it only just—a word with you in the next apartment," he added, and then led the way to the dining-room. "I was about to say, Mr. Strong, that it would be neither just nor reasonable to deprive you of your fees; here is a ten-pound note, and it would have been twenty had the marriage taken place. I must go to Sligo to see the unfortunate baronet, and try what can be done for him—that is, if anything can, which I greatly doubt."

The parson protested against the receipt of the ten-pound note very much in the style of a bashful schoolboy, who pretends to refuse an apple from a strange relation when he comes to pay a visit, whilst, at the same time, the young monkey's chops are watering for it. With some faint show of reluctance he at length received it, and need we say that it soon disappeared in one of his sanctified pockets.

"Strong, my dear fellow," proceeded the squire, "you will take a seat with these ladies in their carriage and see them home."

"I would, with pleasure, my dear friend, but that I am called upon to console poor Mrs. Smellpriest for the loss of the captain."

"The captain! why, what has happened him?"

"Alas! sir, an unexpected and unhappy fate. He went out last night a priest-hunting, like a godly sportsman of the Church, as he was, and on his return from an unsuccessful chase fell off his horse while in the act of singing that far-famed melody called 'Lillibullero,' and sustained such severe injuries that he died on that very night, expressing a very ungodly penitence for his loyalty in persecuting so many treasonable Popish priests."

The squire seemed amazed, and, after a pause, said:

"He repented, you say; upon my soul, then, I am glad to hear it, for it is more than I expected from him, and, between you and me, Strong, I fear it must have taken a devilish large extent of repentance to clear him from the crimes he committed against both priests and Popery."

"Ah," replied Strong, with a groan of deep despondency, "but, unfortunately, my dear sir, he did not repent of his sins—that is the worst of it—Satan must have tempted him to transfer his repentance to those very acts of his life upon which, as Christian champion, he should have depended for justification above—I mean, devoting his great energies so zealously to the extermination of idolatry and error. What was it but repenting for his chief virtues, instead of relying, like a brave and dauntless soldier of our Establishment, upon his praiseworthy exertions to rid it of its insidious and relentless enemies?"

The squire looked at him.

"I'll tell you what, Strong—by the great Boyne, I'd give a trifle to see you get a smart touch of persecution in your own person; it might teach you a little more charity towards those who differ with you; but, upon my honor, if any change in our national parties should soon take place, and that the Papists should get the upper hand, I tell you to your teeth that if ever your fat ribs should be tickled by the whip of persecution, they would render you great injustice who should do it for the sake of *religion*—a commodity with which I see, from the spirit of your present sentiments, you are not over-burdened. However, in the meantime, I daresay that whatever portion you possess of it, you will charitably expend in consoling his widow, as you say. Good-morning!"

We must return, however, to the close of Smellpriest's very sudden and premature departure from the scene of his cruel and merciless labors. Having reached the stripe

already described to him by Mr. Strong, and to which he was guided by his men, he himself having been too far advanced in liquor to make out his way with any kind of certainty, he proceeded, still under their direction, to the cottage adjoining, which was immediately surrounded by the troopers. After knocking at the door with violence, and demanding instant admittance, under the threat of smashing it in, and burning the house as a harbor for rebellious priests, the door was immediately opened by a gray-headed old man, feeble and decrepit in appearance, but yet without any manifestation of terror either in his voice or features. He held a candle in his hand, and asked them, in a calm, composed voice, what it was they wanted, and why they thus came to disturb him and his family at such an unseasonable hour.

"Why, you treasonable old scoundrel," shouted Smellpriest, "haven't you got a rebel and recusant Popish priest in the house? I say, you gray-headed old villain, turn him out on the instant, or, if you hesitate but half a minute, we'll make a bonfire of you, him, the house, and all that's in it. Zounds, I don't see why I shouldn't burn a house as well as Whitecraft. That cursed baronet is getting ahead of me, but I think I am entitled to a bonfire as well as he is. Shall we burn the house?" he added, addressing his men.

"I think you had better not, captain," replied the principal of them; "recollect there are new regulations now. It wouldn't be safe, and might only end in hanging every man of us—yourself among the rest."

"But why doesn't the old rebel produce the priest?" asked their leader. "Come here, sirra—hear me—produce that lurking priest immediately."

"I don't exactly understand you, captain," replied the old man, who appeared to know Smellpriest right well. "I don't think it's to my house you should come to look for a priest."

"Why not, you villain? I have been directed here, and told that I would find my game under your roof."

"In the first place," replied the old man, with a firm and intrepid voice, "I am no villain; and in the next, I say, that if any man directed you to this house in quest of a priest, he must have purposely sent you upon a fool's errand. I am a Protestant, Captain Smellpriest; but, Protestant as I am, I tell you to your face that if I could give shelter to a poor persecuted priest, and save him from the clutches of such men as you and Sir Robert Whitecraft, I would do it. In the meantime, there is neither priest nor friar under this roof; you can come in and search in the house, if you wish."

"Why, gog's ouns, father," exclaimed one of the men, "how does it come that we find you here?"

"Very simply, John," replied his father—for such he was—"I took this cottage, and the bit of land that goes with it, from honest Andy Morrow, and we are not many hours in it. The house was empty for the last six months, so that I say again, whoever sent Captain Smellpriest here sent him upon a fool's errand—upon a wild-goose chase."

The gallant captain started upon hearing these latter words.

"What does he say," he asked—"a wild goose chase! Right—right," he added, in a soliloquy; "Strong is at the bottom of it the black scoundrel! but still, let us search the house; the old fellow admits that he *would* shelter a priest. Search the house I say.

"'There was an old prophecy found in a bog,
Lillibullero, bullen ala, &c., &c.'"

The house was accordingly searched, but it is unnecessary to add that neither priest nor friar was found under the roof, nor any nook or corner in which either one or the other could have been concealed.

The party, who then directed their steps homewards, were proceeding across the fields to the mountain road which ran close by, and parallel with the stripe, when they perceived at once that Smellpriest was in a rage, by the fact of his singing "Lillibullero;" for, whenever either his rage or loyalty happened to run high, he uniformly made a point to indulge himself in singing that celebrated ballad.

"By jabers," said one of them to his companions, "there will be a battle royal between the captain and Mr. Strong if he finds the parson at home before him."

"If there won't be a fight with the parson, there will with the wife," replied the other. "Hang the same parson," he added; "many a dreary chase he has sent us upon, with nothing but the fatigue of a dark and slavish journey for our pains. With what bitterness he's giving us 'Lillibullero,' and he scarcely able to sit on his horse! I think I'll advance, and ride beside him, otherwise, he may get an ugly tumble on this hard road."

He accordingly did so, observing, as he got near him, "I have taken the liberty to ride close beside you, lest, as the night is dark, your horse might stumble."

"What! do you think I'm drunk, you scoundrel?—fall back, sir, immediately.

"'Lillibullero, bullen ala.'

"I say I'm not drunk; but I'm in a terrible

passion at that treacherous scoundrel; but no matter, I saw something to-night—never mind, I say.

"'There was an old prophecy found in a bog,
Lillibullero, bullen ala;
That Ireland should be ruled by an Ass and a Dog,
Lillibullero, bullen ala;
And now that same prophecy has come to pass—
Lillibullero, bullen ala;
For Talbot's the Dog, and James is the Ass,
Lillibullero, bullen ala.'

"Never mind, I say; hang me, but I'll crop the villain, or crop both, which is better still—steady, Schomberg—curse you."

The same rut or chasm across the more open road on which they had now got out, and that had nearly been so fatal to Mr. Brown, became decidedly so to unfortunate Smellpriest. The horse, as his rider spoke, stopped suddenly, and, shying quickly to the one side, the captain was pitched off, and fell with his whole weight upon the hard pavement. The man was an unwieldy, and consequently a heavy man, and the unexpected fall stunned him into insensibility. After about ten minutes or so he recovered his consciousness, however, and having been once more placed upon his horse, was conducted home, two or three of his men, with much difficulty, enabling him to maintain his seat in the saddle. In this manner they reached his house, where they stripped and put him to bed, having observed, to their consternation, that strong gushes of blood welled, every three or four minutes, from his mouth.

The grief of his faithful wife was outrageous; and Mr. Strong, who was still there kindly awaiting his safe return, endeavored to compose her distraction as well as he could.

"My dear madam," said he, "why will you thus permit your grief to overcome you? You will most assuredly injure your own precious health by this dangerous outburst of sorrow. The zealous and truly loyal captain is not, I trust, seriously injured; he will recover, under God, in a few days. You may rest assured, my dear Mrs. Smellpriest, that his life is too valuable to be taken at this unhappy period. No, he will, I trust and hope, be spared until a strong anti-Popish Government shall come in, when, if he is to lose it, he will lose it in some great and godly exploit against the harlot of abominations."

"Alas! my dear Mr. Strong, that is all very kind of you, to support my breaking heart with such comfort; but, when he is gone, what will become of *me?*"

"You will not be left desolate, my dear madam—you will be supported—cheered—consoled. Captain, my friend, how do you feel now? Are you easier?"

"I am," replied the captain feebly—for he had not lost his speech—"come near me, Strong."

"With pleasure, dear captain, as becomes my duty, not only as a friend, but as an humble and unworthy minister of religion. I trust you are not in danger, but, under any circumstances, it is best, you know, to be prepared for the worst. Do not then be cast down, nor allow your heart to sink into despair. Remember that you have acted the part of a zealous and faithful champion on behalf of our holy Church, and that you have been a blessed scourge of Popery in this Pope-ridden country. Let that reflection, then, be your consolation. Think of the many priests you have hunted—and hunted successfully too; think of how many bitter Papists of every class you have been the blessed means of committing to the justice of our laws; think of the numbers of Popish priests and bishops you have, in the faithful discharge of your pious duty, committed to chains, imprisonment, transportation, and the scaffold—think of all these things, I say, and take comfort to your soul by the retrospect. Would you wish to receive the rites and consolations of religion at my hands?"

"Come near me, Strong," repeated Smellpriest. "The rites of religion from *you*—the rights of perdition as soon, you hypocritical scoundrel;" and as he spoke he caught a gush of blood as it issued from his mouth and flung it with all the strength he had left right into the clergyman's face. "Take that, you villain," he added; "I die in every sense with my blood upon you. And as for my hunting of priests and Papists, it is the only thing that lies at this moment heavy over my heart. And as for that wife of mine, I'm sorry she's not in my place. I know, of course, I'll be damned; but it can't be helped now. If I go down, as down I will go, won't I have plenty of friends to keep me in countenance. I know—I feel I'm dying; but I must take the consequences. In the meantime, my best word and wish is, that that vile jade shan't be permitted to approach or touch my body after I am dead. My curse upon you both! for you brought me to this untimely death between you."

"Why, my dear Smellpriest—" exclaimed the wife.

"Don't call me Smellpriest," he replied, interrupting her; "my name is Norbury. But it doesn't matter—it's all up with me, and I know it will soon be all down with me; for down, down I'll go. Strong, you hypocritical scoundrel, don't be a persecutor: look at me on the very brink of perdition for it. And now the only comfort I have is,

that I let the poor Popish bishop off. I could not shoot him, or at any rate make a prisoner of him, and he engaged in the worship of God."

"Alas!" whispered Strong, "the poor man is verging on rank Popery—he is hopeless."

"But, Tom, dear," said the wife, "why are you displeased with me, your own faithful partner? I that was so loving and affectionate to you? I that urged you on in the path of duty? I that scoured your arms and regimentals with my own hands—that mixed you your punch before you went after the *black game*, as you used to say, and, again, had it ready for you when you returned to precious Mr. Strong and me after a long hunt. Don't die in anger with your own Grizzey, as you used to call me, my dear Tom, or, if you do, I feel that I won't long survive you."

"Ah! you jade," replied Tom, "didn't I see the wink between you to-night, although you thought I was drunk? Ah, these wild-goose chases!"

"Tom, dear, we are both innocent. Oh, forgive your own Grizzey!"

"So I do, you jade—my curse on you both."

Whether it was the effort necessary to speak, in addition to the excitement occasioned by his suspicions, and whether these suspicions were well founded or not, we do not presume to say; but the fact was, that, after another outgulp of blood had come up, he drew a long, deep sigh, his under-jaw fell, and the wretched, half-penitent Captain Smellpriest breathed his last. After which his wife, whether from sorrow or remorse, became insensible, and remained in that state for a considerable time; but at length she recovered, and, after expressing the most violent sorrow, literally drove the Rev. Mr. Strong out of the house, with many deep and bitter curses. But to return:

In a few minutes the parties dispersed, and Folliard, too much absorbed in the fates of Reilly and Whitecraft, prepared to ride to Sligo, to ascertain if any thing could be done for the baronet. In the meantime, while he and his old friend Cummiskey are on their way to see that gentleman, we will ask the attention of our readers to the state of Helen's mind, as it was affected by the distressing events which had so rapidly and recently occurred. We need not assure them that deep anxiety for the fate of her unfortunate lover lay upon her heart like gloom of death itself. His image and his natural nobility of character, but, above all, the purity and delicacy of his love for herself; his manly and faithful attachment to his religion, under temptations which few hearts could resist—temptations of which she herself was, beyond all comparison, the most trying and the most difficult to be withstood; his refusal to leave the country on her account, even when the bloodhounds of the law were pursuing him to his death in every direction; and the reflection that this resolution of abiding by her, and watching over her welfare and happiness, and guarding her, as far as he could, from domestic persecution—*all* these reflections, in short, crowded upon her mind with such fearful force that her reason began to totter, and she felt apprehensive that she might not be able to bear the trial which Reilly's position now placed before her in the most hideous colors. On the other hand, there was Whitecraft, a man certainly who had committed many crimes and murders and burnings, often, but not always, upon his own responsibility; a man who, she knew, entertained no manly or tender affection for her; he too about to meet a violent death! That she detested him with an abhorrence as deep as ever woman entertained against man was true; yet she *was* a woman, and this unhappy fate that impended over him was not excluded out of the code of her heart's humanity. She wished him also to be saved, if only that he might withdraw from Ireland and repent of his crimes. Altogether she was in a state bordering on frenzy and despair, and was often incapable of continuing a sustained conversation.

When Whitecraft reached the jail in his carriage, attended by a guard of troopers, the jailer knew not what to make of it; but seeing the carriage, which, after a glance or two, he immediately recognized as that of the well-known grand juror, he came out, with hat in hand, bowing most obsequiously.

"I hope your honor's well; you are coming to inspect the prisoners, I suppose? Always active on behalf of Church and State, Sir Robert."

"Come, Mr. O'Shaughnessy," said one of the constables, "get on with no nonsense. You're a mighty Church and State man now; but I remember when there was as rank a rebel under your coat as ever thumped a craw. Sir Robert, sir, is here as our prisoner, and will soon be yours, for murder and arson, and God knows what besides. Be pleased to walk into the hatch, Sir Robert, and there we surrender you to Mr. O'Shaughnessy, who will treat you well if you pay him well."

They then entered the hatch. The constable produced the *mittimus* and the baronet's person both together, after which they withdrew, having failed to get the price of

a glass from the baronet as a reward for their civility.

Such scenes have been described a hundred times, and we consequently shall not delay our readers upon this. The baronet, indeed, imagined that from his rank and influence the jailer might be induced to give him comfortable apartments. He was in, however, for two capital felonies, and the jailer, who was acquainted with the turn that public affairs had taken, told him that upon his soul and conscience if the matter lay with him he would not put his honor among the felons; but then he had no discretion, because it was as much as his place was worth to break the rules—a thing he couldn't think of doing as an honest man and an upright officer.

"But whatever I can do for you, Sir Robert, I'll do."

"You will let me have pen and ink, won't you?"

"Well, let me see. Yes, I will, Sir Robert; I'll stretch that far for the sake of ould times."

CHAPTER XXII.

The Squire Comforts Whitecraft in his Affliction.

The old squire and Cummiskey lost little time in getting over the ground to the town of Sligo, and, in order to reach it the more quickly, they took a short cut by the old road which we have described at the beginning of this narrative. On arriving at that part of it from which they could view the spot where Reilly rescued them from the murderous violence of the Red Rapparee, Cummiskey pointed to it.

"Does your honor remember that place, where you see the ould buildin'?"

"Yes, I think so. Is not that the place where the cursed Rapparee attacked us?"

"It is, sir; and where poor Reilly saved both our lives; and yet your honor is goin' to hang him."

"You know nothing about it, you old blockhead. It was all a plan got up by Reilly and the Rapparee for the purpose of getting introduced to my daughter, for his own base and selfish purposes. Yes, I'll hang him certainly—no doubt of that."

"Well, sir," replied Cummiskey, "it's one comfort that he won't hang by himself."

"No," said the other, "he and the Rapparee will stretch the same rope."

"The Rapparee! faith, sir, he'll have worse company."

"What do you mean, sirra?"

"Why, Sir Robert Whitecraft, sir; he always had gallows written in his face; but, upon my soul, he'll soon have it about his neck, please God."

"Faith, I'm afraid you are not far from the truth, Cummiskey," replied his master: "however, I am going to make arrangements with him, to see what can be done for the unfortunate man."

"If you'll take my advice, sir, you'll have nothing to do with him. Keep your hand out o' the pot; there's no man can skim boiling lead with his hand and not burn his fingers—but a tinker."

"Don't be saucy, you old dog; but ride on, for I must put Black Tom to his speed."

On arriving at the prison, the squire found Sir Robert pent up in a miserable cell, with a table screwed to the floor, a pallet bed, and a deal form. Perhaps his comfort might have been improved through the medium of his purse, were it not that the Prison Board had held a meeting that very day, subsequent to his committal, in which, with some dissentients, they considered it their duty to warn the jailer against granting him any indulgence beyond what he was entitled to as a felon, and this under pain of their earnest displeasure.

When the squire entered he found the melancholy baronet and priest-hunter sitting upon the hard form, his head hanging down upon his breast, or, indeed, we might say much farther; for, in consequence of the almost unnatural length of his neck, it appeared on that occasion to be growing out of the middle of his body, or of that fleshless vertebral column which passed for one.

"Well, baronet," exclaimed Folliard pretty loudly, "here's an exchange! from the altar to the halter; from the matrimonial noose to honest Jack Ketch's—and a devilish good escape it would be to many unfortunate wretches in this same world."

"Oh, Mr. Folliard," said the baronet, "is not this miserable? What will become of me?"

"Now, I tell you what, Whitecraft, I am come to speak to you upon your position; but before I go farther, let me say a word or two to make you repent, if possible, for what you have done to others."

"For what I have done, Mr. Folliard! why should I not repent, when I find I am to be hanged for it?"

"Oh, hanged you will be, there is no doubt of that; but now consider a little; here you are with a brown loaf, and—is that water in the jug?"

"It is."

"Very well; here you are, hard and fast, you who were accustomed to luxuries, to the richest meats, and the richest wines—here

you are with a brown loaf, a jug of water, and the gallows before you! However, if you wish to repent truly and sincerely, reflect upon the numbers that you and your bloodhounds have consigned to places like this, and sent from this to the gibbet, while you were rioting in luxury and triumph. Good God, sir, hold up your head, and be a man. What if you *are* hanged? Many a better man was. Hold up your head, I say."

"I can't, my dear Folliard; it won't stay up for me."

"Egad! and you'll soon get a receipt for holding it up. Why the mischief can't you have spunk?"

"Spunk; how the deuce could you expect spunk from any man in my condition? It is difficult to understand you, Mr. Folliard; you told me a minute ago to repent, and now you tell me to have spunk; pray what do you mean by that?"

"Why, confound it, I mean that you should repent with spunk. However, let us come to more important matters; what can be done for you?"

"I know not; I am incapable of thinking on any thing but that damned gallows without; yet I should wish to make my will."

"Your will! Why, I think you have lost your senses; don't you know that when you're hanged every shilling and acre you are possessed of will be forfeited to the crown?"

"True," replied the other, "I had forgotten that. Could Hastings be induced to decline prosecuting?"

"What! to compromise a felony, and be transported himself. Thank you for nothing baronet; that's rather a blue look up. No, our only plan is to try and influence the grand jury to throw out the bills; but then, again, there are indictments against you to no end. Hastings' case is only a single one, and, even if he failed, it would not better your condition a whit. Under the late Administration we could have saved you by getting a packed jury; but that's out of the question now. All we can do, I think, is to get up a memorial strongly signed, supplicating the Lord Lieutenant to commute your sentence from hanging to transportation for life. I must confess, however, there is little hope even there. They will come down with their cursed reasoning and tell us that the rank and education of the offender only aggravate the offence; and that, if they allow a man so convicted to escape, in consequence of his high position in life, every humble man found guilty and executed for the same crime—is murdered. They will tell us it would be a prostitution of the prerogative of the Crown to connive at crime in the rich and punish it in the poor. And, again, there's the devil of it; your beggarly want of hospitality in the first place, and the cursed swaggering severity with which you carried out your loyalty, by making unexpected domiciliary visits to the houses of loyal but humane Protestant families, with the expectation of finding a priest or a Papist under their protection: both these, I say, have made you the most unpopular man in the county; and, upon my soul, Sir Robert, I don't think there will be a man upon the grand jury whose family you have not insulted by your inveterate loyalty. No one, I tell you, likes a persecutor. Still, I say, I'll try what I can do with the grand jury. I'll see my friends and yours—if you have any *now*, make out a list of them in a day or two—and you may rest assured that I will leave nothing undone to extricate you."

"Thank you, Mr. Folliard; but do you know *why* I am here?"

"To be sure I do."

"No, you don't, sir. William Reilly, the Jesuit and Papist, is the cause of it, and will be the cause of my utter ruin and ignominious death."

"How is that? Make it plain to me; only make that plain to me."

"He is the bosom friend of Hastings, and can sway him and move him and manage him as a father would a child, or, rather, as a child would a doting father. Reilly, sir, is at the bottom of this, his great object always having been to prevent a marriage between me and your beautiful daughter; I, who, after all, have done so much for Protestantism, am the victim of that Jesuit and Papist."

This vindictive suggestion took at once, and the impetuous old squire started as if a new light had been let in upon his mind. We call him impetuous, because, if he had reflected only for a moment upon the diabolical persecution, both in person and property, which Reilly had sustained at the baronet's hands, he ought not to have blamed him had he shot the scoundrel as if he had been one of the most rabid dogs that ever ran frothing across a country. We say the suggestion, poisoned as it was by the most specious falsehood, failed not to accomplish the villain's object.

Folliard grasped him by the hand. "Never mind," said he; "keep yourself quiet, and leave Reilly to me; I have him, that's enough."

"No," replied the baronet, "it is not enough, because I know what will happen: Miss Folliard's influence over you is a proverb; now she will cajole and flatter and beguile you until she prevails upon you to let the treacherous Jesuit slip through your fingers, and then he will get off to the Continent, and laugh at you all, after having tak-

en her with him ; for there is nothing more certain, if he escapes death through your indulgence, than that you will, in the course of a few years, find yourself grandfather to a brood of young Papists ; and when I say Papists, need I add rebels ?"

"Come," replied the hot-headed old man, "don't insult me ; I am master of my own house, and, well as I love my daughter, I would not for a moment suffer her to interfere in a public matter of this or any other kind. Now good-by ; keep your spirits up, and if you are to die, why die like a man."

They then separated ; and as Folliard was passing through the hatch, he called the jailer into his own office, and strove to prevail upon him, not ineffectually, to smuggle in some wine and other comforts to the baronet. The man told him that he would with pleasure do so if he dared ; but that the caution against it which he had got that very day from the Board rendered the thing impossible. Ere the squire left him, however, his scruples were overcome, and the baronet, before he went to bed that night, had a roast duck for supper, with two bottles of excellent claret to wash it down and lull his conscience into slumber.

"Confound it," the squire soliloquized, on their way home, "I am as stupid as Whitecraft himself, who was never stupid until now ; there have I been with him in that cursed dungeon, and neither of us ever thought of taking measures for his defence. Why, he must have the best lawyers at the Bar, and fee them like princes. Gad ! I have a great notion to ride back and speak to him on the subject ; he's in such a confounded trepidation about his life that he can think of nothing else. No matter, I shall write to him by a special messenger early in the morning. It would be a cursed slap in the face to have one of our leading men hanged —only, after all, for carrying out the wishes of an anti-Papist Government, who connived at his conduct, and encouraged him in it. I know he expected a coronet, and I have no doubt but he'd have got one had his party remained in ; but now all the unfortunate devil is likely to get is a rope—and be hanged to them ! However, as to my own case about Reilly—I must secure a strong bar against him ; and if we can only prevail upon Helen to state the facts as they occurred, there is little doubt that he shall suffer ; for hang he must, in consequence of the disgrace he has brought upon my daughter's name and mine. Whatever I might have forgiven, I will never forgive him that."

He then rode on at a rapid pace, and did not slacken his speed until he reached home. Dinner was ready, and he sat down with none but Helen, who could scarcely touch a morsel. Her father saw at once the state of her mind, and felt that it would be injudicious to introduce any subject that might be calculated to excite her. They accordingly talked upon commonplace topics, and each assumed as much cheerfulness, and more than they could command. It was a miserable sight, when properly understood, to see the father and daughter forced, by the painful peculiarity of their circumstances, thus to conceal their natural sentiments from each other. Love, however, is often a disturber of families, as in the case of Reilly and *Cooleen Bawn ;* and so is an avaricious ambition, when united to a selfish and a sensual attachment, as in the case of Whitecraft.

It is unnecessary now, and it would be only tedious, to dwell upon the energetic preparations that were made for the three approaching trials. Public rumor had taken them up and sent them abroad throughout the greater portion of the kingdom. The three culprits were notorious—Sir Robert Whitecraft, the priest-hunter and prosecutor ; the notorious Red Rapparee, whose exploits had been commemorated in a thousand ballads ; and "Willy Reilly," whose love for the far-famed *Cooleen Bawn,* together with her unconquerable passion for him, had been known throughout the empire. In fact, the interest which the public felt in the result of the approaching trials was intense, not only in Ireland, but throughout England and Scotland, where the circumstances connected with them were borne on the wings of the press. Love, however, especially the romance of it—and here were not only romance but reality enough—love, we say, overcomes all collateral interests—and the history of the loves of Willy Reilly and his "dear *Cooleen Bawn*" even then touched the hearts of thousands, and moistened many a young eye for his calamities and early fate, and the sorrows of his *Cooleen Bawn.*

Helen's father, inspired by the devilish suggestions of Whitecraft, now kept aloof from her as much as he could with decency do. He knew his own weakness, and felt that if he suffered her to gain that portion of his society to which she had been accustomed, his resolution might break down, and the very result prognosticated by Whitecraft might be brought about. Indeed his time was so little his own, between his activity in defence of that villain and his energetic operations for the prosecution of Reilly, that he had not much to spare her, except at meals. It was not, however, through himself that he wished to win her over to prosecute Reilly. No ; he felt his difficulty, and knew that *he* could not attempt to influence

ner with a good grace, or any force of argument. He resolved, therefore, to set his attorney to work, who, as he understood all the quirks and intricacy of the law, might be able to *puzzle* her into compliance. This gentleman, however, who possessed at once a rapacious heart and a stupid head, might have fleeced half the country had the one been upon a par with the other. He was, besides, in his own estimation, a lady-killer, and knew not how these interviews with the fair *Cooleen Bawn* might end. He, at all events, was a sound Protestant, and if it were often said that you might as well ask a Highlander for a knee-buckle as an attorney for religion, he could conscientiously fall back upon the fact that political Protestantism and religion were very different things—for an attorney.

Instructed by Folliard, he accordingly waited upon her professionally, in her father's study, during his absence, and opened his case as follows:

"I have called upon you, Miss Folliard, by the direction of your father, *professionally*, and indeed I thank my stars that any professional business should give me an opportunity of admiring so far-famed a beauty."

"Are you not Mr. Doldrum," she asked, "the celebrated attorney?"

"Doldrum is certainly my name, my lovely client."

"Well, Mr. Doldrum, I think I have heard of you; but permit me to say that before you make love, as you seem about to do, I think it better you should mention your professional business."

"It is very simple, Miss Folliard; just to know whether you have any objection to appear as an evidence against—he-hem—against Mr. Reilly."

"Oh, then your business and time with me will be very brief, Mr. Doldrum. It *is* my intention to see justice done, and for that purpose I shall attend the trial, and if I find that my evidence will be necessary, I assure you I shall give it. But, Mr. Doldrum, one word with you before you go."

"A hundred—a thousand, my dear lady."

"It is this: I beg as a personal favor that you will use your great influence with my father to prevent him from talking to me on this subject until the day of trial comes. By being kind enough to do this you will save me from much anxiety and annoyance."

"I pledge you my honor, madam, that your wishes shall be complied with to the letter, as far, at least, as any influence of mine can accomplish them."

"Thank you, sir; I wish you a good-morning."

"Good-morning, madam; it shall not be my fault if you are harassed upon this most painful subject; and I pledge you my reputation that I never contributed to hang a man in my life with more regret than I experience in this unfortunate case."

It is quite a common thing to find vanity and stupidity united in the same individual, as they were in Mr. Doldrum. He was Mr. Folliard's country attorney, and, in consequence of his strong Protestant politics, was engaged as the law agent of his property; and for the same reason—that is, because he was a violent, he was considered a very able man.

There is a class of men in the world who, when they once engage in a pursuit or an act of any importance, will persist in working it out, rather than be supposed, by relinquishing it, when they discover themselves wrong, to cast an imputation on their own judgments. To such a class belonged Mr. Folliard, who never, in point of fact, acted upon any fixed or distinct principle whatsoever; yet if he once took a matter into his head, under the influence of caprice or impulse, no man could evince more obstinacy or perseverance, apart from all its justice or moral associations, so long, at least, as that caprice or impulse lasted. The reader may have perceived from his dialogue with Helen, on the morning appointed for her marriage with Whitecraft, that the worthy baronet, had he made his appearance, stood a strong chance of being sent about his business as rank a bachelor as he had come. And yet, because he was cunning enough to make the hot-brained and credulous old man believe that Reilly was at the bottom of the plan for his destruction, and Hastings only the passive agent in his hands; we say, because he succeeded in making this impression, which he knew to be deliberately false, upon his plastic nature, he, Folliard, worked himself up into a vindictive bitterness peculiar to little minds, as well as a fixed determination that Reilly should die; not by any means so much because he took away his daughter as that his death might be marked in this conflict of parties as a set-off against that of Whitecraft.

In the meantime he and Helen entertained each a different apprehension; he dreaded that she might exercise her influence over him for the purpose of softening him against Reilly, whom, if he had suffered himself to analyze his own heart, he would have found there in the shape of something very like a favorite. Helen, on the contrary, knew that she was expected to attend the trial, in order to give evidence *against* her lover; and she lived for a few days after his committal under the constant dread that her father

would persecute her with endless arguments to induce her attendance at the assizes. Such, besides, was her love of truth and candor, and her hatred of dissimulation in every shape, that, if either her father or the attorney had asked her, in explicit terms, what the tendency of her evidence was to be, she would at once have satisfied them that it should be in favor of her lover. In the meantime she felt that, as they did not press her on this point, it would have been madness to volunteer a disclosure of a matter so important to the vindication of Reilly's conduct. To this we may add her intimate knowledge of her father's whimsical character and unsteadiness of purpose. She was not ignorant that, even if he were absolutely aware that the tenor of her evidence was to go against Reilly, his mind might change so decidedly as to call upon her to give evidence in his defence. Under these circumstances she acted with singular prudence, in never alluding to a topic of such difficulty, and which involved a contingency that might affect her lover in a double sense.

Her father's conduct, however, on this occasion, saved them both a vast deal of trouble and annoyance, and the consequence was that they met as seldom as possible. In addition to this, we may state that Doldrum communicated the successful result of his interview with Miss Folliard—her willingness to attend the trial and see justice done, upon condition that she should not have the subject obtruded on her, either by her father or any one else, until the appointed day should arrive, when she would punctually attend. In this state were the relative positions and feelings of father and daughter about a month before the opening of the assizes.

In the meantime the squire set himself to work for the baronet. The ablest lawyers were obtained, but Whitecraft most positively objected to Folliard's proposal of engaging Doldrum as his attorney; he knew the stupidity and ignorance of the man, and would have nothing to do with him as the conductor of his case. His own attorney, Mr. Sharply, was engaged; and indeed his selection of a keen and able man such as he was did credit both to his sagacity and foresight.

Considering the state of the country at that particular period, the matter began to assume a most important aspect. A portion of the Protestant party, by which we mean those who had sanctioned all Whitecraft's brutal and murderous excesses, called every energy and exertion into work, in order to defeat the Government and protect the leading man of their own clique. On the other hand, there was the Government, firm and decided, by the just operation of the laws, to make an example of the man who had not only availed himself of those laws when they were with him, but who scrupled not to set them aside when they were against him, and to force his bloodthirsty instincts upon his own responsibility. The Government, however, were not without large and active support from those liberal Protestants, who had been disgusted and sickened by the irresponsible outrages of such persecutors as Whitecraft and Smellpriest. Upon those men the new Government relied, and relied with safety. The country was in a tumult, the bigoted party threatened an insurrection; and they did so, not because they felt themselves in a position to effect it, but in order to alarm and intimidate the Government. On the other hand, the Catholics, who had given decided proofs of their loyalty by refusing to join the Pretender, now expressed their determination to support the Government if an outbreak among that section of the Protestant party to which we have just alluded should take place.

But perhaps the real cause of the conduct of the Government might be traced to Whitecraft's outrage upon a French subject in the person of the Abbé ——. The matter, as we have stated, was seriously taken up by the French Ambassador, in the name, and by the most positive instructions, of his Court. The villain Whitecraft, in consequence of that wanton and unjustifiable act, went far to involve the two nations in a bitter and bloody war. England was every day under the apprehension of a French invasion, which, of course, she dreaded; something must be done to satisfy the French Court. Perhaps, had it not been for this, the general outrages committed upon the unfortunate Catholics of Ireland would never have become the subject of a detailed investigation. An investigation, however, took place, by which a system of the most incredible persecution was discovered, and a milder administration of the laws was found judicious, in order to conciliate the Catholic party, and prevent them from embracing the cause of the Pretender. At all events, what between the necessity of satisfying the claims of the French Government, and in apprehension of a Catholic defection, the great and principal criminal was selected for punishment. The Irish Government, however, who were already prepared with their charges, found themselves already anticipated by Mr. Hastings, a fact which enabled them to lie on their oars and await the result.

Such was the state and condition of affairs as the assizes were within ten days of opening.

One evening about this time the old squire, who never remained long in the same mode of feeling, sent for his daughter to the dining-room, where he was engaged at his Burgundy. The poor girl feared that he was about to introduce the painful subject which she dreaded so much—that is to say, the necessity of giving her evidence against Reilly. After some conversation, however, she was relieved, for he did not allude to it; but he did to the fate of Reilly himself, the very subject which was wringing her heart with agony.

"Helen," said he, "I have been thinking of Reilly's affair, and it strikes me that he may be saved, and become your husband still; because, you know, that if Whitecraft was acquitted, now that he has been publicly disgraced, I'd see the devil picking his bones —and very hard picking he'd find them— before I'd give you to him as a wife."

"Thank you, my dear papa; but let me ask why it is that you are so active in stirring up his party to defend such a man?"

"Foolish girl," he replied; "it is not the man, but the cause and principle, we defend."

"What, papa, the cause! bloodshed and persecution! I believe you to be possessed of a humane heart, papa; but, notwithstanding his character and his crimes, I do not wish the unfortunate man to be struck into the grave without repentance."

"Repentance, Helen! How the deuce could a man feel repentance who does not believe the Christian religion?"

"But then, sir, has he not the reputation of being a sound and leading Protestant?"

"Oh, hang his reputation; it is not of him I wish to speak to you, but Reilly."

Helen's heart beat rapidly and thickly, but she spoke not.

"Yes," said he, "I have a project in my head that I think may save Reilly."

"Pray, what is it, may I ask, papa?"

"No, you may not; but to-morrow I will give him an early call, and let you know how I succeed, after my return to dinner; yes, I will tell you after dinner. But listen, Helen, it is the opinion of the baronet's friends that they will be able to save him."

"I hope they may, sir; I should not wish to see any fellow-creature brought to an ignominious death in the midst of his offences, and in the prime of life."

"But, on the contrary, if he swings, we are bound to sacrifice one of the Papist party for him, and Reilly is the man. Now don't look so pale, Helen—don't look as if death was settled in your face; his fate may be avoided; but ask me nothing—the project's my own, and I will communicate it to no one until after I shall have ascertained whether I fail in it or not."

"I trust, sir, it will be nothing that will involve him in anything dishonorable; but why do I ask? He is incapable of that."

"Well, well, leave the matter in my hand; and now, upon the strength of my project, I'll take another bumper of Burgundy, and drink to its success."

Helen pleaded some cause for withdrawing, as she entertained an apprehension that he might introduce the topic which she most dreaded—that of her duty to give evidence against Reilly. When she was gone he began to ponder over several subjects connected with the principal characters of this narrative until he became drowsy, during which period halters, gibbets, gallowses, hangmen, and judges jumbled each other alternately through his fancy, until he fell fast asleep in his easy-chair.

CHAPTER XXIII.

The Squire becomes Theological and a Proselytizer, but signally fails.

The next morning he and Cummiskey started for Sligo, and, as usual, when they reached the jail the turnkey was about to conduct the squire to Sir Robert's room, when the former turned and said:

"I wish to see Mr. Reilly; lead me to his cell."

"Reilly, sir!" exclaimed the man in astonishment. "Are you sure, sir, it's not Sir Robert Whitecraft you want?"

"Are you sure, sir, that it's not a cut of my whip about the ears you want? Conduct me to where Reilly is, you rascal; do you pretend to know the individual I wish to see better than I do myself? Push along, sirra."

The turnkey accordingly conducted him to Reilly's cell, which, considerably to his surprise, was a much more comfortable one than had been assigned to the baronet. When they had reached the corridor in which it was situated, Folliard said, "Knock at the door, and when he appears tell him that *I* wish to see him."

"I will, your honor."

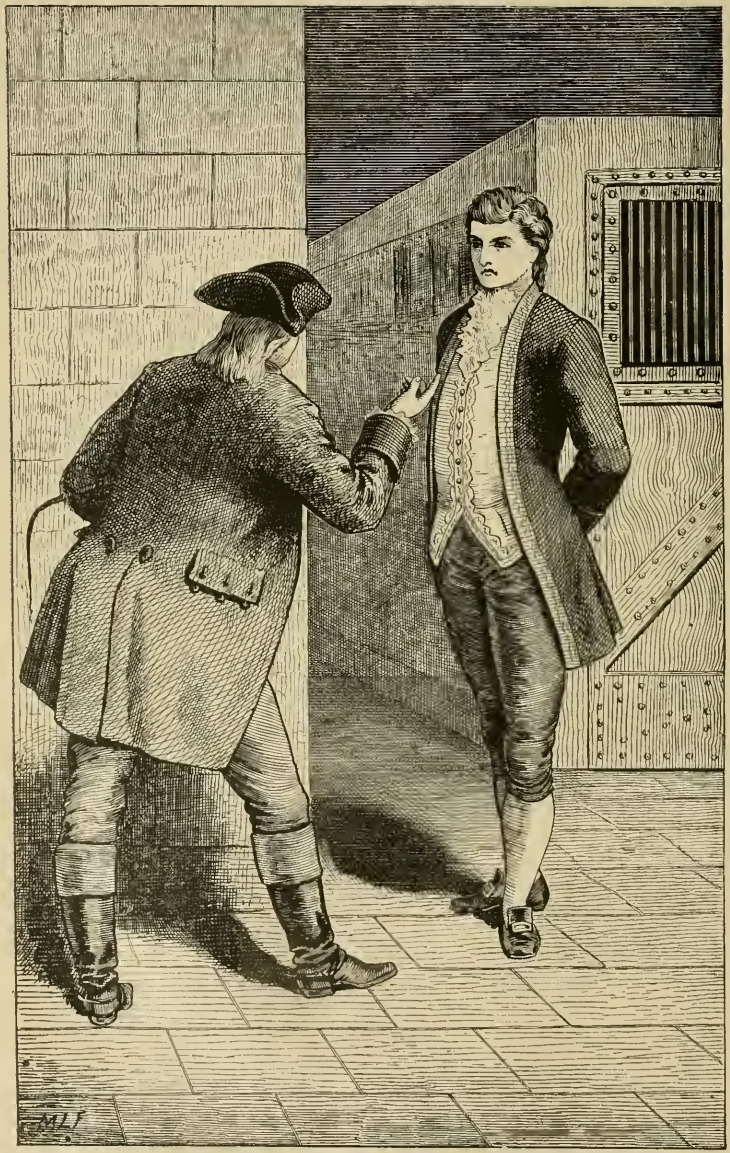
"Say I won't detain him long."

"I will, your honor."

"Hang your honor, go and do what I desire you."

"I will, your honor."

Reilly's astonishment was beyond belief on learning that his vindictive prosecutor



"THEN THE UPSHOT OF THE ARGUMENT IS THIS, THAT THERE IS NOT A TOSS-UP BETWEEN THEM."—p. 157.

had called upon him; but on more mature reflection, and comparing what had happened before with the only motive which he could assign for such a visit, he felt pretty certain that the squire came to revive, in his own person, a subject which he had before proposed to him through his daughter. There was no other earthly object to which he could attribute his visit; but of course he made up his mind to receive him with every courtesy. At length Folliard entered, and, before Reilly had time to utter a syllable, commenced:

"Reilly," said he, "you are astonished to see me here?"

"I am, sir," replied Reilly, "very much."

"Yes, I thought you would; and very few persons, except myself, would come upon such an errand to the man that has disgraced my daughter, myself, and my family; you have stained our name, sir—a name that was never associated with any thing but honor and purity until you came among us."

"If you have paid me this visit, sir, only for the purpose of uttering language which you know must be very painful to me, I would rather you had declined to call upon me at all. I perceive no object you can have in it, unless to gratify a feeling of enmity on your part, and excite one of sorrow on mine. I say sorrow, because, on considering our relative positions, and knowing the impetuosity of your temper, I am sorry to see you here; it is scarcely generous in you to come, for the purpose of indulging in a poor, and what, after all, may be an equivocal and premature triumph over a man whose love for your daughter, you must know, will seal his lips against the expression of one offensive word towards you."

"But how, let me ask, sir, do you know what brought me here? I didn't come to scold you, nor to triumph over you; and I have already said the worst I shall say. I know very well that you and Whitecraft will be hanged, probably from the same rope too, but, in the meantime, I would save you both if I could. I fear indeed that to save him is out of the question, because it appears that there's a cart-load of indictments against him."

"How could you doubt it, sir, when you know the incredible extent of his villany, both private and public? and yet this is the man to whom you would have married your daughter!"

"No; when I found Helen reduced to such a state the morning on which they were to be married, I told her at once that as she felt so bitterly against him I would never suffer him to become her husband. Neither will I; if he were acquitted to-morrow I would tell him so; but you, Reilly, love my daughter for her own sake."

"For her own sake, sir, as you have said, I love her. If she had millions, it could not increase my affection, and if she had not a penny, it would not diminish it."

"Well, but you can have her if you wish, notwithstanding."

Reilly first looked at him with amazement; but he was so thoroughly acquainted with his character, both from what he had seen and heard of it, that his amazement passed away, and he simply replied:

"Pray how, sir?"

"Why, I'll tell you what, Reilly; except with respect to political principles, I don't think, after all, that there's the difference of a a rush between the Papist and the Protestant Churches, as mere religions. My own opinion is, that there's neither of them any great shakes, as to any effect they have on society, unless to disturb it. I have known as good Papists as ever I did Protestants, and indeed I don't know why a Papist should not be as good a man as a Protestant; nor why a Protestant should not be as good a man as a Papist, on the other hand. Now, do you see what I'm driving at?"

"Well, I can't exactly say that I do," replied Reilly.

"Then the upshot of the argument is this, that there is not a toss-up between them, and any man getting into a scrape, and who could get out of it by changing from one to the other—of course I mean from Popery to Protestantism—would prove himself a man of good sound sense, and above the prejudices of the world."

The truth is, Reilly saw ere this what Folliard was approaching, and, as he determined to allow him full scope, his reply was brief:

"You seem fond of indulging in speculation, sir," replied Reilly, with a smile; "but I should be glad to know why you introduce this subject to *me?*"

"To you?" replied Folliard; "why, who the devil else should or could I introduce it to with such propriety? Here now are two religions; one's not sixpence better nor worse than the other. Now, you belong to one of them, and because you do you're here snug and fast. I say, then, I have a proposal to make to you: you are yourself in a difficulty—you have placed me in a difficulty—and you have placed poor Helen in a difficulty—which, if any thing happens you, I think will break her heart, poor child. Now you can take her, yourself, and me, out of all our difficulties, if you have only sense enough to shove over from the old P—— to the young P——. As a Protestant, you can marry

Helen, Reilly—but as a Papist, never! and you know the rest; for if you are obstinate, and blind to your own interests, I must do my duty."

"Will you allow me to ask, sir, whether Miss Folliard is aware of this mission of yours to me?"

"She aware! She never dreamt of it; but I have promised to tell her the result after dinner to-day."

"Well, sir," replied Reilly, "will you allow me to state to you a few facts?"

"Certainly; go on."

"In the first place, then, such is your daughter's high and exquisite sense of integrity and honor that, if I consented to the terms you propose, she would reject me with indignation and scorn, as she ought to do. There, then, is your project for accomplishing my selfish and dishonest apostacy given to the winds. Your daughter, sir, is too pure in all her moral feelings, and too noble-minded, to take to her arms a renegade husband—a renegade, too, not from conviction, but from selfish and mercenary purposes."

"Confound the thing, this is but splitting hairs, Reilly, and talking big for effect. Speak, however, for yourself; as for Helen, I know very well that, in spite of your heroics and her's, she'd be devilish glad you'd become a Protestant and marry her."

"I am sorry to say, sir, that you don't know your own daughter; but as for me, Mr. Folliard, if one word of your's, or of her's, could place me on the British throne, I would not abandon my religion. Under no circumstances would I abandon it; but least of all, now that it is so barbarously persecuted by its enemies. This, sir, is my final determination."

"But do you know the alternative?"

"No, sir, nor do you."

"Don't I, faith? Why, the alternative is simply this—either marriage or hanging!"

"Be it so; in that case I will die like a man of honor and a true Christian and Catholic, as I hope I am."

"As a true fool, Reilly—as a true fool. I took this step privately, out of respect for your character. See how many of your creed become Protestants for the sake of mere property; think how many of them join our Church for the purpose of ousting their own fathers and relatives from their estates; and what is it all, on their parts, but the consequence of an enlightened judgment that shows them the errors of their old creed, and the truth of ours? I think, Reilly, you are loose about the brains."

"That may be, sir, but you will never find me loose about my principles."

"Are you aware, sir, that Helen is to appear against you as an evidence?"

"No, sir, I am not, neither do I believe it. But now, sir, I beg you to terminate this useless and unpleasant interview. I can look into my own conscience with satisfaction, and am prepared for the worst. If the scaffold is to be my fate, I cannot but remember that many a noble spirit has closed the cares of an unhappy life upon it. I wish you good-day, Mr. Folliard."

"By the Boyne! you are the most obstinate blockhead that ever lived; but I've done; I did all in my power to save you—yet to no purpose. Upon my soul, I'll come to your execution."

"And if you do, you will see me die like a man and a gentleman; may I humbly add, like a Christian!"

The squire, on his way home, kept up a long, low whistle, broken only by occasional soliloquies, in which Reilly's want of common-sense, and neglect not only of his temporal interests, but of his life itself, were the prevailing sentiments. He regretted his want of success, which he imputed altogether to Reilly's obstinacy, instead of his integrity, firmness, and honor.

This train of reflection threw him into one of those capricious fits of resentment so peculiar to his unsteady temper, and as he went along he kept lashing himself up into a red heat of indignation and vengeance against that unfortunate gentleman. After dinner that day he felt somewhat puzzled as to whether he ought to communicate to his daughter the result of his interview with Reilly or not. Upon consideration, however, he deemed it more prudent to avoid the subject altogether, for he felt apprehensive that, however she might approve of her lover's conduct, the knowledge of his fate, which depended on it, would only plunge her into deeper distress. The evening consequently passed without any allusion to the subject, unless a peculiar tendency to melody, on his part, might be taken to mean something; to this we might add short abrupt ejaculations unconsciously uttered—such as—"Whew, whew, whew-o-whew-o—hang the fellow! Whew, whew-o-whew—he's a cursed goose, but an obstinate—whew, whew-o-whew-o. Ay, but no matter—well—whew, whew-o, whew, whew! Helen, a cup of tea. Now, Helen, do you know a discovery I have made—but how could you? No, you don't, of course; but listen and pay attention to me, because it deeply affects myself."

The poor girl, apprehensive that he was about to divulge some painful secret, became pale and a good deal agitated; she gave him a long, inquiring look, but said nothing.

"Yes, Helen, and the discovery is this: I find from experience that tea and Burgundy —or, indeed, tea and any kind of wine— don't agree with my constitution: curse the fel—whew, whew, whew, whew-o-whew; no, the confounded mixture turns my stomach into nothing more nor less than a bag of aquafortis—if he had but common— whew—"

"Well, but, papa, why do you take tea, then?"

"Because I'm an old fool, Helen; and if I am, there are some young ones besides; but it can't be helped now—whew, whew—it was done for the best."

In this manner he went on for a considerable time, ejaculating mysteries and enigmas, until he finished the second bottle, after which he went to bed.

It may be necessary to state here that, notwithstanding the incredible force and tenderness of his affection for his daughter, he had, ever since her elopement with Reilly, kept her under the strictest surveillance, and in the greatest seclusion—that is to say, as the proverb has it, "he locked the stable door when the steed was stolen;" or if he did not realize the aphorism, he came very near it.

Time, however, passes, and the assizes were at hand, a fearful *Avatar* of judicial power to the guilty. The struggle between the parties who were interested in the fate of Whitecraft, and those who felt the extent of his unparalleled guilt, and the necessity not merely of making him an example but of punishing him for his enormous crimes, was dreadful. The infatuation of political rancor on one side, an infatuation which could perceive nothing but the virtue of high and resolute Protestantism in his conduct, blinded his supporters to the enormity of his conduct, and, as a matter of course, they left no stone unturned to save his life. As we said, however, they were outnumbered; but still they did not despair. Reilly's friends had been early in the legal market, and succeeded in retaining some of the ablest men at the bar, his leading counsel being the celebrated advocate Fox, who was at that time one of the most distinguished men at the Irish bar. Helen, as the assizes approached, broke down so completely in her health that it was felt, if she remained in that state, that she would be unable to attend; and although Reilly's trial was first on the list, his opposing counsel succeeded in getting it postponed for a day or two in order that an important witness, then ill, he said, might be able to appear on their part.

It is not our intention to go through the details of the trial of the Red Rapparee. The evidence of Mary Mahon, Fergus O'Reilly, and the sheriff, was complete; the chain was unbroken; the change of apparel—the dialogue in Mary Mahon's cabin, in which he avowed the fact of his having robbed the sheriff—the identification of his person by the said sheriff in the farmer's house, as before stated, left nothing for the jury to do but to bring in a verdict of guilty. Mercy was out of the question. The hardened ruffian —the treacherous ruffian—who had lent himself to the bloodthirsty schemes of Whitecraft—and all this came out upon his trial, not certainly to the advantage of the baronet—this hardened and treacherous ruffian, we say, who had been a scourge to that part of the country for years, now felt, when the verdict of guilty was brought in against him, just as a smith's anvil might feel when struck by a feather. On hearing it, he growled a hideous laugh, and exclaimed:

"To the divil I pitch you all; I wish, though, that I had Tom Bradley, the prophecy man, here, who tould me that I'd never be hanged, and that the rope was never born for me."

"If the rope was not born for you," observed the judge, "I fear I shall be obliged to inform you that you were born for the rope. Your life has been an outrage upon civilized society."

"Why, you ould dog!" said the Rapparee, "you can't hang me; haven't I a pardon? didn't Sir Robert Whitecraft get me a pardon from the Government for turnin' against the Catholics, and tellin' him where to find the priests? Why, you joulter-headed ould dog, you can't hang me, or, if you do, I'll leave them behind me that will put such a half ounce pill into your guts as will make you turn up the whites of your eyes like a duck in tundher. You'll hang me for robbery, you ould sinner! But what is one half the world doin' but robbin' the other half? and what is the other half doin' but robbin' them? As for Sir Robert Whitecraft, if he desaved me by lies and falsehoods, as I'm afraid he did, all I say is, that if I had him here for one minute I'd show him a trick he'd never tell to mortal. Now go on, bigwig."

Notwithstanding the solemnity of the position in which this obdurate ruffian was placed, the judge found it nearly impossible to silence the laughter of the audience and preserve order in the court. At length he succeeded, and continued his brief address to the Rapparee:

"Hardened and impenitent reprobate, in the course of my judicial duties, onerous and often painful as they are and have been, I must say that, although it has fallen to my lot to pronounce the awful sentence of death upon many an unfeeling felon, I am bound

to say that a public malefactor so utterly devoid of all the feelings which belong to man, and so strongly impregnated with those of the savage animal as you are, has never stood in a dock before me, nor probably before any other judge, living or dead. Would it be a waste of language to enforce upon you the necessity of repentance? I fear it would; but it matters not; the guilt of impenitence be on your own head, still I must do my duty; try, then, and think of death, and a far more awful judgment than mine. Think of the necessity you have for supplicating mercy at the throne of your Redeemer, who himself died for you, and for all of us, between two thieves."

"That has nothing to do with my case; I never was a thief; I robbed like an honest man on the king's highways; but as for thievin', why, you ould sinner, I never stole a farthing's worth in my life. Don't, then, pitch such beggarly comparisons into my teeth. I never did what you and your class often did; I never robbed the poor in the name of the blessed laws of the land; I never oppressed the widow or the orphan; and for all that I took from those that did oppress them, the divil a grain of sorrow or repentance I feel for it, nor ever will feel for it. Oh! mother of Moses! if I had a glass of whiskey!"

The judge was obliged to enforce silence a second time; for, to tell the truth, there was something so ludicrously impenitent in the conduct of this hardened convict that the audience could not resist it, especially when it is remembered that the sympathies of the lower Irish are always with such culprits.

"Well," continued the judge, when silence was again restored, "your unparalleled obduracy has gained one point; it was my intention to have ordered you for execution tomorrow at the hour of twelve o'clock; but, as a Christian man, I could not think for a moment of hurrying you into eternity in your present state. The sentence of the court then is that you be taken from the dock in which you now stand to the prison from whence you came, and that from thence you be brought to the place of execution on next Saturday, and there be hanged by the neck until you be dead, and may God have mercy on your soul!"

The Rapparee gazed at him with a look of the most hardened effrontery, and exclaimed, "Is it in earnest you are?" after which he was once more committed to his cell, loaded with heavy chains, which he wore, by the way, during his trial.

Now, in order to account for his outrageous conduct, we must make a disclosure to the reader. There is in and about all jails a certain officer yclept a hangman—an officer who is permitted a freer ingress and egress than almost any other person connected with those gloomy establishments. This hangman, who resided in the prison, had a brother whom Sir Robert Whitecraft had hanged, and, it was thought, innocently. Be this as it may, the man in question was heard to utter strong threats of vengeance against Sir Robert for having his brother, whose innocence he asserted, brought to execution. In some time after this a pistol was fired one night at Sir Robert from behind a hedge, which missed him; but as his myrmidons were with him, and the night was light, a pursuit took place, and the guilty wretch was taken prisoner, with the pistol on his person, still warm after having been discharged. The consequence was that he was condemned to death. But it so happened that at this period, although there were five or six executions to take place, yet there was no hangman to be had, that officer having died suddenly, after a fit of liquor, and the sheriff would have been obliged to discharge the office with his own hands unless a finisher of the law could be found. In brief, he was found, and in the person of the individual alluded to, who, in consequence of his consenting to accept the office, got a pardon from the Crown. Now this man and the Rapparee had been old acquaintances, and renewed their friendship in prison. Through the means of the hangman O'Donnel got in as much whiskey as he pleased, and we need scarcely say that they often got intoxicated together. The secret, therefore, which we had to disclose to the reader, in explanation of the Rapparee's conduct at his trial, was simply this, that the man was three-quarters drunk.

After trial he was placed in a darker dungeon than before; but such was the influence of the worthy executioner with every officer of the jail, that he was permitted to go either in or out without search, and as he often gave a "slug," as he called it, to the turnkeys, they consequently allowed him, in this respect, whatever privileges he wished. Even the Rapparee's dungeon was not impenetrable to him, especially as he put the matter on a religious footing, to wit, that as the unfortunate robber was not allowed the spiritual aid of his own clergy, he himself was the only person left to prepare him for death, which he did with the whiskey-bottle.

The assizes on that occasion were protracted to an unusual length. The country was in a most excited state, and party feeling ran fearfully high. Nothing was talked of but the *two* trials, *par excellence*, to wit, that of Whitecraft and Reilly; and scarcely a fair or market, for a considerable time previous, ever

came round in which there was not a battle on the subject of either one or the other of them, and not unfrequently of both. Nobody was surprised at the conviction of the Red Rapparee; but, on the contrary, every one was glad that the country had at last got rid of him.

Poor Helen, however, was not permitted to remain quiet, as she had expected. When Mr. Doldrum had furnished the leading counsel with his brief and a list of the witnesses, the latter gentleman was surprised to see the name of Helen Folliard among them.

"How is this?" he inquired; "is not this the celebrated beauty who eloped with him?"

"It is, sir," replied Doldrum.

"But," proceeded the other, "you have not instructed me in the nature of the evidence she is prepared to give."

"She is deeply penitent, sir, and in a very feeble state of health; so much so that we were obliged to leave the tendency of her evidence to be brought out on the trial."

"Have you subpœnaed her?"

"No, sir."

"And why not, Mr. Doldrum? Don't you know that there is no understanding the caprices of women? You *ought* to have subpœnaed her, because, if she be a leading evidence, she may still change her mind and leave us in the lurch."

"I certainly did not subpœna her," replied Doldrum, "because, when I mentioned it to her father, he told me that if I attempted it he would break my head. It was enough, he said, that she had given her promise—a thing, he added, which she was never known to break."

"Go to her again, Doldrum; for unless we know what she can prove we will be only working in the dark. Try her, at all events, and glean what you can out of her. Her father tells me she is somewhat better, so I don't apprehend you will have much difficulty in seeing her."

Doldrum did see her, and was astonished at the striking change which had, in so short a time, taken place in her appearance. She was pale, and exhibited all the symptoms of an invalid, with the exception of her eyes, which were not merely brilliant, but dazzling, and full of a fire that flashed from them with something like triumph whenever her attention was directed to the purport of her testimony. On this subject they saw that it would be quite useless, and probably worse than useless, to press her, and they did not, consequently, put her to the necessity of specifying the purport of her evidence.

"I have already stated," said she, "that I shall attend the trial; that ought, and must be, sufficient for you. I beg, then, you will withdraw, sir. My improved health will enable me to attend, and you may rest assured that if I have life I shall be there, as I have already told you; but, I say, that if you wish to press me for the nature of my evidence, you shall have it," and, as she spoke, her eyes flashed fearfully, as they were in the habit of doing whenever she felt deeply excited. Folliard himself became apprehensive of the danger which might result from the discussion of any subject calculated to disturb her, and insisted that she should be allowed to take her own way. In the meantime, after they had left her, at her own request, her father informed the attorney that she was getting both strong and cheerful, in spite of her looks.

"To be sure," said he, "she is pale! but that's only natural, after her recent slight attack, and all the excitement and agitation she has for some time past undergone. She sings and plays now, although I have heard neither a song nor a tune from her for a long time past. In the evening, too, she is exceedingly cheerful when we sit together in the drawing-room; and she often laughs more heartily than I ever knew her to do before in my life. Now, do you think, Doldrum, if she was breaking her heart about Reilly that she would be in such spirits?"

"No, sir; she would be melancholy and silent, and would neither sing, nor laugh, nor play; at least I felt so when I was in love with Miss Swithers, who kept me in a state of *equilibrium* for better than two years; but that wasn't the worst of it, for she knocked the loyalty clean out of me besides—indeed, so decidedly so that I never once sang 'Lillibullero' during the whole period of my attachment, and be hanged to her."

"And what became of her?"

"Why, she married my clerk, who used to serve my love-letters upon her; and when I expected to come in by execution—that is, by marriage—that cursed little sheriff, Cupid, made a return of *nulla bona*. She and Sam Snivel—a kind of half Puritan—entered a *dis*appearance, and I never saw them since; but I am told they are in America. From what you tell me, sir, I have no doubt but Miss Folliard will make a capital witness. In fact, Reilly ought to feel proud of the honor of being hanged by her evidence; she will be a host in herself."

We have already stated that the leading counsel against Reilly had succeeded in getting his trial postponed until Miss Folliard should arrive at a sufficient state of health to appear against him. In the meantime, the baronet's trial, which was in a political, indeed, we might say, a national point of view, of far more importance than

Reilly's, was to come on next day. In the general extent of notoriety or fame, Reilly had got in advance—though not much—of his implacable rival. The two trials were, in fact, so closely united by the relative position of the parties that public opinion was strangely and strongly divided between them. Reilly and his *Cooleen Bawn* had, by the unhappy peculiarity of their fate, excited the interest of all the youthful and loving part of society—an interest which was necessarily reflected upon Whitecraft, as Reilly's rival, independently of the hold which his forthcoming fate had upon grave and serious politicians. Reilly's leading counsel, Fox, a man of great judgment and ability, gave it as his opinion that in consequence of the exacerbated state of feeling produced against the Catholics by the prosecution of Whitecraft—to appease whom, the opinion went that it was instituted—it seemed unlikely that Reilly had a single chance. Had his trial, he said, taken place previous to that of Whitecraft's, he might have escaped many of the consequences of Whitecraft's conviction; but now, should the latter *be* convicted, the opposing party would die in the jury-box rather than let Reilly escape.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Preparations—Jury of the Olden Time—The Scales of Justice.

At last the trial came on, and Sir Robert Whitecraft, the great champion of Protestantism—a creed which he did not believe—was conducted into the court-house and placed in the dock. He was dressed in his best apparel, in order to distinguish himself from common culprits, and to give this poor external evidence of his rank, with a hope that it might tell, to a certain extent at least, upon the feeling of the jury. When placed in the dock, a general buzz and bustle agitated the whole court. His friends became alert, and whispered to each other with much earnestness, and a vast number of them bowed to him, and shook hands with him, and advised him to be cool, and keep up his spirits. His appearance, however, was any thing but firm; his face was deadly pale, his eyes dull and cowardly, his knees trembled so much that he was obliged to support himself on the front of the dock.

At length the trial commenced, and the case having been opened by a young lawyer, a tall, intellectual-looking man, about the middle age, of pale but handsome features, and an eye of singular penetration and brilliancy, rose; and after pulling up his gown at the shoulders, and otherwise adjusting it, proceeded to lay a statement of this extraordinary case before the jury.

He dwelt upon "the pain which he felt in contemplating a gentleman of rank and vast wealth occupying the degraded position of a felon, but not, he was sorry to say, of a common felon. The circumstances, my lord, and gentlemen of the jury, which have brought the prisoner before you this day, involve a long catalogue of crimes that as far transcend, in the hideousness of their guilt, the offences of a *common* felon as his rank and position in life do that of the humblest villain who ever stood before a court of justice.

"The position, gentlemen, of this country has for a long series of years been peculiar, anomalous, and unhappy. Divided as it is, and has been, by the bitter conflict between two opposing creeds and parties, it is not to be wondered at that it should be a melancholy scene of misery, destitution, famine, and crime; and, unhappily, it presents to us the frightful aspect of all these. The nature, however, of the conflicts between those creeds and parties, inasmuch as it bears upon the case of the prisoner, gentlemen, who now stands for trial and a verdict at your hands, is such as forces me, on that account, to dwell briefly upon it. In doing so, I will have much, for the sake of our common humanity, to regret and to deplore. It is a fundamental principle, gentlemen, in our great and glorious Constitution, that the paramount end and object of our laws is to protect the person, the liberty, and the property of the subject. But there is something, gentlemen, still dearer to us than either liberty, person, or property; something which claims a protection from those laws that stamps them with a nobler and a loftier character, when it is afforded, and weaves them into the hearts and feelings of men of all creeds, when this divine mission of the law is fulfilled. I allude, gentlemen, to the inalienable right of every man to worship God freely, and according to his own conscience—without restraint—without terror—without oppression, and, gentlemen of the jury, *without persecution*. A man, or a whole people, worship God, we will assume, sincerely, according to their notions of what is right, and, I say, gentlemen, that the individual who persecutes that man, or those people, for piously worshipping their Creator, commits blasphemy against the Almighty—and stains, as it were, the mercy-seat with blood.

"Gentlemen of the jury, let me ask you what has been the state and condition of this unhappy and distracted country? I have

mentioned two opposing creeds, and consequently two opposing parties, and I have also mentioned persecution ; but let me also ask you again on which side has the persecution existed? Look at your Roman Catholic fellow-subjects, and ask yourselves to what terrible outburst of political and religious vengeance have they not been subjected? But it is said they are not faithful and loyal subjects, and that they detest the laws. Well, let us consider this—let us take a cursory view of all that the spirit and operation of the laws have left them to be thankful for—have brought to bear upon them for the purpose, we must suppose, of securing their attachment and their loyalty. Let us, gentlemen, calmly and solemnly, and in a Christian temper, take a brief glance at the adventures which the free and glorious spirit of the British Constitution has held out to them, in order to secure their allegiance. In the first place, their nobles and their gentry have been deprived of their property, and the right of tenure has been denied even to the people. Ah, my lord, and gentlemen of the jury, what ungrateful and disloyal miscreant could avoid loving a Constitution, and hugging to his grateful heart laws which showered down such blessings upon him, and upon all those who belong to a creed so favored? But it would seem to have been felt that these laws had still a stronger claim upon their affections. They would protect their religion as they did their property ; and in order to attach them still more strongly, they shut up their places of worship —they proscribed and banished and hung their clergy—they hung or shot the unfortunate people who fled to worship God in the desert—in mountain fastnesses and in caves, and threw their dead bodies to find a tomb in the entrails of the birds of the air, or the dogs which even persecution had made mad with hunger. But again—for this pleasing panorama is not yet closed, the happy Catholics, who must have danced with delight, under the privileges of such a Constitution, were deprived of the right to occupy and possess all civil offices—their enterprise was crushed —their industry made subservient to the rapacity of their enemies, and not to their own prosperity. But this is far from being all. The sources of knowledge—of knowledge which only can enlighten and civilize the mind, prevent crime, and promote the progress of human society—these sources of knowledge, I say, were sealed against them ; they were consequently left to ignorance, and its inseparable associate—vice. All those noble principles which result from education, and which lead youth into those moral footsteps in which they should tread, were made criminal in the Catholic to pursue, and impossible to attain ; and having thus been reduced by ignorance to the perpetration of those crimes which it uniformly produces—the people were punished for that which oppressive laws had generated, and the ignorance which was forced upon them was turned into a penalty and a persecution. They were first made ignorant by one Act of Parliament, and then punished by another for those crimes which ignorance produces.

"And now, my lord, and gentlemen of the jury, it remains for me to take another view of the state and condition of this wretched country. Perhaps there is not in the world so hideously a penal code of laws as that which appertains to the civil and religious rights of our unfortunate Roman Catholic countrymen. It is not that this code is fierce, inhuman, unchristian, barbarous, and Draconic, and conceived in a spirit of blood —because it might be all this, and yet, through the liberality and benevolence of those into whose hands it ought to be entrusted for administration, much of its dreadful spirit might be mitigated. And I am bound to say that a large and important class of the Protestant community look upon such a code nearly with as much horror as the Catholics themselves. Unfortunately, however, in every state of society and of law analogous to ours, a certain class of men, say rather of monsters, is sure to spring up, as it were, from hell, their throats still parched and heated with that insatiable thirst which the guilty glutton felt before them, and which they now are determined to slake with blood. For some of these men the apology of selfishness, an anxiety to raise themselves out of the struggles of genteel poverty, and a wolfish wish to earn the wages of oppression, might be pleaded ; although, heaven knows, it is at best but a desperate and cowardly apology. On the other hand, there are men not merely independent, but wealthy, who, imbued with a fierce and unreasoning bigotry, and stained by a black and unscrupulous ambition, start up into the front ranks of persecution, and carry fire and death and murder as they go along, and all this for the sake of adding to their reprobate names a title—a title earned by the shedding of innocent blood—a title earned by the oppression and persecution of their unresisting fellow-subjects—a title, perhaps that of *baronet ;* if I am mistaken in this, the individual who stands before you in that dock could, for he might, set me right.

"In fact, who are those who have lent themselves with such delight to the execution of bad laws? of laws that, for the sake of religion and Christianity, never ought to have

been enacted? Are they men of moral and Christian lives? men whose walk has been edifying in the sight of their fellows? are they men to whom society could look up as examples of private virtue and the decorous influence of religion? are they men who, on the Sabbath of God, repair with their wives and families to his holy worship? Alas! no. These heroic persecutors, who hunt and punish a set of disarmed men, are, in point of fact, not only a disgrace to that religion in whose name they *are* persecutors, and on whose merciful precepts they trample, but to all religion, in whatever light true religion is contemplated. Vicious, ignorant, profligate, licentious, but cunning, cruel, bigoted, and selfish, they make the spirit of oppressive laws, and the miserable state of the country, the harvest of their gain. Look more closely at the picture, gentlemen of the jury, and make, as I am sure you will, the dismal and terrible circumstances which I will lay before you your own. Imagine for a moment that those who are now, or at least have been, the objects of hot and blood-scenting persecution, had, by some political revolution, got the power of the State and of the laws into their own hands; suppose, for it is easily supposed, that they had stripped you of your property, deprived you of your civil rights, disarmed you of the means of self-defence, persecuted yourselves and proscribed your religion, or, *vice versa*, proscribed yourselves and persecuted your religion, or, to come at once to the truth, proscribed and persecuted both; suppose your churches shut up, your pious clergy banished, and that, when on the bed of sickness or of death, some of your family, hearing your cries for the consolations of religion, ventured out, under the clouds of the night, pale with sorrow, and trembling with apprehension, to *steal* for you, at the risk of life, that comfort which none but a minister of God can effectually bestow upon the parting spirit; suppose this, and suppose that your house is instantly surrounded by some cruel but plausible Sir Robert Whitecraft, or some drunken and ruffianly Captain Smellpriest, who, surrounded and supported by armed miscreants, not only breaks open that house, but violates the awful sanctity of the deathbed itself, drags out the minister of Christ from his work of mercy, and leaves him a bloody corpse at your threshold. I say, change places, gentlemen of the jury, and suppose in your own imaginations that all those monstrous persecutions, all those murderous and flagitious outrages, had been inflicted upon yourselves, with others of an equally nefarious character; suppose all this, and you may easily do so, for you have seen it all perpetrated in the name of God and the law, or, to say the truth, in the hideous union of mammon and murder; suppose all this, and you will feel what such men as he who stands in that dock deserves from humanity and natural justice; for, alas! I cannot say, from the laws of his country, under the protection of which, and in the name of which, he and those who resemble him have deluged that country with innocent blood, laid waste the cabin of the widow and the orphan, and carried death and desolation wherever they went. But, gentlemen, I shall stop here, as I do not wish to inflict unnecessary pain upon you, even by this mitigated view of atrocities which have taken place before your own eyes; yet I cannot close this portion of my address without referring to so large a number of our fellow-Protestants with pride, as I am sure their Roman Catholic friends do with gratitude. Who were those who, among the Protestant party, threw the shield of their name and influence over their Catholic neighbors and friends? Who, need I ask? The pious, the humane, the charitable, the liberal, the benevolent, and the enlightened. Those were they who, overlooking the mere theological distinctions of particular doctrines, united in the great and universal creed of charity, held by them as a common principle on which they might meet and understand and love each other. And indeed, gentlemen of the jury, there cannot be a greater proof of the oppressive spirit which animates this penal and inhuman code than the fact that so many of those, for whose benefit it was enacted, resisted its influence, on behalf of their Catholic fellow-subjects, as far as they could, and left nothing undone to support the laws of humanity against those of injustice and oppression. When the persecuted Catholic could not invest his capital in the purchase of property, the generous Protestant came forward, purchased the property in his own name, became the *bona fide* proprietor, and then transferred its use and advantages to his Catholic friend. And again, under what roof did the hunted Catholic priest first take refuge from those blood-hounds of persecution? In most cases under that of his charitable and Christian brother, the Protestant clergyman. Gentlemen, could there be a bitterer libel upon the penal laws than the notorious facts which I have the honor of stating to you?

"The facts which have placed the prisoner at the bar before you are these, and in detailing them I feel myself placed in circumstances of great difficulty, and also of peculiar delicacy. The discharge, however, of a public duty, which devolves upon me as lead-

ing law officer of the Crown, forces me into a course which I cannot avoid, unless I should shrink from promoting and accomplishing the ends of public justice. In my position, and in the discharge of my solemn duties here to-day, I can recognize no man's rank, no man's wealth, nor the prestige of any man's name. So long as he stands at that bar, charged with great and heinous crimes, I feel it my duty to strip him of all the advantages of his birth and rank, and consider him simply a mere subject of the realm.

"In order to show you, gentlemen of the jury, the *animus* under which the prisoner at the bar acted, in the case before us, I must go back a little—a period of some months. At that time a highly respectable gentleman of an ancient and honored family in this country was one evening on his way home from this town, attended, as usual, by his servant. At a lonely place on a remote and antiquated road, which they took as a shorter way, it so happened that, in consequence of a sudden mist peculiar to those wild moors, they lost their path, and found themselves in circumstances of danger and distress. The servant, however, whistled, and his whistle was answered; a party of men, of freebooters, of robbers, headed by a person called the Red Rapparee, who has been convicted at these assizes, and who has been the scourge of the country for years, came up to them, and as the Rapparee had borne this respectable gentleman a deadly and implacable enmity for some time past, he was about to murder both master and man, and actually had his musket levelled at him, as others of his gang had at his aged servant, when a person, a gentleman named Reilly—[here there was a loud cheer throughout the court, which, however, was soon repressed, and the Attorney-General proceeded]—this person started out from an old ruin, met the robber face to face, and, in short, not only saved the lives of the gentleman and his servant, but conducted them safely home. This act of courage and humanity, by a Roman Catholic to a Protestant, had such an effect upon the old gentleman's daughter, a lady whose name has gone far and wide for her many virtues and wonderful beauty, that an attachment was formed between the young gentleman and her. The prisoner at the bar, gentlemen, was a suitor for her hand; but as the young and amiable lady was acquainted with his character as a priest-hunter and persecutor, she, though herself a Protestant, could look upon him only with abhorrence. At all events, after the rescue of her father's life, and her acquaintance with Mr. Reilly, the prisoner at the bar was rejected with disdain, as he would have been, it seems, if Reilly never had existed. Now, gentlemen of the jury, observe that Reilly was a Catholic, which was bad enough in the eyes of the prisoner at the bar; but he was more; he was a rival, and were it not for the state of the law, would, it appears, for there is no doubt of it now, have been a successful one. From henceforth the prisoner at the bar marked Mr. Reilly for vengeance, for destruction, for death. At this time he was in the full exercise of irresponsible authority; he could burn, hang, shoot, without being called to account; and as it will appear before you, gentlemen, this consciousness of impunity stimulated him to the perpetration of such outrages as, in civil life, and in a country free from civil war, are unparalleled in the annals of crime and cruelty.

"But, gentlemen, what did this man do? this man, so anxious to preserve the peace of the country; this man, the terror of the surrounding districts; what did he do, I ask? Why, he took the most notorious robber of his day, the fierce and guilty Rapparee—he took him into his councils, in order that he might enable him to trace the object of his vengeance, Reilly, in the first place, and to lead him to the hiding-places of such unfortunate Catholic priests as had taken refuge in the caves and fastnesses of the mountains. Instead of punishing this notorious malefactor, he took him into his own house, made him, as he was proud to call them, one of his *priesthounds*, and induced him to believe that he had procured him a pardon from Government. Reilly's name he had, by his foul misrepresentations, got into the *Hue-and-Cry*, and subsequently had him gazetted as an outlaw; and all this upon his own irresponsible authority. I mention nothing, gentlemen, in connection with this trial which we are not in a capacity to prove.

"Having forced Reilly into a variety of disguises, and hunted him like a mad dog through the country; having searched every lurking-place in which he thought he might find him, he at length resolved on the only course of vengeance he could pursue. He surrounded his habitation, and, after searching for Reilly himself, he openly robbed him of all that was valuable of that gentleman's furniture, then set fire to the house, and in the clouds of the night reduced that and every out-office he had to ashes—a capital felony. It so happens, however, that the house and offices were, in point of fact, not the property of Reilly at all, but of a most respectable Protestant gentleman and magistrate, Mr. Hastings, with whose admirable character I have no doubt you are all acquainted; and all that remains for me to say is, that he is the prosecutor in this case.

"And now, gentlemen, we expect a calm, deliberate, and unbiassed verdict from you. Look upon the prisoner at the bar as an innocent man until you can, with a clear conscience, find him guilty of the charges which we are in a condition to prove against him; but if there be any doubt upon your minds, I hope you will give him the benefit of it."

Sir Robert Whitecraft, in fact, had no defence, and could procure no witnesses to counteract the irresistible body of evidence that was produced against him. Notwithstanding all this, his friends calculated upon the prejudices of a Protestant jury. His leading counsel made as able a speech in his defence as could be made under the circumstances. It consisted, however, of vague generalities, and dwelt upon the state of the country and the necessity that existed for men of great spirit and Protestant feeling to come out boldly, and, by courage and energy, carry the laws that had passed for the suppression of Popery into active and wholesome operation. "Those laws were passed by the wisest and ablest assembly of legislators in the world, and to what purpose could legislative enactments for the preservation of Protestant interests be passed if men of true faith and loyalty could not be found to carry them into effect. There were the laws; the prisoner at the bar did not make those laws, and if he was invested with authority to carry them into operation, what did he do but discharge a wholesome and important duty? The country was admitted, on all sides, to be in a disturbed state; Popery was attempting for years most insidiously to undermine the Protestant Church, and to sap the foundation of all Protestant interests; and if, by a pardonable excess of zeal, of zeal in the right direction, and unconscious lapse in the discharge of what he would call, those noble but fearful duties had occurred, was it for those who had a sense of true liberty, and a manly detestation of Romish intrigue at heart, to visit that upon the head of a true and loyal man as a crime. Forbid it, the spirit of the British Constitution—forbid it, heaven—forbid it, Protestantism. No, gentlemen of the jury," etc., etc.

We need not go further, because we have condensed in the few sentences given the gist of all he said.

When the case was closed, the jury retired to their room, and as Sir Robert Whitecraft's fate depends upon their verdict, we will be kind enough to avail ourselves of the *open sesame* of our poor imagination to introduce our readers invisibly into the jury-room.

"Now," said the foreman, "what's to be done? Are we to sacrifice a Protestant champion to Popery?"

"To Popery! To the deuce," replied another. "It's not Popery that is prosecuting him. Put down Popery by argument, by fair argument, but don't murder those that profess it, in cold blood. As the Attorney-General said, let us make it our own case, and if the Papishes treated us as we have treated them, what would we say? By jingo, I'll hang that fellow. He's a Protestant champion, they say; but I say he's a Protestant bloodhound, and a cowardly rascal to boot."

"How is he a cowardly rascal, Bob? Hasn't he proved himself a brave man against the Papishes? eh?"

"A brave man! deuce thank him for being a brave man against poor devils that are allowed nothing stouter than a horse-rod to defend themselves with—when he has a party of well-armed bloodhounds at his back. He's the worst landlord in Ireland, and, above all things, he's a tyrant to his Protestant tenants, this champion of Protestantism. Ay, and fierce as he is against Popery, there's not a Papish tenant on his estate that he's not like a father to."

"And how the deuce do you know that?"

"Because I was head bailiff to him for ten years."

"But doesn't all the world know that he hates the Papists, and would have them massacred if he could?"

"And so he does—and so he would; but it's all his cowardice, because he's afraid that if he was harsh to his Popish tenants some of them might shoot him from behind a hedge some fine night, and give him a leaden bullet for his supper."

"I know he's a coward," observed another, "because he allowed himself to be horse-whipped by Major Bingham, and didn't call him out for it."

"Oh, as to that," said another, "it was made up by their friends; but what's to be done? All the evidence is against him, and we are on our oaths to find a verdict according to the evidence."

"Evidence be hanged," said another; "I'll sit here till doom's-day before I find him guilty. Are we, that are all loyal Protestants, to bring out a varjuice to please the Papishes? Oh, no, faith; but here's the thing, gentlemen; mark *me;* here now, I take off my shoes, and I'll sit them before I find him guilty;" and as he spoke he deliberately slipped of his shoes, and placed them on the table, ready for his tough and loyal repast.

"By Gog," said another, "I'll hang him, in spite of your *teeth;* and, afther aiten your brogues, you may go barefooted if you like. *I* have brogues to ait as well as you, and one of mine is as big as two of yours."

This was followed by a chorus of laughter, after which they began to consider the case before them, like admirable and well-reasoning jurors, as they were. Two hours passed in wrangling and talking and recriminating, when, at last, one of them, striking the table, exclaimed with an oath :

"All Europe won't save the villain. Didn't he seduce my sister's daughter, and then throw her and her child back, with shame and disgrace, on the family, without support?"

"Look at that," said the owner of the shoe, holding it up triumphantly ; "that's my supper to-night, and my argument in his defence. I say our Protestant champion mustn't hang, at least until I starve first."

The other, who sat opposite to him, put his hand across the table, and snatching the shoe, struck its owner between the two eyes with it and knocked him back on the floor. A scene of uproar took place, which lasted for some minutes, but at length, by the influence of the foreman, matters were brought to a somewhat amicable issue. In this way they spent the time for a few hours more, when one of the usual messengers came to know if they had agreed ; but he was instantly dismissed to a very warm settlement, ith the assurance that they had not.

"Come," said one of them, pulling out a pack of cards, "let us amuse ourselves at any rate. Who's for a hand at the Spoil Five?"

The cards were looked upon as a godsend, and in a few moments one half the jury were busily engaged at that interesting game. The other portion of them amused themselves, in the meantime, as well as they could.

"Tom," said one of them, "were you ever on a special jury in a revenue case?"

"No," replied Tom, "never. Is there much fun?"

"The devil's own fun ; because if we *find* for the defendant, he's sure to give us a splendid feed. But do you know how we manage when we find that we can't agree?"

"No. How is it?"

"Why, you see, when the case is too clear against him, and that to find for him would be too barefaced, we get every man to mark down on a slip of paper the least amount of damages he is disposed to give against him ; when they're all down, we tot them up, and divide by twelve—"*

"Silence," said another, "till we hear John Dickson's song."

The said John Dickson was at the time indulging them with a comic song, which was encored with roars of laughter.

"Hallo!" shouted one of those at the cards, "here's Jack Brereton has prigged the ace of hearts."

"Oh, gentlemen," said Jack, who was a greater knave at the cards than any in the pack, "upon my honor, gentlemen, you wrong me."

"There—he has dropped it," said another ; "look under the table."

The search was made, and up was hugged the redoubtable ace of hearts from under one of Jack's feet, who had hoped, by covering it, to escape detection. Detected, however, he was, and, as they all knew him well, the laughter was loud accordingly, and none of them laughed louder than Jack himself.

"Jack," said another of them, "let us have a touch of the legerdemain."

"Gentlemen, attention," said Jack. "Will any of you lend me a halfpenny?"

This was immediately supplied to him, and the first thing he did was to stick it on his forehead—although there had been brass enough there before—to which it appeared to have been glued ; after a space he took it off and placed it in the palm of his right hand, which he closed, and then, extending both his hands, shut, asked those about him in which hand it was. Of course they all said in the right ; but, upon Jack's opening the said hand, there was no halfpenny there.

In this way they discussed a case of life or death, until another knock came, which "knock" received the same answer as before.

"Faith," said a powerful-looking farmer from near the town of Boyle—the very picture of health, "if they don't soon let us out I'll get sick. It's I that always does the sickness for the jury when we're kept in too long."

"Why, then, Billy Bradley," asked one of them, "how could you, of all men living, sham sickness on a *doctor?*"

"Because," said Billy, with a grin. "I'm beginning to feel a diversion of blood to the head, for want of a beefsteak and a pot o' porther. My father and grandfather both died of a diversion of blood to the head."

"I rather think," observed another, "that they died by taking their diversion at the beefsteak and the pot of porter."

"No matther," said Billy, "they died at all events, and so will we all, praise God."

"Come," said one of them, "there is Jack Brereton and his cane—let us come to business. What do you say, Jack, as to the prisoner?"

Jack at the time had the aforesaid cane

*By no means an uncommon proceeding in revenue cases, even at the present day.

between his legs, over which he was bent like a bow, with the head of it in his mouth.

"Are you all agreed?" asked Jack.

"All for a verdict of guilty, with the exception of this fellow and his shoes."

Jack Brereton was a handsome old fellow, with a red face and a pair of watery eyes; he was a little lame, and hirpled as he walked, in consequence of a hip complaint, which he got by a fall from a jaunting-car; but he was now steady enough, except the grog.

"Jack, what do *you* say?" asked the foreman; "it's time to do something."

"Why," replied Jack, "the scoundrel engaged me to put down a pump for him, and I did it in such a manner as was a credit to his establishment. To be sure, he wanted the water to come whenever it was asked; but I told him that that wasn't my system; that I didn't want to make a good thing too cheap; but that the water would come in genteel time—that is to say, whenever they didn't want it; and faith the water bore me out." And here Jack laughed heartily. "But no matter," proceeded Jack, "he's only a *bujeen;* sure it was his mother nursed me. Where's that fellow that's going to eat his shoes? Here, Ned Wilson, you flaming Protestant, I have neither been a grand juror nor a petty juror of the county of Sligo for nothing. Where are you? Take my cane, place it between your knees as you saw me do, put your mouth down to the head of it, suck up with all your strength, and you'll find that God will give you sense afterwards."

Wilson, who had taken such a fancy for eating his shoes, in order to show his loyalty, was what is called a *hard-goer*, and besides a great friend of Jack's. At all events, he followed his advice—put the head of the huge cane into his mouth, and drew up accordingly. The cane, in fact, was hollow all through, and contained about three half-pints of strong whiskey. There was some wrangling with the man for a little time after this; but at length he approached Jack, and handing him the empty cane, said:

"What's your opinion, Jack?"

"Why, we must hang him," replied Jack. "He defrauded me in the pump; and I ask you did you ever put your nose to a better pump than *that?*"*

"Give me your hand, Jack, we're agreed—he swings!"

* We have been taken to task about this description of the jury-room; but we believe, and have good reason to believe, that every circumstance mentioned in it is a fact. Do our readers remember the history of Orr's trial, where three-fourths of the jurors who convicted him were drunk—a fact to which they themselves confirmed upon oath afterwards?

At this moment an officer came to ask the same question, when, in reply, the twelve jurymen came out, and, amidst the most profound silence, the foreman handed down the issue paper to the Clerk of the Crown.

"Gentlemen," said that officer, after having cast his eye over it, "have you agreed in your verdict?"

"We have."

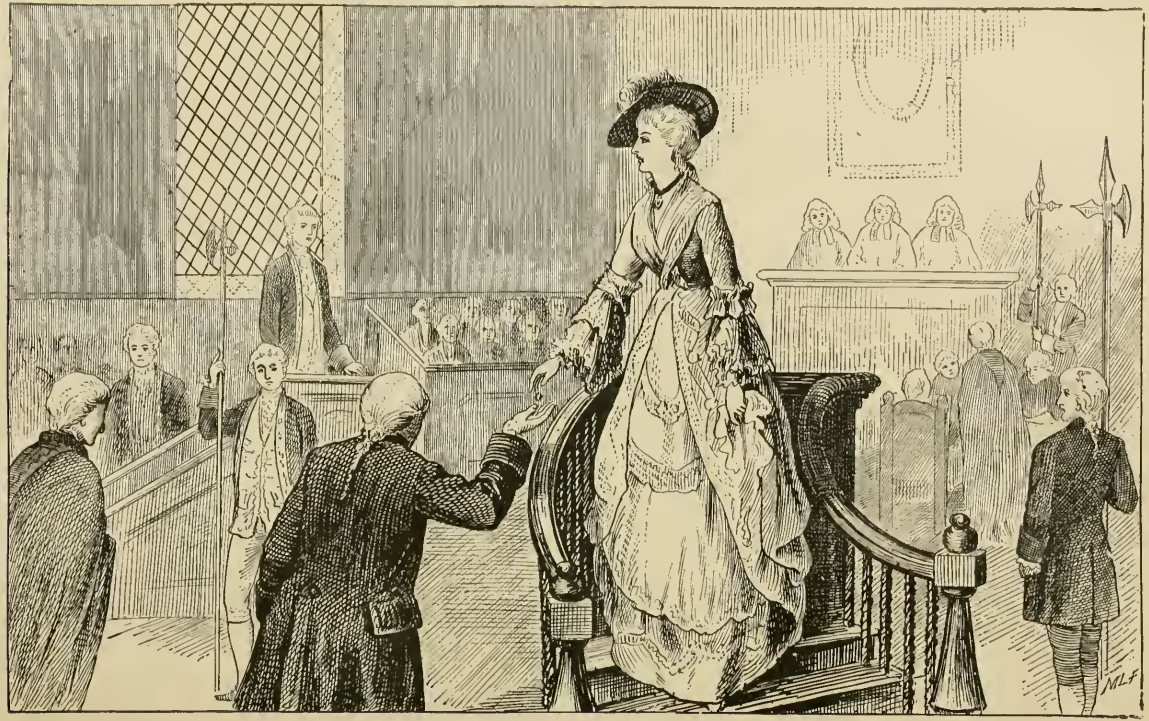
"Is the prisoner at the bar guilty, or not guilty?"

"Guilty!"

Let us pause here a moment, and reflect upon the precarious tenure of life, as it is frequently affected by such scenes as the above, in the administration of justice. Here was a criminal of the deepest dye, shivering in the dock with the natural apprehension of his fate, but supported, notwithstanding, by the delay of the jury in coming to a verdict. He argued reasonably enough, that in consequence of that very delay he must necessarily have friends among them who would hold out to the last. The state of suspense, however, in which he was held must have been, and was, dreadful. His lips and throat became parched by excitement, and he was obliged to drink three or four glasses of water. Being unable to stand, he was accommodated with a chair, on which, while he sat, the perspiration flowed from his pallid face. Yet, with the exception of his own clique, there was scarcely an individual present who did not hope that this trial would put an end to his career of blood. After all, there was something of the retributive justice of Providence even in the conduct and feelings of the jury; for, in point of fact, it was more on account of his private crimes and private infamy that they, however wrongly, brought in their verdict. Here was he, encircled by their knowledge of his own iniquities, apart from his public acts; and there, standing in that dock, from which he might have gone out free, so far as regarded his political exploits, he found, although he did not know it, the black weight of his private vices fall upon his head in the shape of the verdict just delivered. It would be impossible to describe his appearance on hearing it; his head fell down upon his breast listless, helpless, and with a character of despair that was painful to contemplate.

When the verdict was handed down, the judge immediately put on the black-cap; but Whitecraft's head was resting on his breast, and he did not for some time see it. At length, stirred into something like life by the accents of the judge, he raised his head with an effort. The latter addressed him as thus:

"Sir Robert Whitecraft, you have been convicted this day by as enlightened a jury



"GIVE THAT RING TO THE PRISONER: I KNOW NOT, WILLIAM," SHE ADDED, "WHETHER I SHALL EVER SEE YOU AGAIN OR NOT. IT MAY SO HAPPEN THAT THIS IS THE LAST TIME MY EYES CAN EVER REST UPON YOU WITH LOVE AND SORROW.—*Willy Reilly*, chap. XXV.—*p.* 175.

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as ever sat in a jury-box. You must be aware yourself, by the length of time, and consequently the deep and serious investigation which they bestowed—and, it is evident, painfully bestowed—upon your unhappy case, that your conviction is the deliberate result of their conscientious opinion. It is obvious, as I said, from the length of time occupied in the jury-room, that the evidence in your case was sifted closely, and canvassed with the ability and experience of able and honest men. In the verdict they have returned the Court perfectly concurs; and it now only remains for me to pass upon you that awful sentence of the law which is due to your cruel life and flagitious crimes. Were you a man without education, nurtured in ignorance, and the slave of its debasing consequences, some shade of compassion might be felt for you on that account. But you cannot plead this; you cannot plead poverty, or that necessity which urges many a political adventurer to come out as a tyrant and oppressor upon his fellow-subjects, under the shield of the law, and in the corrupt expectation of reward or promotion. You were not only independent in your own circumstances, but you possessed great wealth; and why you should shape yourself such an awful course of crime can only be attributed to a heart naturally fond of persecution and blood. I cannot, any more than the learned Attorney-General, suffer the privileges of rank, wealth, or position to sway me from the firm dictates of justice. You imagined that the law would connive at you—and it did so too long, but, believe me, the sooner or later it will abandon the individual that has been provoking it, and, like a tiger when goaded beyond patience, will turn and tear its victim to pieces. It remains for me now to pronounce the awful sentence of the law upon you; but before I do so, let me entreat you to turn your heart to that Being who will never refuse mercy to a repentant sinner; and I press this upon you the more because you need not entertain the slightest expectation of finding it in this world. In order, therefore, that you may collect and compose your mind for the great event that is before you, I will allow you four days, in order that you may make a Christian use of your time, and prepare your spirit for a greater tribunal than this. The sentence of the Court is that, on the fifth day after this, you be, etc., etc., etc.; and may God have mercy on your soul!"

At first there was a dead silence in the Court, and a portion of the audience was taken completely by surprise on hearing both the verdict and the sentence. At length a deep, condensed murmur, which arose by degrees into a yell of execration, burst forth from his friends, whilst, on the other hand, a peal of cheers and acclamations rang so loudly through the court that they completely drowned the indignant vociferations of the others. In the meantime silence was restored, and it was found that the convict had been removed during the confusion to one of the condemned cells. What now were his friends to do? Was it possible to take any steps by which he might yet be saved from such a disgraceful death? Pressed as they were for time, they came to the conclusion that the only chance existing in his favor was for a deputation of as many of the leading Protestants of the county, as could be prevailed upon to join in the measure, to proceed to Dublin without delay. Immediately, therefore, after the trial, a meeting of the baronet's friends was held in the head inn of Sligo, where the matter was earnestly discussed. Whitecraft had been a man of private and solitary enjoyments—in social and domestic life, as cold, selfish, inhospitable, and repulsive as he was cruel and unscrupulous in his public career. The consequence was that he had few personal friends of either rank or influence, and if the matter had rested upon his own personal character and merits alone, he would have been left, without an effort, to the fate which had that day been pronounced upon him. The consideration of the matter, however, was not confined to himself as an individual, but to the Protestant party at large, and his conviction was looked upon as a Popish triumph. On this account many persons of rank and influence, who would not otherwise have taken any interest in his fate, came forward for the purpose, if possible, of defeating the Popish party—who, by the way, had nothing whatsoever to do in promoting his conviction—and of preventing the stigma and deep disgrace which his execution would attach to their own. A very respectable deputation was consequently formed, and in the course of the next day proceeded to Dublin, to urge their claims in his favor with the Lord Lieutenant. This nobleman, though apparently favorable to the Catholic people, was nevertheless personally and secretly a bitter enemy to them. The state policy which he was instructed and called upon to exercise in their favor differed *toto cœlo* from his own impressions. He spoke to them, however, sweetly and softly, praised them for their forbearance, and made large promises in their favor, whilst, at the same time, he entertained no intention of complying with their request.

The deputation, on arriving at the castle, ascertained, to their mortification, that the viceroy would not be at home until the following day, having spent the last week with

a nobleman in the neighborhood; they were consequently obliged to await his arrival. After his return they were admitted to an audience, in which they stated their object in waiting upon him, and urged with great earnestness the necessity of arresting the fate of such a distinguished Protestant as Sir Robert Whitecraft; after which they entered into a long statement of the necessity that existed for such active and energetic men in the then peculiar and dangerous state of the country.

To all this, however, he replied with great suavity, assuring them that no man felt more anxious to promote Protestant interests than he did, and added that the relaxation of the laws against the Catholics was not so much the result of his own personal policy or feeling as the consequence of the instructions he had received from the English Cabinet. He would be very glad to comply with the wishes of the deputation if he could, but at present it was impossible. This man's conduct was indefensible; for, not content in carrying out the laws against the Catholics with unnecessary rigor, he committed a monstrous outrage against a French subject of distinction, in consequence of which the French Court, through their Ambassador in London, insisted upon his punishment.

"Very well, my lord," replied the spokesman of the deputation, "I beg to assure you, that if a hair of this man's head is injured there will be a massacre of the Popish population before two months; and I beg also to let you know, for the satisfaction of the English Cabinet, that they may embroil themselves with France, or get into whatever political embarrassment they please, but an Irish Protestant will never hoist a musket, or draw a sword, in their defence. Gentlemen, let us bid his Excellency a good-morning."

This was startling language, as the effect proved, for it startled the viceroy into a compliance with their wishes, and they went home post-haste, in order that the pardon might arrive in time.

CHAPTER XXV.

Rumor of Cooleen Bawn's Treachery—How it appears—Reilly stands his Trial—Conclusion.

Life, they say, is a life of trials, and so may it be said of this tale—at least of the conclusion of it; for we feel that it devolves upon us once more to solicit the presence of our readers to the same prison in which the Red Rapparee and Sir Robert Whitecraft received their sentence of doom.

As it is impossible to close the mouth of to silence the tongue of fame, so we may assure our readers, as we have before, that the history of the loves of those two celebrated individuals, to wit, Willy Reilly and the far-famed *Cooleen Bawn*, had given an interest to the coming trial such as was never known within the memory of man, at that period, nor perhaps equalled since. The Red Rapparee, Sir Robert Whitecraft, and all the other celebrated villains of that time, have nearly perished out of tradition itself, whilst those of our hero and heroine are still fresh in the feelings of the Connaught and Northern peasantry, at whose hearths, during the winter evenings, the rude but fine old ballad that commemorated that love is still sung with sympathy, and sometimes, as we can testify, with tears. This is fame. One circumstance, however, which deepened the interest felt by the people, told powerfully against the consistency of the *Cooleen Bawn*, which was, that she had resolved to come forward that day to bear evidence against her lover. Such was the general impression received from her father, and the attorney Doldrum, who conducted the trial against Reilly, although our readers are well aware that on this point they spoke without authority. The governor of the prison, on going that morning to conduct him to the bar, said:

"I am sorry, Mr. Reilly, to be the bearer of bad news; but as the knowledge of it may be serviceable to you or your lawyers, I think I ought to mention it to you."

"Pray, what is it?" asked Reilly.

"Why, sir, it is said to be a fact that the *Cooleen Bawn* has proved false and treacherous, and is coming this day to bear her testimony against you."

Reilly replied with a smile of confidence, which the darkness of the room prevented the other from seeing, "Well, Mr. O'Shaughnessy, even if she does, it cannot be helped; have you heard what the nature of her evidence is likely to be?"

"No; it seems her father and Doldrum the attorney asked her, and she would not tell them; but she said she had made her mind up to attend the trial and see justice done. Don't be cast down, Mr. Reilly, though, upon my soul, I think she ought to have stood it out in your favor to the last."

"Come," said Reilly, "I am ready; time will tell, Mr. O'Shaughnessy, and a short time too; a few hours now, and all will know the result."

"I hope in God it may be in your favor, Mr. Reilly."

"Thank you, O'Shaughnessy; lead on; I am ready to attend you."

The jail was crowded even to suffocation; but this was not all. The street opposite the jail was nearly as much crowded as the jail itself, a moving, a crushing mass of thousands having been collected to abide and hear the issue. It was with great difficulty, and not without the aid of a strong military force, that a way could be cleared for the judge as he approached the prison. The crowd was silent and passive, but in consequence of the report that the *Cooleen Bawn* was to appear against Reilly, a profound melancholy and an expression of deep sorrow seemed to brood over it. Immediately after the judge's carriage came that of the squire, who was accompanied by his daughter, Mrs. Brown and Mrs. Hastings, for Helen had insisted that her father should procure their attendance. A private room in the prison had, by previous arrangement, been prepared for them, and to this they were conducted by a back way, so as to avoid the crushing of the crowd. It was by this way also that the judge and lawyers entered the body of the court-house, without passing through the congregated mass.

At length the judge, having robed himself, took his seat on the bench, and, on casting his eye over the court-house, was astonished at the dense multitude that stood before him. On looking at the galleries, he saw that they were crowded with ladies of rank and fashion. Every thing having been now ready, the lawyers, each with his brief before him, and each with a calm, but serious and meditative aspect, the Clerk of the Crown cried out, in a voice which the hum of the crowd rendered necessarily loud:

"Mr. Jailer, put William Reilly to the bar."

At that moment a stir, a murmur, especially among the ladies in the gallery, and a turning of faces in the direction of the bar, took place as Reilly came forward, and stood erect in front of the judge. The very moment he made his appearance all eyes were fastened on him, and whatever the prejudices may have been against the *Cooleen Bawn* for falling in love with a Papist, that moment of his appearance absolved her from all—from every thing. A more noble or majestic figure never stood at that or any other bar. In the very prime of manhood, scarcely out of youth, with a figure like that of Antinous, tall, muscular, yet elegant, brown hair of the richest shade, a lofty forehead, features of the most manly cast, but exquisitely formed, and eyes which, but for the mellow softness of their expression, an eagle might have envied for their transparent brilliancy. The fame of his love for the *Cooleen Bawn* had come before him. The judge surveyed him with deep interest; so did every eye that could catch a view of his countenance; but, above all, were those in the gallery riveted upon him with a degree of interest—and, now that they had seen him, of sympathy—which we shall not attempt to describe. Some of them were so deeply affected that they could not suppress their tears, which, by the aid of their handkerchiefs, they endeavored to conceal as well as they could. Government, in this case, as it was not one of political interest, did not prosecute. A powerful bar was retained against Reilly, but an equally powerful one was engaged for him, the leading lawyer being, as we have stated, the celebrated advocate Fox, the Curran of his day.

The charge against him consisted of only two counts—that of robbing Squire Folliard of family jewels of immense value, and that of running away with his daughter, a ward of Chancery, contrary to her consent and inclination, and to the laws in that case made and provided.

The first witness produced was the sheriff—and, indeed, to state the truth, a very reluctant one was that humane gentleman on the occasion. Having been sworn, the leading counsel proceeded:

"You are the sheriff of this county?"

"I am."

"Are you aware that jewellery to a large amount was stolen recently from Mr. Folliard?"

"I am not."

"You are not? Now, is it not a fact, of which you were an eye-witness, that the jewellery in question was found upon the person of the prisoner at the bar, in Mr. Folliard's house?"

"I must confess that I saw him about to be searched, and that a very valuable case of jewellery was found upon his person."

"Yes, found upon his person—a very valuable case of jewellery, the property of Mr. Folliard, found upon his person; mark that, gentlemen of the jury."

"Pardon me," said the sheriff, "I saw jewellery found upon him; but I cannot say on my oath whether it belonged to Mr. Folliard or not; all I can say is, that Mr. Folliard claimed the jewels as his."

"As his—just so. Nobody had a better right to claim them than the person to whom they belonged. What took place on the occasion?"

"Why, Mr. Folliard, as I said, claimed them, and Mr. Reilly refused to give them up to him."

"You hear that, gentlemen—refused to

surrender him the property of which he had robbed him, even in his own house."

"And when you searched the prisoner?"

"We didn't search him; he refused to submit to a search."

"Refused to submit to a search! No wonder, I think! But, at the time he refused to submit to a search, had he the jewellery upon his person?"

"He had."

"He had? You hear that gentlemen—at the time he refused to be searched he had the jewellery upon his person."

The sheriff was then cross-examined by Fox, to the following effect:

"Mr. Sheriff, have you been acquainted, or are you acquainted, with the prisoner at the bar?"

"Yes; I have known him for about three years—almost ever since he settled in this county."

"What is your opinion of him?"

"My opinion of him is very high."

"Yes—your opinion of him is very high," with a significant glance at the jury—"I believe it is, and I believe it ought to be. Now, upon your oath, do you believe that the prisoner at the bar is capable of the theft or robbery imputed to him?"

"I do not."

"You do not? What did he say when the jewels were found upon him?"

"He refused to surrender them to Mr. Folliard as having no legal claim upon them, and refused, at first, to place them in any hands but Miss Folliard's own; but, on understanding that she was not in a state to receive them from him, he placed them in mine."

"Then he considered that they were Miss Folliard's personal property, and not her father's?"

"So it seemed to me from what he said at the time."

"That will do, sir; you may go down."

"Alexander Folliard!" and the father then made his appearance on the table; he looked about him, with a restless eye, and appeared in a state of great agitation, but it was the agitation of an enraged and revengeful man.

He turned his eyes upon Reilly, and exclaimed with bitterness: "There you are, Willy Reilly, who have stained the reputation of my child, and disgraced her family."

"Mr. Folliard," said his lawyer, "you have had in your possession very valuable family jewels."

"I had."

"Whose property were they?"

"Why, mine, I should think."

"Could you identify them?"

"Certainly I could."

"Are these the jewels in question?"

The old man put on his spectacles, and examined them closely.

"They are; I know every one of them."

"They were stolen from you?"

"They were."

"On whose person, after having been stolen, were they found?"

"On the person of the prisoner at the bar."

"You swear that?"

"I do; because I saw him take them out of his pocket in my own house after he had been made prisoner and detected."

"Then they are your property?"

"Certainly—I consider them my property; who else's property could they be."

"Pray, is not your daughter a minor?"

"She is."

"And a ward in the Court of Chancery?"

"Yes."

"That will do, sir."

The squire was then about to leave the table, when Mr. Fox addressed him:

"Not yet, Mr. Folliard, if you please; you swear the jewels are yours?"

"I do; to whom else should they belong?"

"Are you of opinion that the prisoner at the bar robbed you of them?"

"I found them in his possession."

"And you now identify them as the same jewels which you found in his possession?"

"Hang it, haven't I said so before?"

"Pray, Mr. Folliard, keep your temper, if you please, and answer me civilly and as a gentleman. Suffer me to ask you are there any other family jewels in your possession?"

"Yes, the Folliard jewels?"

"The Folliard jewels! And how do they differ in denomination from those found upon the prisoner?"

"Those found upon the prisoner are called the Bingham jewels, from the fact of my wife, who was a Bingham, having brought them into our family."

"And pray, did not your wife always consider those jewels as her own private property?"

"Why, I believe she did."

"And did she not, at her death-bed, bequeath those very jewels to her daughter, the present Miss Folliard, on the condition that *she too* should consider them as her *private* property?"

"Why, I believe she did; indeed, I am sure of it, because I was present at the time."

"In what part of the house were those jewels deposited?"

"In a large oak cabinet that stands in a recess in my library."

"Did you keep what you call the Folliard jewels there?"

"Yes, all our jewellery was kept there."

"But there was no portion of the Folliard jewellery touched?"

"No; but the Bingham sets were all taken, and all found upon the prisoner."

"What was your opinion of the prisoner's circumstances?"

"I could form no opinion about them."

"Had he not the reputation of being an independent man?"

"I believe such was the impression."

"In what style of life did he live?"

"Certainly in the style of a gentleman."

"Do you think, then, that necessity was likely to tempt a man of independence like him to steal your daughter's jewels?"

"I'd advise you, Sergeant Fox, not to put me out of temper; I haven't much to spare just now. What the deuce are you at?"

"Will you answer my question?"

"No, I don't think it was."

"If the Bingham jewellery had been stolen by a thief, do you think that thief would have left the Folliard jewellery behind him?"

"I'll take my oath *you* wouldn't, if you had been in the place of the person that took them. You'd have put the Bingham jewellery in one pocket, and balanced it with the Folliard in the other. But," he added, after a slight pause, "the villain stole from me a jewel more valuable and dearer to her father's heart than all the jewellery of the universal world put together. He stole my child, my only child," and as he spoke the tears ran slowly down his cheeks. The court and spectators were touched by this, and Fox felt that it was a point against them. Even he himself was touched, and saw that, with respect to Reilly's safety, the sooner he got rid of the old man, for the present at least, the better.

"Mr. Folliard," said he, "you may withdraw now. Your daughter loved, as what woman has not? There stands the object of her affections, and I appeal to your own feelings whether any living woman could be blamed for loving such a man. You may go down, sir, for the present."

The prosecuting counsel then said: "My lord, we produce Miss Folliard herself to bear testimony against this man. Crier, let Helen Folliard be called."

Now was the moment of intense and incredible interest. There was the far-famed beauty herself, to appear against her manly lover. The stir in the court, the expectation, the anxiety to see her, the stretching of necks, the pressure of one over another, the *fercor* of curiosity, was such as the reader may possibly conceive, but such certainly as we cannot attempt to describe. She advanced from a side door, deeply veiled; but the tall and majestic elegance of her figure not only struck all hearts with admiration, but prepared them for the inexpressible beauty with which the whole kingdom rang. She was assisted to the table, and helped into the witness's chair by her father, who seemed to triumph in her appearance there. On taking her seat, the buzz and murmur of the spectators became hushed into a silence like that of death, and, until she spoke, a feather might have been heard falling in the court.

"Miss Folliard," said the judge, in a most respectful voice, "you are deeply veiled—but perhaps you are not aware that, in order to give evidence in a court of justice, your veil should be up; will you have the goodness to raise it?"

Deliberately and slowly she raised it, as the court had desired her—but, oh! what an effulgence of beauty, what wonderful brilliancy, what symmetry, what radiance, what tenderness, what expression!

But we feel that to attempt the description of that face, which almost had divinity stamped upon it, is beyond all our powers. The whole court, every spectator, man and woman, all for a time were mute, whilst their hearts drank in the delicious draught of admiration which such beauty created. After having raised her veil, she looked around the court with a kind of wonder, after which her eyes rested on Reilly, and immediately her lids dropped, for she feared that she had done wrong in looking upon him. This made many of those hearts who were interested in his fate sink, and wonder why such treachery should be associated with features that breathed only of angelic goodness and humanity.

"Miss Folliard," said the leading counsel engaged against Reilly, "I am happy to hear that you regret some past occurrences that took place with respect to you and the prisoner at the bar."

"Yes," she replied, in a voice that was melody itself, "I do regret them."

Fox kept his eye fixed upon her, after which he whispered something to one or two of his brother lawyers; they shook their heads, and immediately set themselves to hear and note her examination.

"Miss Folliard, you are aware of the charges which have placed the prisoner at the bar of justice and his country?"

"Not exactly: I have heard little of it beyond the fact of his incarceration."

"He stands there charged with two very heinous crimes—one of them, the theft of

robbery of a valuable packet of jewels, your father's property."

"Oh, no," she replied, "they are my own exclusive property—not my father's. They were the property of my dear mother, who, on her death-bed, bequeathed them to me, in the presence of my father himself; and I always considered them as mine."

"But they were found upon the person of the prisoner?"

"Oh, yes; but that is very easily explained. It is no secret now, that, in order to avoid a marriage which my father was forcing on me with Sir Robert Whitecraft, I chose the less evil, and committed myself to the honor of Mr. Reilly. If I had not done so I should have committed suicide, I think, rather than marry Whitecraft—a man so utterly devoid of principle and delicacy that he sent an abandoned female into my father's house in the capacity of my maid and also as a spy upon my conduct."

This astounding fact created an immense sensation throughout the court, and the lawyer who was examining her began to feel that her object in coming there was to give evidence in favor of Reilly, and not against him. He determined, however, to try her a little farther, and proceeded:

"But, Miss Folliard, how do you account for the fact of the Bingham jewels being found upon the person of the prisoner?"

"It is the simplest thing in the world," she replied. "I brought my own jewels with me, and finding, as we proceeded, that I was likely to lose them, having no pocket sufficiently safe in which to carry them, I asked Reilly to take charge of them, which he did. Our unexpected capture, and the consequent agitation, prevented him from returning them to me, and they were accordingly found upon his person; but, as for stealing them, he is just as guilty as his lordship on the bench."

"Miss Folliard," proceeded the lawyer, "you have taken us by surprise to-day. How does it happen that you volunteered your evidence against the prisoner, and, now that you have come forward, every word you utter is in his favor? Your mind must have recently changed—a fact which takes very much away from the force of that evidence."

"I pray you, sir, to understand me, and not suffer yourself to be misled. I never stated that I was about to come here to give evidence *against* Mr. Reilly; but I said, when strongly pressed to come, that I *would* come, and see justice done. Had they asked me my meaning, I would have instantly told them; because, I trust, I am incapable of falsehood; and I will say now, that if my life could obtain that of William Reilly, I would lay it willingly down for him, as I am certain he would lay down his for the preservation of mine."

There was a pause here, and a murmur of approbation ran through the court. The opposing counsel, too, found that they had been led astray, and that to examine her any further would be only a weakening of their own cause. They attached, however, no blame of insincerity to her, but visited with much bitterness the unexpected capsize which they had got, on the stupid head of Doldrum, their attorney. They consequently determined to ask her no more questions, and she was about to withdraw, when Fox rose up, and said:

"Miss Folliard, I am counsel for the prisoner at the bar, and I trust you will answer me a few questions. I perceive, madam, that you are fatigued of this scene; but the questions I shall put to you will be few and brief. An attachment has existed for some time between you and the prisoner at the bar? You need not be ashamed, madam, to reply to it."

"I am *not* ashamed," she replied proudly, "and it is true."

"Was your father aware of that attachment at any time?"

"He was, from a very early period."

"Pray, how did he discover it?"

"I myself told him of my love for Reilly."

"Did your father give his consent to that attachment?"

"Conditionally he did."

"And pray, Miss Folliard, what were the conditions?"

"That Reilly should abjure his creed, and then no further obstacles should stand in the way of our union, he said."

"Was ever that proposal mentioned to Reilly?"

"Yes, I mentioned it to him myself; but, well as he loved me, he would suffer to go into an early grave, he said, sooner than abandon his religion; and I loved him a thousand times better for his noble adherence to it."

"*Did he not save your father's life?*"

"*He did, and the life of a faithful and attached old servant at the same time.*"

Now, although this fact was generally known, yet the statement of it here occasioned a strong expression of indignation against the man who could come forward and prosecute the individual, to whose courage and gallantry he stood indebted for his escape from murder. The uncertainty of Folliard's character, however, was so well known, and his whimsical changes of opinion such a matter of proverb among the people, that many persons said to each other:

"The cracked old squire is in one of his tan'rums now; he'll be a proud man if he can convict Reilly to-day; and perhaps to-morrow, or in a month hence, he'll be cursing himself for what he did—for that's his way."

"Well, Miss Folliard," said Fox, "we will not detain you any longer; this to you must be a painful scene; you may retire, madam."

She did not immediately withdraw, but taking a green silk purse out of her bosom, she opened it, and, after inserting her long, white, taper fingers into it, she brought out a valuable emerald ring, and placing it in the hands of the crier, she said:

"Give that ring to the prisoner: I know not, William," she added, "whether I shall ever see you again or not. It may so happen that this is the last time my eyes can ever rest upon you with love and sorrow." Here a few bright tears ran down her lovely cheeks. "If you should be sent to a far-off land, wear this for the sake of her who appreciated your virtues, your noble spirit, and your pure and disinterested love; look upon it when, perhaps, the Atlantic may roll between us, and when you do, think of your *Cooleen Bawn*, and the love she bore you; but if a still unhappier fate should be yours, let it be placed with you in your grave, and next that heart, that noble heart, that refused to sacrifice your honor and your religion even to your love for me. I will now go."

There is nothing so brave and fearless as innocence. Her youth, the majesty of her beauty, and the pathos of her expressions, absolutely flooded the court with tears. The judge wept, and hardened old barristers, with hearts like the nether millstone, were forced to put their handkerchiefs to their eyes; but as they felt that it might be detrimental to their professional characters to be caught weeping, they shaded off the pathos under the hypocritical pretence of blowing their noses. The sobs from the ladies in the gallery were loud and vehement, and Reilly himself was so deeply moved that he felt obliged to put his face upon his hands, as he bent over the bar, in order to conceal his emotion. He received the ring with moist eyes, kissed it, and placed it in a small locket which he put in his bosom.

"Now," said the *Cooleen Bawn*, "I am ready to go."

She was then conducted to the room to which we have alluded, where she met Mrs. Brown and Mrs. Hastings, both of whom she found in tears—for they had been in the gallery, and witnessed all that had happened. They both embraced her tenderly, and attempted to console her as well as they could; but a weight like death, she said, pressed upon her heart, and she begged them not to distract her by their sympathy, kind and generous as she felt it to be, but to allow her to sit, and nurture her own thoughts until she could hear the verdict of the jury. Mrs. Hastings returned to the gallery, and arrived there in time to hear the touching and brilliant speech of Fox, which we are not presumptuous enough to imagine, much less to stultify ourselves by attempting to give. He dashed the charge of Reilly's theft of the jewels to pieces—not a difficult task, after the evidence that had been given; and then dwelt upon the loves of this celebrated pair with such force and eloquence and pathos that the court was once more melted into tears. The closing speech by the leading counsel against Reilly was bitter; but the gist of it turned upon the fact of his having eloped with a ward of Chancery, contrary to law; and he informed the jury that no affection—no consent upon the part of any young lady under age was either a justification of, or a protection against, such an abduction as that of which Reilly had been guilty. The state of the law at the present time, he assured them, rendered it a felony to marry a Catholic and a Protestant together; and he then left the case in the hands, he said, of an honest Protestant jury.

The judge's charge was brief. He told the jury that they could not convict the prisoner on the imputed felony of the jewels; but that the proof of his having taken away Miss Folliard from her father's house, with—as the law stood—her felonious abduction, for the purpose of inveigling her into an unlawful marriage with himself, was the subject for their consideration. Even had he been a Protestant, the law could afford him no protection in the eye of the Court of Chancery.

The jury retired; but their absence from their box was very brief. Unfortunately, their foreman was cursed with a dreadful hesitation in his speech, and, as he entered, the Clerk of the Crown said:

"Well, gentlemen, have you agreed in your verdict?"

There was a solemn silence, during which nothing was heard but a convulsive working about the chest and glottis of the foreman, who at length said:

"We—we—we—we have."

"Is the prisoner at the bar guilty or not guilty?"

Here the internal but obstructed machinery of the chest and throat set to work again, and at last the foreman was able to get out —"Guilty—"

Mrs. Hastings had heard enough, and too much; and, as the sentence was pronounced, she instantly withdrew: but how to convey the melancholy tidings to the *Cooleen Bawn*

she knew not. In the meantime the foreman, who had not fully delivered himself of the verdict, added, after two or three desperate hiccups—"*on the second count.*"

This, if the foreman had not labored under such an extraordinary hesitation, might have prevented much suffering, and many years of unconscious calamity to one of the unhappy parties of whom we are writing, inasmuch as the felony of the jewels would have been death, whilst the elopement with a ward of Chancery was only transportation.

When Mrs. Hastings entered the room where the *Coolcen Bawn* was awaiting the verdict with a dreadful intensity of feeling, the latter rose up, and, throwing her arms about her neck, looked into her face, with an expression of eagerness and wildness, which Mrs. Hastings thought might be best allayed by knowing the worst, as the heart, in such circumstances, generally collects itself, and falls back upon its own resources.

"Well, Mrs. Hastings, well—the verdict?"

"Collect yourself, my child—be firm—be a woman. Collect yourself—for you will require it. The verdict—GUILTY!"

The *Coolcen Bawn* did not faint—nor become weak—but she put her fair white hand to her forehead—then looked around the room, then upon Mrs. Brown, and lastly upon Mrs. Hastings. They also looked upon her. God help both her and them! Yes, they looked upon her countenance—that lovely countenance—and then into her eyes—those eyes! But, alas! where was their beauty now? Where their expression?

"Miss Folliard! my darling Helen!" exclaimed Mrs. Hastings, in tears—"great God, what is this, Mrs. Brown? Come here and look at her."

Mrs. Brown, on looking at her, whispered, in choking accents, "Oh! my God, the child's reason is overturned; what is there now in those once glorious eyes but vacancy? Oh, that I had never lived to see this awful day! Helen, the treasure, the delight of all who ever knew you, what is wrong? Oh, speak to us—recognize us—your own two best friends—Helen—Helen! speak to us."

She looked upon them certainly; but it was with a dead and vacant stare which wrung their hearts.

"Come," said she, "tell me where is William Reilly? Oh, bring me to William Reilly; they have taken me from him, and I know not where to find him."

The two kind-hearted ladies looked at one another, each stupefied by the mystery of what they witnessed.

"Oh," said Mrs. Hastings, "her father must be instantly sent for. Mrs. Brown, go to the lobby—there is an officer there—desire him to go to Mr. Folliard and say that—but we had better not alarm him too much," she added, "say that Miss Folliard wishes to see him immediately."

The judge, we may observe here, had not yet pronounced sentence upon Reilly. The old man, who, under all possible circumstances, was so affectionately devoted and attentive to his daughter, immediately proceeded to the room, in a state of great triumph and exultation exclaiming, "GUILTY, GUILTY; we have noosed him at last." He even snapped his fingers, and danced about for a time, until rebuked by Mrs. Hastings.

"Unhappy and miserable old man," she exclaimed, with tears, "what have you done? Look at the condition of your only child, whom you have murdered. She is now a maniac."

"What," he exclaimed, rushing to her, "what, what is this? What do you mean? Helen, my darling, my child—my delight—what is wrong with you? Recollect yourself, my dearest treasure. Do you not know me, your own father? Oh, Helen, Helen! for the love of God speak to me. Say you know me—call me father—rouse yourself—recollect me—don't you know who I am?"

There, however, was the frightfully vacant glance, but no reply.

"Oh," said she, in a low, calm voice, "where is William Reilly? They have taken me from him, and I cannot find him; bring me to William Reilly."

"Don't you know me, Helen? don't you know your loving father? Oh, speak to me, child of my heart! speak but one word as a proof that you know me."

She looked on him, but that look filled his heart with unutterable anguish; he clasped her to that heart, he kissed her lips, he strove to soothe and console her—but in vain. There was the vacant but unsettled eye, from which the bright expression of reason was gone; but no recognition—no spark of reflection or conscious thought—nothing but the melancholy inquiry from those beautiful lips of—"Where's William Reilly? They have taken me from him—and will not allow me to see him. Oh, bring me to William Reilly!"

"Oh, wretched fate!" exclaimed her distracted father, "I am—I am a murderer, and faithful Connor was right—Mrs. Brown—Mrs. Hastings—hear me, both—I was warned of this, but I would not listen either to reason or remonstrance, and now I am punished, as Connor predicted. Great heaven, what a fate both for her and me—for her the innocent, and for me the guilty!"

It is unnecessary to dwell upon the father's misery and distraction; but, from all our

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HELEN, MY DARLING, MY CHILD, MY DELIGHT, WHAT IS WRONG WITH YOU?"—*Willy Reilly*, chap. xxv.—*p.* 176.

readers have learned of his extraordinary tenderness and affection for that good and lovely daughter, they may judge of what he suffered. He immediately ordered his carriage, and had barely time to hear that Reilly had been sentenced to transportation for seven years. His daughter was quite meek and tractable; she spoke not, nor could any ingenuity on their part extract the slightest reply from her. Neither did she shed a single tear, but the vacant light of her eyes had stamped a fatuitous expression on her features that was melancholy and heartbreaking beyond all power of language to describe.

No other person had seen her since the bereavement of her reason, except the officer who kept guard on the lobby, and who, in the hurry and distraction of the moment, had been dispatched by Mrs. Brown for a glass of cold water. Her father's ravings, however, in the man's presence, added to his own observation, and the distress of her female friends were quite sufficient to satisfy him of the nature of her complaint, and in less than half an hour it was through the whole court-house, and the town besides, that the *Cooleen Bawn* had gone mad on hearing the sentence that was passed upon her lover. Her two friends accompanied her home, and remained with her for the night.

Such was the melancholy conclusion of the trial of Willy Reilly; but even taking it at its worst, it involved a very different fate from that of his vindictive rival, Whitecraft. It appeared that that worthy gentleman and the Red Rapparee had been sentenced to die on the same day, and at the same hour. It is true, Whitecraft was aware that a deputation had gone post-haste to Dublin Castle to solicit his pardon, or at least some lenient commutation of punishment. Still, it was feared that, owing to the dreadful state of the roads, and the slow mode of travelling at that period, there was a probability that the pardon might not arrive in time to be available; and indeed there was every reason to apprehend as much. The day appointed for the execution of the Red Rapparee and him arrived—nay, the very hour had come; but still there was hope among his friends. The sheriff, a firm, but fair and reasonable man, waited beyond the time named by the judge for his execution. At length he felt the necessity of discharging his duty; for, although more than an hour beyond the appointed period had now elapsed, yet this delay proceeded from no personal regard he entertained for the felon, but from respect for many of those who had interested themselves in his fate.

After an unusual delay the sheriff felt himself called upon to order both the Rapparee and the baronet for execution. In waiting so long for a pardon, he felt that he had transgressed his duty, and he accordingly ordered them out for the last ceremony. The hardened Rapparee died sullen and silent, the only regret he expressed being that he could not live to see his old friend turned off before him.

"Troth," replied the hangman, "only that the sheriff has ordhered me to hang you first as bein' the betther man, I would give you that same satisfaction; but if you're not in a very great hurry to the warm corner you're goin' to, and if you will just take your time for a few minutes, I'll engage to say you will soon have company. God speed you, any way," he exclaimed as he turned him off; "only take your time, and wait for your neighbors. Now, Sir Robert," said he, "turn about, they say, is fair play—it's your turn now; but you look unbecomin' upon it. Hould up your head, man, and don't be cast down. You'll have company where you're goin'; for the Red Rapparee tould me to tell you that he'd wait for you. Hallo! —what's that?" he exclaimed as he cast his eye to the distance and discovered a horseman riding for life, with a white handkerchief, or flag of some kind, floating in the breeze. The elevated position in which the executioner was placed enabled him to see the signal before it could be perceived by the crowd. "Come, Sir Robert," said he, "stand where I'll place you—there's no use in asking you to hould up your head, for you're not able; but listen. You hanged my brother that you knew to be innocent; and now I hang you that I know to be guilty. Yes, I hang you, with the white flag of the Lord Lieutenant's pardon for you wavin' in the distance; and listen again, *remember Willy Reilly;*" and with these words he launched him into eternity.

The uproar among his friends was immense, as was the cheering from the general crowd, at the just fate of this bad man. The former rushed to the gallows, in order to cut him down, with a hope that life might still be in him, a process which the sheriff, after perusing his pardon, permitted them to carry into effect. The body was accordingly taken into the prison, and a surgeon procured to examine it; but altogether in vain; his hour had gone by, life was extinct, and all the honor they could now pay Sir Robert Whitecraft was to give him a pompous funeral, and declare him a martyr to Popery—both of which they did.

On the day previous to Reilly's departure his humble friend and namesake, Fergus, at the earnest solicitation of Reilly himself,

was permitted to pay him a last melancholy visit. After his sentence, as well as before it, every attention had been paid to him by O'Shaughnessy, the jailer, who, although an avowed Protestant, and a brand plucked from the burning, was, nevertheless, a lurking Catholic at heart, and felt a corresponding sympathy with his prisoner. When Fergus entered his cell he found him neither fettered nor manacled, but perfectly in the enjoyment at least of bodily freedom. It is impossible, indeed, to say how far the influence of money may have gone in securing him the comforts which surrounded him, and the attentions which he received. On entering his cell, Fergus was struck by the calm and composed air with which he received him. His face, it is true, was paler than usual, but a feeling of indignant pride, if not of fixed but stern indignation, might be read under the composure into which he forced himself, and which he endeavored to suppress. He approached Fergus, and extending his hand with a peculiar smile, very difficult to be described, said :

"Fergus, I am glad to see you ; I hope you are safe—at least I have heard so."

"I am safe, sir, and free," replied Fergus ; "thanks to the Red Rapparee and the sheriff for it."

"Well," proceeded Reilly, "you have one comfort—the Red Rapparee will neither tempt you nor trouble you again ; but is there no danger of his gang taking up his quarrel and avenging him ?"

"His gang, sir ? Why, only for me he would a' betrayed every man of them to Whitecraft and the Government, and had them hanged, drawn, and quartered—ay, and their heads grinning at us in every town in the county."

"Well, Fergus, let his name and his crimes perish with him ; but, as for you, what do you intend to do ?"

"Troth, sir," replied Fergus, "it's more than I rightly know. I had my hopes, like others ; but, somehow, luck has left all sorts of lovers of late—from Sir Robert Whitecraft to your humble servant."

"But you may thank God," said Reilly, with a smile, "that you had not Sir Robert Whitecraft's luck."

"Faith, sir," replied Fergus archly, "there's a pair of us may do so. You went nearer his luck—such as it was—than I did."

"True enough," replied the other, with a serious air ; "I had certainly a narrow escape ; but I wish to know, as I said, what you intend to do ? It is your duty now, Fergus, to settle industriously and honestly."

"Ah, sir, *honestly*. I didn't expect that from you, Mr. Reilly."

"Excuse me, Fergus," said Reilly, taking him by the hand ; "when I said honestly I did not mean to intimate any thing whatsoever against your integrity. I know, unfortunately, the harsh circumstances which drove you to associate with that remorseless villain and his gang ; but I wish you to resume an industrious life, and, if Ellen Connor is disposed to unite her fate with yours, I have provided the means—ample means for you both to be comfortable and happy. She who was so faithful to her mistress will not fail to make you a good wife."

"Ah," replied Fergus, "it's I that knows that well ; but, unfortunately, I have no hope there."

"No hope ; how is that ? I thought your affection was mutual."

"So it is, sir—or, rather, so it was ; but she has affection for nobody now, barring the *Cooleen Bawn*."

Reilly paused, and appeared deeply moved by this. "What," said he, "will she not leave her ? But I am not surprised at it."

"No, sir, she will not leave her, but has taken an oath to stay by her night and day, until—better times come."

We may say here that Reilly's friends took care that neither jailer nor turnkey should make him acquainted with the unhappy state of the *Cooleen Bawn ;* he was consequently ignorant of it, and, fortunately, remained so until after his return home.

"Fergus," said Reilly, "can you tell me how the *Cooleen Bawn* bears the sentence which sends me to a far country ?"

"How would she bear it, sir ? You needn't ask ; Connor, at all events, will not part from her—not, anyway, until you come back."

"Well, Fergus," proceeded Reilly, "I have, as I said, provided for you both ; what that provision is I will not mention now. Mr. Hastings will inform you. But if you have a wish to leave this unhappy and distracted country, even without Connor, why, by applying to him, you will be enabled to do so ; or, if you wish to stay at home and take a farm, you may do so."

"Divil a foot I'll leave the country," replied the other. "Ellen may stick to the *Cooleen Bawn*, but, be my sowl, I'll stick to Ellen, if I was to wait these seven years. I'll be as stiff as she is stout ; but, at any rate, she's worth waitin' for."

"You may well say so," replied Reilly, "and I can quarrel neither with your attachment nor your patience ; but you will not forget to let her know the provision which I have left for her in the hands of Mr. Hastings, and tell her it is a slight reward for her noble attachment to my dear *Cooleen Bawn*. Fergus," he proceeded, "have you

ever had a dream in the middle of which you awoke, then fell asleep and dreamt out the dream?"

"Troth had I, often, sir; and, by the way, talkin' of dreams, I dreamt last night that I was wantin' Ellen to marry me, and she said, 'not yet, Fergus, but in due time.'"

"Well, Fergus," proceeded Reilly, "perhaps there is but half my dream of life gone; who knows when I return—if I ever do—but my dream may be completed? and happily, too; I know the truth and faith of my dear *Cooleen Bawn*. And, Fergus, it is not merely my dear *Cooleen Bawn* that I feel for, but for my unfortunate country. I am not, however, without hope that the day will come—although it may be a distant one—when she will enjoy freedom, peace, and prosperity. Now, Fergus, good-by, and farewell! Come, come, be a man," he added, with a melancholy smile, whilst a tear stood even in his own eye—"come, Fergus, I will not have this; I won't say farewell for ever, because I expect to return and be happy yet—if not in my own country, at least in some other, where there is more freedom and less perseeution for conscience' sake."

Poor Fergus, however, when the parting moment arrived, was completely overcome. He caught Reilly in his arms—wept over him bitterly—and, after a last and sorrowful embrace, was prevailed upon to take his leave.

The history of the *Cooleen Bawn's* melancholy fate soon went far and near, and many an eye that had never rested on her beauty gave its tribute of tears to her undeserved sorrows. There existed, however, one individual who was the object of almost as deep a compassion; this was her father, who was consumed by the bittcrest and most profound remorse. His whole character became changed by his terrible and unexpected shock, by which his beautiful and angelic daughter had been blasted before his eyes. He was no longer the boisterous and convivial old squire, changeful and unsettled in all his opinions, but silent, quiet, and abstracted almost from life.

He wept incessantly, but his tears did not bring him comfort, for they were tears of anguish and despair. Ten times a day he would proceed to her chamber, or follow her to the garden where she loved to walk, always in the delusive hope that he might catch some spark of returning reason from those calm-looking but meaningless eyes, after which he would weep like a child. With respect to his daughter, every thing was done for her that wealth and human means could accomplish, but to no purpose; the malady was too deeply seated to be affected by any known remedy, whether moral or physical. From the moment she was struck into insanity she was never known to smile, or to speak, unless when she chanced to see a stranger, upon which she immediately approached, and asked, with clasped hands:

"Oh! can you tell me where is William Reilly? They have taken me from him, and I cannot find him. Oh! can *you* tell me where is William Reilly?"

There was, however, another individual upon whose heart the calamity of the *Cooleen Bawn* fell like a blight that seemed to have struck it into such misery and sorrow as threatened to end only with life. This was the faithful and attached Ellen Connor. On the day of Reilly's trial she experienced the alternations of hope, uncertainty, and despair, with such a depth of anxious feeling, and such feverish excitement, that the period of time which elapsed appeared to her as if it would never come to an end. She could neither sit, nor stand, nor work, nor read, nor take her meals, nor scarcely think with any consistency or clearness of thought. We have mentioned *hope*—but it was the faintest and the feeblest element in that chaos of distress and confusion which filled and distracted her mind. She knew the state and condition of the country too well—she knew the powerful influence of Mr. Folliard in his native county—she knew what the consequences to Reilly must be of taking away a Protestant heiress; the fact was there—plain, distinct, and incontrovertible, and she knew that no chance of impunity or acquittal remained for any one of his creed guilty of such a violation of the laws—we say, she knew all this—but it was not of the fate of Reilly she thought. The girl was an acute observer, and both a close and clear thinker. She had remarked in the *Cooleen Bawn*, on several occasions, small gushes, as it were, of unsettled thought, and of temporary wildness, almost approaching to insanity. She knew, besides, that insanity was in the family on her father's side; * and, as she had so boldly and firmly stated to that father himself, she dreaded the result which Reilly's conviction might produce upon a mind with such a tendency, worn down and depressed as it had been by all she had suffered, and more especially what she must feel by the tumult and agitation of that dreadful day.

It was about two hours after dark when she was startled by the noise of the carriage-wheels as they came up the avenue. Her

* The reader must take this as the necessary material for our fiction. There never was insanity in Helen's family; and we make this note to prevent them from taking unnecessary offence.

heart beat as if it would burst, the blood rushed to her head, and she became too giddy to stand or walk; then it seemed to rush back to her heart, and she was seized with thick breathing and feebleness; but at length, strengthened by the very intensity of the interest she felt, she made her way to the lower steps of the hall door in time to be present when the carriage arrived at it. She determined, however, wrought up as she was to the highest state of excitement, to await, to watch, to listen. She did so. The carriage stopped at the usual place, the coachman came down and opened the door, and Mr. Folliard came out. After him, assisted by Mrs. Brown, came Helen, who was immediately conducted in between the latter and her father. In the meantime poor Ellen could only look on. She was incapable of asking a single question, but she followed them up to the drawing-room where they conducted her mistress. When she was about to enter, Mrs. Brown said:

"Ellen, you had better not come in; your mistress is unwell."

Mrs. Hastings then approached, and, with a good deal of judgment and consideration, said:

"I think it is better, Mrs. Brown, that Ellen should see her, or, rather, that she should see Ellen. Who can tell how beneficial the effect may be on her? We all know how she was attached to Ellen."

In addition to those fearful intimations, Ellen heard inside the sobs and groans of her distracted father, mingled with caresses and such tender and affectionate language as, she knew by the words, could only be addressed to a person incapable of understanding them. Mrs. Brown held the door partially closed, but the faithful girl would not be repulsed. She pushed in, exclaiming:

"Stand back, Mrs. Brown, I must see my mistress!—if she is my mistress, or anybody's mistress now,"—and accordingly she approached the settee on which the *Cooleen Bawn* sat. The old squire was wringing his hands, sobbing, and giving vent to the most uncontrollable sorrow.

"Oh, Ellen," said he, "pity and forgive me. Your mistress is gone, gone!—she knows nobody!"

"Stand aside," she replied; "stand aside all of you; let *me* to her."

She knelt beside the settee, looked distractedly, but keenly, at her for about half a minute—but there she sat, calm, pale, and unconscious. At length she turned her eyes upon Ellen—for ever since the girl's entrance she had been gazing on vacancy—and immediately said:

"Oh! can you tell me where is William Reilly? They have taken me from him, and I cannot find him. Oh! will *you* tell me where is William Reilly?"

Ellen gave two or three rapid sobs; but, by a powerful effort, she somewhat composed herself.

"Miss Folliard," she said, in a choking voice, however, "darling Miss Folliard—my beloved mistress—*Cooleen Bawn*—oh, do you not know me—*me*, your own faithful Ellen, that loved you—and that loves you so well—ay, beyond father and mother, and all others living in this unhappy world? Oh, speak to me, dear mistress—speak to your own faithful Ellen, and only say that you know me, or only look upon me as if you did."

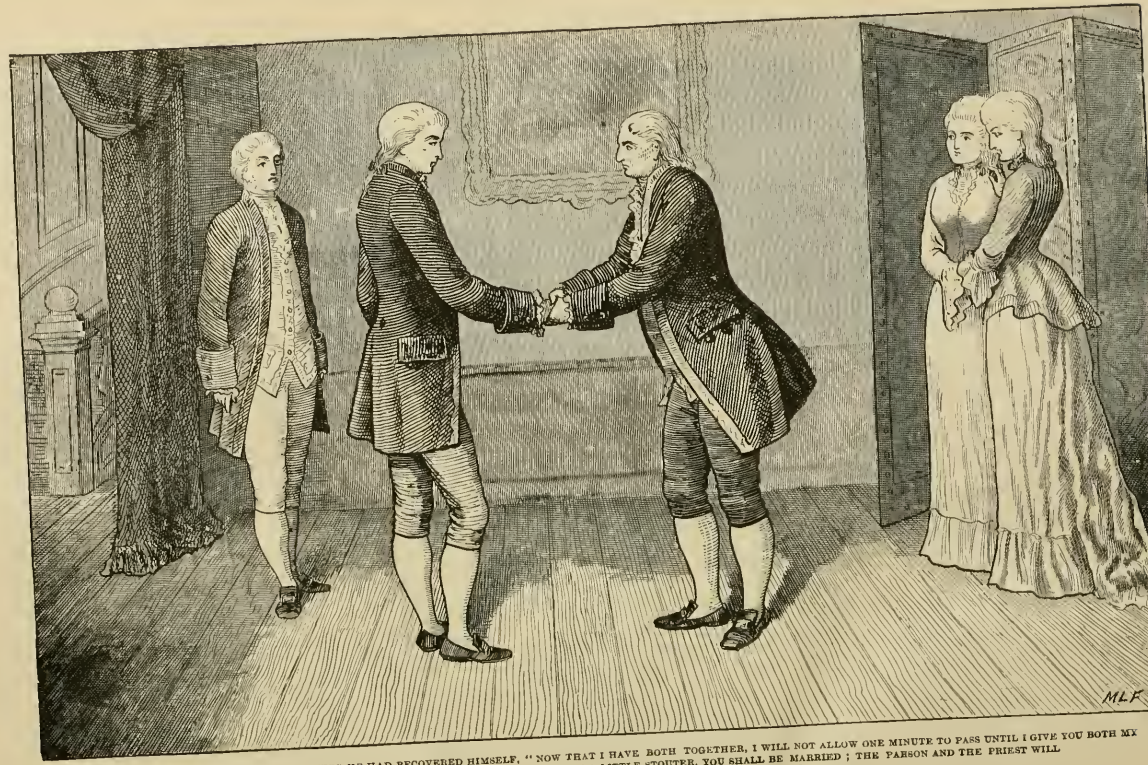
Not a glance, however, of recognition followed those loving solicitations; but there, before them all, she sat, with the pale face, the sorrowful brow, and the vacant look. Ellen addressed her with equal tenderness again and again, but with the same melancholy effect. The effect was beyond question—reason had departed; the fair temple was there, but the light of the divinity that had been enshrined in it was no longer visible: it seemed to have been abandoned probably for ever. Ellen now finding that every effort to restore her to rational consciousness was ineffectual, rose up, and, looking about for a moment, her eyes rested upon her father.

"Oh, Ellen!" he exclaimed, "spare me, spare me—you know I'm in your power. I neglected your honest and friendly warning, and now it is too late."

"Poor man!" she replied, "it is not she, but you, that is to be pitied. No; after this miserable sight, never shall my lips breathe one syllable of censure against you. Your punishment is too dreadful for that. But when I look upon her—look upon her *now*—oh, my God! what is this?"—

"Help the girl," said Mrs. Brown quickly, and with alarm. "Oh, she has fallen—raise her up, Mr. Folliard. Oh, my God, Mrs. Hastings, what a scene is this!"

They immediately opened her stays, and conveyed her to another settee, where she lay for nearly a quarter of an hour in a calm and tranquil insensibility. With the aid of the usual remedies, however, she was, but with some difficulty, restored, after which she burst into tears, and wept for some time bitterly. At length she recovered a certain degree of composure, and, after settling her dress and luxuriant brown hair, aided by Mrs. Brown and Mrs. Hastings, she arose, and once more approaching her lovely, but unconscious, mistress, knelt down, and, clasping her hands, looked up to heaven whilst she said:



"MY SON! MY SON! NOW," HE ADDED, AFTER HE HAD RECOVERED HIMSELF, "NOW THAT I HAVE BOTH TOGETHER, I WILL NOT ALLOW ONE MINUTE TO PASS UNTIL I GIVE YOU BOTH MY BLESSING; AND IN DUE TIME, WHEN HELEN GETS STRONG, AND WHEN I GET A LITTLE STOUTER, YOU SHALL BE MARRIED; THE PARSON AND THE PRIEST WILL MAKE YOU BOTH HAPPY. REILLY, CAN YOU FORGIVE ME?"—*p.* 183.

"Here, I take the Almighty God to witness, that from this moment out I renounce father and mother, brother and sister, friend and relative, man and woman, and will abide by my dear unhappy *Coolreen Bawn*—that blighted flower before us—both by day and by night—through all seasons—through all places wherever she may go, or be brought, until it may please God to restore her to reason, or until death may close her sufferings, should I live so long, and have health and strength to carry out this solemn oath; so may God hear me, and assist me in my intention."

She then rose, and, putting her arms around the fair girl, kissed her lips, and poured forth a copious flood of tears into her bosom.

"I am yours now," she said, caressing her mournfully: "I am yours now, my ever darling mistress; and from this hour forth nothing but death will ever separate your own Connor from you."

Well and faithfully did she keep that generous and heroic oath. Ever, for many a long and hopeless year, was she to be found, both night and day, by the side of that beautiful but melancholy sufferer. No other hand ever dressed or undressed her; no other individual ever attended to her wants, or complied with those little fitful changes and caprices to which persons of her unhappy class are subject. The consequence of this tender and devoted attachment was singular, but not by any means incompatible, we think, even with her situation. If Connor, for instance, was any short time absent, and another person supplied her place, the *Coolreen Bawn*, in whose noble and loving heart the strong instincts of affection could never die, uniformly appeared dissatisfied and uneasy, and looked around her, as if for some object that would afford her pleasure. On Ellen's reappearance a faint but placid smile would shed its feeble light over her countenance, and she would appear calm and contented; but, during all this time, word uttered she none, with the exception of those to which we have already alluded.

These were the only words she was known to utter, and no stranger ever came in her way to whom she did not repeat them. In this way her father, her maid, and herself passed through a melancholy existence for better than six years, when a young physician of great promise happened to settle in the town of Sligo, and her father having heard of it had him immediately called in. After looking at her, however, he found himself accosted in the same terms we have already given:

"Oh! can you tell me where is William Reilly?"

"William Reilly will soon be with you," he replied; "he will soon be here."

A start—barely, scarcely perceptible, was noticed by the keen eye of the physician; but it passed away, and left nothing but that fixed and beautiful vacancy behind it.

"Sir," said the physician, "I do not absolutely despair of Miss Folliard's recovery: the influence of some deep excitement, if it could be made accessible, might produce a good effect; it was by a shock it came upon her, and I am of opinion that if she ever does recover it will be by something similar to that which induced her pitiable malady."

"I will give a thousand pounds—five thousand—ten thousand, to any man who will be fortunate enough to restore her to reason," said her father.

"One course," proceeded the physician, "I would recommend you to pursue; bring her about as much as you can; give her variety of scenery and variety of new faces; visit your friends, and bring her with you. This course may have some effect; as for medicine, it is of no use here, for her health is in every other respect good."

He then took his leave, having first received a fee which somewhat astonished him.

His advice, however, was followed; her father and she, and Connor, during the summer and autumn months, visited among their acquaintances and friends, by whom they were treated with the greatest and most considerate kindness; but, so far as poor Helen was concerned, no symptom of any salutary change became visible; the long, dull blank of departed reason was still unbroken.

Better than seven years and a half had now elapsed, when she and her father came by invitation to pay a visit to a Mr. Hamilton, grandfather to the late Dacre Hamilton of Monaghan, who—the grandfather we mean—was one of the most notorious priest-hunters of the day. We need not say that her faithful Connor was still in attendance. Old Folliard went riding out with his friend, for he was now so much debilitated as to be scarcely able to walk abroad for any distance, when, about the hour of two o'clock, a man in the garb, and with all the bearing of a perfect gentleman, knocked at the door, and inquired of the servant who opened it whether Miss Folliard were not there. The servant replied in the affirmative, upon which the stranger asked if he could see her.

"Why, I suppose you must be aware, sir, of Miss Folliard's unfortunate state of mind, and that she can see nobody; sir, she knows nobody, and I have strict orders to deny her

to every one unless some particular friend of the family."

The stranger put a guinea into his hand, and added, "I had the pleasure of knowing her before she lost her reason, and as I have not seen her since, I should be glad to see her now, or even to look on her for a few minutes."

"Come up, sir," replied the man, "and enter the drawing-room immediately after me, or I shall be ordered to deny her."

The gentleman followed him; but why did his cheek become pale, and why did his heart palpitate as if it would burst and bound out of his bosom? We shall see. On entering the drawing-room he bowed, and was about to apologize for his intrusion, when the *Coolleen Bawn*, recognizing him as a stranger, approached him and said:

"Oh! can you tell me where is William Reilly? They have taken me from him, and I cannot find him. Oh, can *you* tell me any thing about William Reilly?"

The stranger staggered at this miserable sight, but probably more at the contemplation of that love which not even insanity could subdue. He felt himself obliged to lean for support upon the back of a chair, during which brief space he fixed his eyes upon her with a look of the most inexpressible tenderness and sorrow.

"Oh!" she repeated, "can *you* tell me where is William Reilly?"

"Alas! Helen," said he, "I am William Reilly."

"You!" she exclaimed. "Oh, no, the wide, wide Atlantic is between him and me."

"It *was* between us, Helen, but it is not now; I am here in life before you—your own William Reilly, that William Reilly whom you loved so well, but so fatally. I am he: do you not know me?"

"You are not William Reilly," she replied; "if you were, you would have a token."

"Do you forget that?" he replied, placing in her hand the emerald ring she had given him at the trial. She started on looking at it, and a feeble flash was observed to proceed from her eyes.

"This might come to you," she said, "by Reilly's death; yes, this might come to you in that way; but there is another token which is known to none but himself and me."

"Whisper," said he, and as he spoke he applied his mouth to her ear, and breathed the token into it. She stood back, her eyes flashed, her beautiful bosom heaved; she advanced, looked once more, and exclaimed, with a scream, "It is he! it is he!" and the next moment she was insensible in his arms. Long but precious was that insensibility, and precious were the tears which his eyes rained down upon that pale but lovely countenance. She was soon placed upon a settee, but Reilly knelt beside her, and held one of her hands in his. After a long trance she opened her eyes and again started. Reilly pressed her hand and whispered in her ear, "Helen, I am with you at last."

She smiled on him and said, "Help me to sit up, until I look about me, that I may be certain this is not a dream."

She then looked about her, and as the ladies of the family spoke tenderly to her, and caressed her, she fixed her eyes once more upon her lover, and said, "It is *not* a dream then; this is a reality; but, alas! Reilly, I tremble to think lest they should take you from me again."

"You need entertain no such apprehension, my dear Helen," said the lady of the mansion. "I have often heard your father say that he would give twenty thousand pounds to have you well, and Reilly's wife. In fact, you have nothing to fear in that, or any other quarter. But there's his knock; he and my husband have returned, and I must break this blessed news to him by degrees, lest it might be too much for him if communicated without due and proper caution."

She accordingly went down to the hall, where they were hanging up their great coats and hats, and brought them into her husband's study.

"Mr. Folliard," said she with a cheerful face, "I think, from some symptoms of improvement noticed to-day in Helen, that we needn't be without hope."

"Alas, alas!" exclaimed the poor father, "I have no hope: after such a length of time I am indeed without a shadow of expectation. If unfortunate Reilly were here, indeed her seeing him, as that Sligo doctor told me, might give her a chance. He saw her about a week before we came down, and those were his words. But as for Reilly, even if he were in the country, how could I look him in the face? What wouldn't I give now that he were here, that Helen was well, and that one word of mine could make them man and wife?"

"Well, well," she replied, "don't be cast down; perhaps I could tell you good news if I wished."

"You're beating about the bush, Mary, at all events," said her husband, laughing.

"Perhaps, now, Mr. Folliard," she continued, "I could introduce a young lady who is so fond of you, old and ugly as you are, that she would not hesitate to kiss you tenderly, and cry with delight on your bosom you old thief."

They both started at her words with

amazement, and her husband said: "Egad, Alick, Helen's malady seems catching. What the deuce do you mean, Molly? or must I, too, send for a doctor?"

"Shall I introduce you to the lady, though?" she proceeded, addressing the father; "but remember that, if I do, you must be a man, Mr. Folliard!"

"In God's name! do what you like," said Mr. Hamilton, "but do it at once."

She went upstairs, and said, "As I do not wish to bring your father up, Helen, until he is prepared for a meeting with Mr. Reilly, I will bring you down to him. The sight of you *now* will give him new life."

"Oh, come, then," said Helen, "bring me to my father; do not lose a moment, not a moment!—oh, let me see him instantly!"

The poor old man suspected something. "For a thousand!" said he, "this is some good news about Helen!"

"Make your mind up for that," replied his friend; "as sure as you live it is; and if it be, bear it stoutly."

In the course of a few minutes Mrs. Hamilton entered the room with Helen, now awakened to perfect reason, smiling, and leaning upon her arm. "Oh, dear papa!" she exclaimed, meeting him, with a flood of tears, and resting her head on his bosom.

"What, my darling!—my darling! And you know papa once more!—you know him again, my darling Helen! Oh, thanks be to God for this happy day!" And he kissed her lips, and pressed her to his heart, and wept over her with ecstasy and delight. It was a tender and tearful embrace.

"Oh, papa!" said she, "I fear I have caused you much pain and sorrow: something has been wrong, but I am well now that *he* is here. I felt the tones of his voice in my heart."

"Who, darling, who?"

"Reilly, papa."

"Hamilton, bring him down instantly; but oh, Helen, darling, how will I see him?—how can I see him? but he must come, and we must all be happy. Bring him down."

"You know, papa, that Reilly is generosity itself."

"He is, he is, Helen, and how could I blame you for loving him?"

Reilly soon entered; but the old man, already overpowered by what had just occurred, was not able to speak to him for some time. He clasped and pressed his hand, however, and at length said:

"My son! my son! Now," he added, after he had recovered himself, "now that I have both together. I will not allow one minute to pass until I give you both my blessing; and in due time, when Helen gets strong, and when I get a little stouter, you shall be married; the parson and the priest will make you both happy. Reilly, can you forgive me?"

"I have nothing to forgive you, sir," replied Reilly; "whatever you did proceeded from your excessive affection for your daughter; I am more than overpaid for any thing I may have suffered myself; had it been ages of misery, this one moment would cancel the memory of it for ever."

"I cannot give you my estate, Reilly," said the old man, "for that is entailed, and goes to the next male issue; but I can give you fifty thousand pounds with my girl, and that will keep you both comfortable for life."

"I thank you, sir," replied Reilly, "and for the sake of your daughter I will not reject it; but I am myself in independent circumstances, and could, even without your generosity, support Helen in a rank of life not unsuitable to her condition."

It is well known that, during the period in which the incidents of our story took place, no man claiming the character of a gentleman ever travelled without his own servant to attend him. After Reilly's return to his native place, his first inquiries, as might be expected, were after his *Cooleen Bawn;* and his next, after those who had been in some degree connected with those painful circumstances in which he had been involved previous to his trial and conviction. He found Mr. Brown and Mr. Hastings much in the same state in which he left them. The latter, who had been entrusted with all his personal and other property, under certain conditions, that depended upon his return after the term of his sentence should have expired, now restored to him, and again reinstated him on the original terms into all his landed and other property, together with such sums as had accrued from it during his absence, so that he now found himself a wealthy man. Next to *Cooleen Bawn*, however, one of his first inquiries was after Fergus Reilly, whom he found domiciled with a neighboring middleman as a head servant, or kind of under steward. We need not describe the delight of Fergus on once more meeting his beloved relative at perfect liberty, and free from all danger in his native land.

"Fergus," said Reilly, "I understand you are still a bachelor—how does that come?"

"Why, sir," replied Fergus, "now that you know every thing about the unhappy state of the *Cooleen Bawn*, surely you can't blame poor Eller for not desartin' her. As for me I cared nothing about any other girl, and

I never could let either my own dhrame, or what you said was yours, out o' my head. I still had hope, and I still have, that she may recover."

Reilly made no reply to this, for he feared to entertain the vague expectation to which Fergus alluded.

"Well, Fergus," said he, "although I have undergone the sentence of a convict, yet now, after my return, I am a rich man. For the sake of old times—of old dangers and old difficulties—I should wish you to live with me, and to attend me as my own personal servant or man. I shall get you a suit of livery, and the crest of O'Reilly shall be upon it. I wish you to attend upon me, Fergus, because you understand me, and because I never will enjoy a happy heart, or one day's freedom from sorrow again. All hope of that is past, but you will be useful to me—and that you know."

Fergus was deeply affected at these words, although he was gratified in the highest degree at the proposal. In the course of a few days he entered upon his duties, immediately after which Reilly set out on his journey to Monaghan, to see once more his beloved, but unhappy, *Cooleen Bawn*. On arriving at that handsome and hospitable town, he put up at an excellent inn, called the "Westenra Arms," kept by a man who was the model of innkeepers, known by the *sobriquet* of "honest Peter M'Philips." We need not now recapitulate that with which the reader is already acquainted; but we cannot omit describing a brief interview which took place in the course of a few days after the restoration of the *Cooleen Bawn* to the perfect use of her reason, between two individuals, who, we think, have some claim upon the good-will and good wishes of our readers. We allude to Fergus Reilly and the *faithful* Ellen Connor. Seated in a comfortable room in the aforesaid inn—now a respectable and admirably kept hotel—with the same arms over the door, were the two individuals alluded to. Before them stood a black bottle of a certain fragrant liquor, as clear and colorless as water from the purest spring, and, to judge of it by the eye, quite as harmless; but there was the mistake. Never was hypocrisy better exemplified than by the contents of that bottle. The liquor in question came, Fergus was informed, from the green woods of Truagh, and more especially from a townland named Derrygola, famous, besides, for stout men and pretty girls.

"Well, now, Ellen darlin'," said Fergus, "if ever any two bachelors* were entitled to drink their own healths, surely you and I are. Here's to us—a happy marriage, soon and sudden. As for myself, I've had the patience of a Trojan."

Ellen pledged him beautifully with her eyes, but very moderately with the liquor.

"Bedad!" he proceeded, "seven years—ay, and a half—wasn't a bad apprenticeship, at any rate; but, as I tould Mr. Reilly before he left the country—upon my sowl, says I, Mr. Reilly, she's worth waitin' for; and he admitted it."

"But, Fergus, did ever any thing turn out so happy for all parties? To me it's like a dream; I can scarcely believe it."

"Faith, and if it be a dhrame, I hope it's one we'll never waken from. And so the four of us are to be married on the same day, and we're all to live with the squire."

"We are, Fergus; the *Cooleen Bawn* will have it so; but, indeed, her father is as anxious for it almost as she is. Ah, no, Fergus, she could not part with her faithful Ellen, as she calls me; nor, after all, Fergus, would her faithful Ellen wish to part with her?"

"And he's to make me steward; begad, and if I don't make a good one, I'll make an honest one. Faith, at all events, Ellen, we'll be in a condition to provide for the childre', plaise God."

Ellen gave him a blushing look of reproach, and desired him to keep a proper tongue in his head.

"But what will we do with the five hundred, Ellen, that the squire and Mr. Reilly made up between them?"

"We'll consult Mr. Reilly about it," she replied, "and no doubt but he'll enable us to lay it out to the best advantage. Now, Fergus dear, I must go," she added; "you know *she* can't bear me even now to be any length of time away from her. Here's God bless them both, and continue them in the happiness they now enjoy."

"Amen," replied Fergus, "and here's God bless ourselves, and make us more lovin' to one another every day we rise; and here's to take a foretaste of it now, you thief."

Some slight resistance, followed by certain smacking sounds, closed the interview; for Ellen, having started to her feet, threw on her cloak and bonnet, and hurried out of the room, giving back, however, a laughing look at Fergus as she escaped.

In a few months afterwards they were married, and lived with the old man until he became a grandfather to two children, the eldest a boy, and the second a girl. Upon the same day of their marriage their humble but faithful friends were also united; so that there was a double wedding. The ceremony, in the case of Reilly and his *Cooleen Bawn*, was

*"Bachelor," in Ireland, especially in the country parts of it, where English is not spoken correctly, is frequently applied to both the sexes.

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SHE STOOD BACK, HER EYES FLASHED, HER BEAUTIFUL BOSOM HEAVED; SHE ADVANCED, LOOKED ONCE MORE, AND EXCLAIMED, WITH A SCREAM, "IT IS HE! IT IS HE!" AND THE NEXT MOMENT SHE WAS INSENSIBLE IN HIS ARMS.—*Willy Reilly*, chap. XXV.—*p.* 182.

performed by the Reverend Mr. Brown first, and the parish priest afterwards; Mr. Strong, who had been for several years conjoined to Mrs. Smellpriest, having been rejected by both parties as the officiating clergyman upon the occasion, although the lovely bride was certainly his parishioner. Age and time, however, told upon the old man; and at the expiration of three years they laid him, with many tears, in the grave of his fathers. Soon after this Reilly and his wife, accompanied by Fergus and Ellen—for the *Cooleen Bawn* would not be separated from the latter—removed to the Continent, where they had a numerous family, principally of sons; and we need not tell our learned readers, at least, that those young men distinguished not only themselves, but their name, by acts of the most brilliant courage in continental warfare. And so, gentle reader, ends the troubled history of Willy Reilly and his *own Cooleen Bawn*.

FARDOROUGHA, THE MISER.

PART I.

Fardorougha, the Miser.

IT was on one of those nights in August, when the moon and stars shine through an atmosphere clear and cloudless, with a mildness of lustre almost continental, that a horseman, advancing at a rapid pace, turned off a remote branch of road up a narrow lane, and, dismounting before a neat white-washed cottage, gave a quick and impatient knock at the door. Almost instantly, out of a small window that opened on hinges, was protruded a broad female face, surrounded, by way of nightcap, with several folds of flannel, that had originally been white.

"Is Mary Moan at home?" said the horseman.

"For a miricle—ay!" replied the female; "who's *down*, in the name o' goodness?"

"Why, thin, I'm thinkin' you'll be smilin' whin you hear it," replied the messenger. "The sorra one else than Honor Donovan, that's now marrid upon Fardorougha Donovan to the tune of thirteen years. Bedad, time for her, anyhow,—but, sure it'll be good whin it comes, we're thinkin'."

"Well, betther late than never—the Lord be praised for all His gifts, anyhow. Put your horse down to the mountin'-stone, and I'll be wid you in half a jiffy, acushla."

She immediately drew in her head, and ere the messenger had well placed his horse at the aforesaid stirrup, or mounting-stone, which is an indispensable adjunct to the midwife's cottage, she issued out, cloaked and bonneted; for, in point of fact, her practice was so extensive, and the demands upon her attendance so incessant, that she seldom, if ever, slept or went to bed, unless partially dressed. And such was her habit of vigilance, that she ultimately became an illustration of the old Roman proverb, *Non dormio omnibus;* that is to say, she could sleep as sound as a top to every possible noise except a knock at the door, to which she might be said, during the greater part of her professional life, to have been instinctively awake.

Having ascended the mounting-stone, and placed herself on the crupper, the guide and she, while passing down the narrow and difficult lane, along which they could proceed but slowly and with caution, entered into the following dialogue, she having first turned up the hood of her cloak over her bonnet, and tied a spotted cotton kerchief round her neck.

"This," said the guide, who was Fardorougha Donovan's servant-man, "is a quare enough business, as some o' the nabors do be sayin'—marrid upon one another beyant thirteen year, an' ne'er a sign of a haporth. Why then begad it is quare."

"Whisht, whisht," replied Molly, with an expression of mysterious and superior knowledge; "don't be spakin' about what you don't understand—sure, nuttin's impossible to God, avick—don't you know that?"

"Oh, bedad, sure enough—*that* we must allow, whether or not, still—"

"Very well; seein' that, what more have we to say, barrin' to hould our tongues. Children sent late always come either for great good or great sarra to their parents—an' God grant that this may be for good to the honest people—for indeed honest people they are, by all accounts. But what myself wonders at is, that Honor Donovan never once opened her lips to me about it. However, God's will be done! The Lord send her safe over all her throubles, poor woman! And, now that we're out o' this thief of a lane, lay an for the bare life, and never heed me. I'm as good a horseman as yourself; and, indeed, I've a good right, for I'm an ould hand at it."

"I'm thinkin'," she added, after a short silence, "it's odd I never was much acquainted with the Donovans. I'm tould they're a hard pack, that loves the money."

"Faix," replied her companion, "Let Fardorougha alone for knowin' the value of a shillin'!—they're not in Europe can hould a harder grip o' one."

His master, in fact, was a hard, frugal man, and his mistress a woman of somewhat similar character; both were strictly honest, but, like many persons to whom God has denied offspring, their hearts had for a considerable time before been placed upon

money as their idol; for, in truth, the affections must be fixed upon something, and we generally find that where children are denied, the world comes in and hardens by its influence the best and tenderest sympathies of humanity.

After a journey of two miles they came out on a hay-track, that skirted an extensive and level sweep of meadow, along which they proceeded with as much speed as a pillionless midwife was capable of bearing. At length, on a gentle declivity facing the south, they espied in the distance the low, long, whitewashed farm-house of Fardorougha Donovan. There was little of artificial ornament about the place, but much of the rough, heart-stirring wildness of nature, as it appeared in a strong, vigorous district, well cultivated, but without being tamed down by those finer and more graceful touches, which nowadays mark the skilful hand of the scientific agriculturist.

To the left waved a beautiful hazel glen, which gradually softened away into the meadows above mentioned. Up behind the house stood an ancient plantation of whitethorn, which, during the month of May, diffused its fragrance, its beauty, and its melody, over the whole farm. The plain garden was hedged round by the graceful poplar, whilst here and there were studded over the fields either single trees or small groups of mountain ash, a tree still more beautiful than the former. The small dells about the farm were closely covered with blackthorn and holly, with an occasional oak shooting up from some little cliff, and towering sturdily over its lowly companions. Here grew a thick interwoven mass of dog-tree, and upon a wild hedgerow, leaning like a beautiful wife upon a rugged husband, might be seen, supported by clumps of blackthorn, that most fragrant and exquisite of creepers, the delicious honeysuckle. Add to this the neat appearance of the farm itself, with its meadows and cornfields waving to the soft sunny breeze of summer, and the reader may admit, that without possessing any striking features of pictorial effect, it would, nevertheless, be difficult to find an uplying farm upon which the eye could rest with greater satisfaction.

Ere arriving at the house they were met by Fardorougha himself, a small man, with dark, but well-set features, which being at no time very placid, appeared now to be absolutely gloomy, yet marked by strong and profound anxiety.

"Thank God!" he exclaimed on meeting them; "is this Mary Moan?"

"It is—it is!" she exclaimed; "how are all within?—am I in time?"

"Only poorly," he returned; "you are, I hope."

The midwife, when they reached the door, got herself dismounted in all haste, and was about entering the house, when Fardorougha, laying his hand upon her shoulder, said in a tone of voice full of deep feeling—

"I need say nothing to you; what you can do, you will do—but one thing I expect—if you see danger, call in assistance."

"It's all in the hands o' God, Fardorougha, acushla; be as aisy in your mind as you can: if there's need for more help you'll hear it; so keep the man an' horse both ready."

She then blessed herself and entered the house, repeating a short prayer, or charm, which was supposed to possess uncommon efficacy in relieving cases of the nature she was then called upon to attend.

Fardorougha Donovan was a man of great good sense, and of strong, but not obvious or flexible feeling; this is to say, on strong occasions he felt accordingly, but exhibited no remarkable symptoms of emotion. In matters of a less important character, he was either deficient in sensibility altogether, or it affected him so slightly as not to be perceptible. What his dispositions and feelings might have been, had his parental affections and domestic sympathies been cultivated by the tender intercourse which subsists between a parent and his children, it is not easy to say. On such occasions many a new and delightful sensation—many a sweet trait of affection previously unknown—and, oh! many, many a fresh impulse of rapturous emotion never before felt gushes out of the heart; all of which, were it not for the existence of ties so delightful, might have there lain sealed up forever. Where is the man who does not remember the strange impression of tumultuous delight which he experienced on finding himself a husband? And who does not recollect that nameless charm, amounting almost to a new sense, which pervaded his whole being with tenderness and transport on kissing the rose-bud lips of his first-born babe? It is, indeed, by the ties of domestic life that the purity and affection and the general character of the human heart are best tried. What is there more beautiful than to see that fountain of tenderness multiplying its affections instead of diminishing them, according as claim after claim arises to make fresh demands upon its love? Love, and especially parental love, like jealousy, increases by what it feeds on. But, oh! from what an unknown world of exquisite enjoyment are they shut out, to whom Providence has not vouchsafed those beloved beings on whom the heart lavishes the whole fulness of its rapture! No wonder that their own af-

fections should wither in the cold gloom of disappointed hope, or their hearts harden into that moody spirit of worldly-mindedness which adopts for its offspring the miser's idol.

Whether Fardorougha felt the want of children acutely or otherwise, could not be inferred from any visible indication of regret on his part by those who knew him. His own wife, whose facilities of observation were so great and so frequent, was only able to suspect in the affirmative. For himself he neither murmured nor repined; but she could perceive that, after a few years had passed, a slight degree of gloom began to settle on him, and an anxiety about his crops, and his few cattle, and the produce of his farm. He also began to calculate the amount of what might be saved from the fruits of their united industry. Sometimes, but indeed upon rare occasions, his temper appeared inclining to be irascible or impatient; but in general it was grave, cold, and inflexible, without any outbreaks of passion, or the slightest disposition to mirth. His wife's mind, however, was by no means so firm as his, nor so free from the traces of that secret regret which preyed upon it. She both murmured and repined, and often in terms which drew from Fardorougha a cool rebuke for her want of resignation to the will of God. As years advanced, however, her disappointment became harassing even to herself, and now that hope began to die away, her heart gradually partook of the cool worldly spirit which had seized upon the disposition of her husband. Though cultivating but a small farm, which they held at a high rent, yet, by the dint of frugality and incessant diligence, they were able to add a little each year to the small stock of money which they had contrived to put together. Still would the unhappy reflection that they were childless steal painfully and heavily over them; the wife would sometimes murmur, and the husband reprove her, but in a tone so cool and indifferent that she could not avoid concluding that his own want of resignation, though not expressed, was at heart equal to her own. Each also became somewhat religious, and both remarkable for a punctual attendance upon the rites of their church, and that in proportion as the love of temporal things overcame them. In this manner they lived upwards of thirteen years, when Mrs. Donovan declared herself to be in that situation which in due time rendered the services of Mary Moan necessary.

From the moment this intimation was given, and its truth confirmed, a faint light, not greater than the dim and trembling lustre of a single star, broke in upon the darkened affections and worldly spirit of Fardorougha Donovan. Had the announcement taken place within a reasonable period after his marriage, before he had become sick of disappointment, or had surrendered his heart from absolute despair to an incipient spirit of avarice, it would no doubt have been hailed with all the eager delight of unblighted hope and vivid affection; but now a new and subtle habit had been superinduced, after the last cherished expectation of the heart had departed; a spirit of foresight and severe calculation descended on him, and had so nearly saturated his whole being, that he could not for some time actually determine whether the knowledge of his wife's situation was more agreeable to his affection, or repugnant to the parsimonious disposition which had quickened his heart into an energy incompatible with natural benevolence, and the perception of those tender ties which spring up from the relations of domestic life. For a considerable time this struggle between the two principles went on; sometimes a new hope would spring up, attended in the background by a thousand affecting circumstances—on the other hand, some gloomy and undefinable dread of exigency, distress, and ruin, would wring his heart and sink his spirits down to positive misery. Notwithstanding this conflict between growing avarice and affection, the star of the father's love had risen, and though, as we have already said, its light was dim and unsteady, yet the moment a single opening occurred in the clouded mind, there it was to be seen serene and pure, a beautiful emblem of undying and solitary affection struggling with the cares and angry passions of life. By degrees, however, the husband's heart became touched by the hopes of his younger years, former associations revived, and remembrances of past tenderness, though blunted in a heart so much changed, came over him like the breath of fragrance that has nearly passed away. He began, therefore, to contemplate the event without foreboding, and by the time the looked-for period arrived, if the world and its debasing influences were not utterly overcome, yet nature and the quickening tenderness of a father's feeling had made a considerable progress in a heart from which they had been long banished. Far different from all this was the history of his wife since her perception of an event so delightful. In her was no bitter and obstinate principle subversive of affection to be overcome. For although she had in latter years sunk into the painful apathy of a hopeless spirit, and given herself somewhat to the world, yet no sooner did the unexpected light dawn upon her, than

her whole soul was filled with exultation and delight. The world and its influence passed away like a dream, and her heart melted into a habit of tenderness at once so novel and exquisite, that she often assured her husband she had never felt happiness before.

Such are the respective states of feeling in which our readers find Fardorougha Donovan and his wife, upon an occasion whose consequences run too far into futurity for us to determine at present whether they are to end in happiness or misery. For a considerable time that evening, before the arrival of Mary Moan, the males of the family had taken up their residence in an inside kiln, where, after having kindled a fire in the draught-hole, or what the Scotch call the "logie," they sat and chatted in that kind of festive spirit which such an event uniformly produces among the servants of a family. Fardorougha himself remained for the most part with them, that is to say except while ascertaining from time to time the situation of his wife. His presence, however, was only a restraint upon their good-humor, and his niggardly habits raised some rather uncomplimentary epithets during his short visits of inquiry. It is customary upon such occasions, as soon as the mistress of the family is taken ill, to ask the servants to drink "an aisy bout to the misthress, sir, an' a speedy recovery, not forgettin' a safe landin' to the youngsther, and, like a Christmas compliment, many of them to you both. Whoo! death alive, but that's fine stuff. Oh, begorra, the misthress can't but thrive wid that in the house. Thank you, sir, an' wishin' her once more safe over her troubles!—divil a betther misthress ever," etc., etc., etc.

Here, however, there was nothing of the kind. Fardorougha's heart, in the first instance, was against the expense, and besides, its present broodings resembled the throes of pain which break out from the stupor that presses so heavily upon the exhausted functions of life in the crisis of a severe fever. He could not, in fact, rest nor remain for any length of time in the same spot. With a slow but troubled step he walked backward and forward, sometimes uttering indistinct ejaculations and broken sentences, such as no one could understand. At length he approached his own servants, and addressed the messenger whose name was Nogher M'Cormick.

"Nogher," said he, "I'm throubled."

"Throubled! dad, Fardorougha, you ought to be a happy and a thankful man this night, that is, if God sinds the misthress safe over it, as I hope He will, plase goodness."

"I'm poor, Nogher, I'm poor, an' here's a family comin'."

"Faith, take care it's not sin you're committin' by spakin' as you're doin'."

"But you know I'm poor, Nogher."

"But I know you're *not*, Fardorougha; but I'm afraid, if God hasn't said it, your heart's too much fix'd upon the world. Be my faix, it's on your knees you ought to be this same night, thankin' the Almighty for His goodness, and not grumblin' an' sthreelin' about the place, flyin' in the face of God for sendin' you an' your wife a blessin'—for sure I hear the Scripthur says that all childhres a blessin' if they're resaved as sich; an' wo be to the man, says Scripthur, dat's born wid a millstone about his neck, especially if he's cast into the *say*. I know you pray enough, but, be my sowl, it hasn't improved your morals, or it's the misthress' health we'd be drinkin' in a good bottle o' whiskey at the present time. Faix, myself wouldn't be much surprised if she had a hard twist in consequence, an' if she does, the fault's your own an' not ours, for we're willin' as the flowers o' May to drink all sorts o' good luck to her."

"Nogher," said the other, "it's truth a great dale of what you've sed—maybe all of it."

"Faith, I know," returned Nogher, "that about the whiskey it's parfit gospel."

"In one thing I'll be advised by you, an' that is, I'll go to my knees and pray to God to set my heart right if it's wrong. I feel strange—strange, Nogher—happy, an' not happy."

"You needn't go to your knees at all," replied Nogher, "if you give us the whiskey; or if you do pray, be in earnest, that your heart may be inclined to do it."

"You desarve none for them words," said Fardorougha, who felt that Nogher's buffoonery jarred upon the better feelings that were rising within him—"you desarve none, an' you'll get none—for the present at laste, an' I'm only a fool for spaking to you."

He then retired to the upper part of the kiln, where, in a dark corner, he knelt with a troubled heart, and prayed to God.

We doubt not but such readers as possess feeling will perceive that Fardorougha was not only an object at this particular period of much interest, but also entitled to sincere sympathy. Few men in his circumstances could or probably would so earnestly struggle with a predominant passion as he did, though without education, or such a knowledge of the world as might enable him, by any observation of the human heart in others, to understand the workings in his own. He had not been ten minutes at prayer when the voice of his female servant was heard in

loud and exulting tones, calling out, ere she approached the kiln itself—

"Fardorougha, ca woul thu?—Where's my footin', masther? Where's my arles?—Come in—come in, you're a waitin' to kiss your son—the misthress is dyin' till you kiss our son."

The last words were uttered as she entered the kiln.

"Dyin'!" he repeated—"the misthress dyin'—oh Susy, let a thousand childre go before *her*—dyin'! did you say dyin'?"

"Ay did I, an' it's truth too; but it's wid joy she's dyin' to see you kiss one of the purtiest young boys in all the barony of Lisnamona—myself's over head and ears in love wid him already."

He gave a rapid glance upwards, so much so that it was scarcely perceptible, and immediately accompanied her into the house. The child, in the meantime, had been dressed, and lay on its mother's arm in the bed when its father entered. He approached the bedside and glanced at it—then at the mother who lay smiling beside it—she extended her hand to him, whilst the soft, sweet tears of delight ran quietly down her cheeks. When he seized her hand he stooped to kiss her, but she put up her other hand and said—

"No, no, you must kiss *him* first."

He instantly stooped over the babe, took it in his arms, looked long and earnestly upon it, put it up near him, again gave it a long, intense gaze, after which he raised its little mouth to his own, and then imprinted the father's first kiss upon the fragrant lips of his beloved first-born. Having gently deposited the precious babe upon its mother's arm, he caught her hand and imprinted upon her lips a kiss;—but to those who understand it, we need not describe it—to those who cannot, we could give no adequate notion of that which we are able in no other way to describe than by saying that it would seem as if the condensed enjoyment of a whole life were concentrated into that embrace of the child and mother.

When this tender scene was over, the midwife commenced—

"Well, if ever a man had raison to be thank—"

"Silence, woman!" he exclaimed in a voice which hushed her almost into terror.

"Let him alone," said the wife, addressing her, "let him alone, I know what he feels."

"No," he replied, "even you, Honora, don't know it—my heart, my heart went astray, and there, undher God and my Saviour, is the being that will be the salvation of his father."

His wife understood him and was touched; the tears fell fast from her eyes, and, extending her hand to him, she said, as he clasped it:

"Sure, Fardorougha, the world won't be as much in your heart now, nor your temper so dark as it was."

He made no reply; but, placing his other hand over his eyes, he sat in that posture for some minutes. On raising his head the tears were running as if involuntarily down his cheeks.

"Honora," said he, "I'll go out for a little—you can tell Mary Moan where anything's to be had—let them all be trated so as that they don't take too much—and, Mary Moan, you won't be forgotten."

He then passed out, and did not appear for upwards of an hour, nor could any one of them tell where he had been.

"Well," said Honora, after he had left the room, "we're now married near fourteen years; and until this night I never see him shed a tear."

"But sure, acushla, if anything can touch a father's heart, the sight of his first child will. Now keep yourself aisy, avourneen, and tell me where the whiskey an' anything else that may be a wantin' is, till I give these crathurs of sarvints a dhrop of something to comfort thim."

At this time, however, Mrs. Donovan's mother and two sisters, who had some hours previously been sent for, just arrived, a circumstance which once more touched the newly awakened chord of the mother's heart, and gave her that confidence which the presence of "one's own blood," as the people expressed it, always communicates upon such occasions. After having kissed and admired the babe, and bedewed its face with the warm tears of affection, they piously knelt down, as is the custom among most Irish families, and offered up a short but fervent prayer of gratitude as well for an event so happy, as for her safe delivery, and the future welfare of the mother and child. When this was performed, they set themselves to the distribution of the blithe meat or groaning malt, a duty which the midwife transferred to them with much pleasure, this being a matter which, except in matters of necessity, she considered beneath the dignity of her profession. The servants were accordingly summoned in due time, and, headed by Nogher, soon made their appearance. In events of this nature, servants in Ireland, and we believe everywhere else, are always allowed a considerable stretch of good-humored license in those observations which they are in the habit of making. Indeed, this is not so much an extemporaneous indulgence of wit on their part, as a mere repetition of the set phrases and traditionary apothegms which

have been long established among the peasantry, and as they are generally expressive of present satisfaction and good wishes for the future, so would it be looked upon as churlishness, and in some cases, on the part of the servants, a sign of ill-luck, to neglect them.

"Now," said Honora's mother to the servants of both sexes, "now, childre, that you've aite a trifle, you must taste something in the way of dhrink. It would be too bad on *this* night above all nights we've seen yet, not to have a glass to the stranger's health at all events. Here, Nogher, thry this, avick—you never got a glass wid a warmer heart."

Nogher took the liquor, his grave face charged with suppressed humor, and first looking upon his fellow-servants with a countenance so droll yet dry, that none but themselves understood it, he then directed a very sober glance at the good woman.

"Thank you, ma'am," he exclaimed; "be goxty, sure enough if our hearts wouldn't get warm now, they'd never warm. A happy night it is for Fardorougha and the misthress, at any rate. I'll engage the stranger was worth waitin' for, too. I'll hould a thrifle, he's the beauty o' the world this minnit—an' I'll engage it's breeches we'll have to be gettin' for him some o' these days, the darlin'. Well, here's his health, any way; an' may he——"

"Husth, arogorah!" exclaimed the midwife; "stop, I say—the tree afore the fruit, all the world over; don't you know, an' bad win to you, that if the sthranger was to go to-morrow, as good might come affher him, while the paarent stocks are to the fore. The mother an' father first, acushla, an' *thin* the sthranger."

"Many thanks to you, Mrs. Moan," replied Nogher, "for settin' me right—sure we'll know something ourselves whin it comes our turn, plase goodness. If the misthress isn't asleep, by goxty, I'd call in to her, that I'm dhrinkin' her health."

"She's not asleep," said her mother; "an' proud she'll be, poor thing, to hear you, Nogher."

"Misthress!" he said in a loud voice, "are you asleep, ma'am?"

"No, indeed, Nogher," she replied, in a good-humored tone of voice.

"Well, ma'am," said Nogher, still in a loud voice, and scratching his head, "here's your health; an' now that the ice is bruk—be goxty, an' so it is sure," said he in an undertone to the rest—"Peggy, behave yourself," he continued, to one of the servant-maids, "mockin's catchin': faix, you dunna what's afore yourself yet—beg pardon—I'm forgettin' myself—an' now that the ice is *bruk*, ma'am," he resumed, "you must be dacent for the futher. Many a bottle, plase goodness, we'll have this way yet. Your health, ma'am, an' a speedy recovery to you—an' a sudden uprise—not forgettin' the masther—long life to him!"

"What!" said the midwife, "are you forgettin' the sthranger?"

Nogher looked her full in the face, and opened his mouth, without saying a word, literally pitched the glass of spirits to the very bottom of his throat.

"Beggin' your pardon, ma'am," he replied, "is it three healths you'd have me dhrink wid the one glassful?—not myself, indeed; faix, I'd be long sorry to make so little of him—if he was a bit of a *girsha* I'd not scruple to give him a corner o' the glass, but, bein' a young man althers the case intirely—he must have a bumper for himself."

"A girsha!" said Peggy, his fellow-servant, feeling the indignity just offered to her sex—"Why thin, bad manners to your assurance for that same: a girsha's as well intitled to a full glass as a gorsoon, any day."

"Husth a colleen," said Nogher, good-humoredly, "sure, it's takin' pattern by sich a fine example you ought to be. This, Mrs. Moan, is the purty crature I was mintionin' as we came along, that intends to get spanshelled wid myself some o' these days—that is, if she can bring me into good-humor, the thief."

"And if it does happen," said Peggy, "you'll have to look sharper afther him, Mrs. Moan. He's pleasant enough now, but I'll be bound no man 'ill know betther how to hang his fiddle behind the door when he comes home to us."

"Well, acushla, sure he may, if he likes, but if he does, he knows what's afore him—not sayin' that he ever will, I hope, for it's a woful case whin it comes to that, ahagur."

"Faix, it's a happy story for half the poor wives of the parish that you're in it," said Peggy, "sure, only fore——"

"*Be dhe husth Vread, agus glak sho*—hould your tongue, Peggy, and taste this," said the mother of her mistress, handing her a glass: "If you intend to go together, in the name o' goodness fear God more than the midwife, if you want to have luck an' grace."

"Oh, is it all this?" exclaimed the sly girl; "faix, it 'ill make me *hearty* if I dhrink so much—bedeed it will. Well, misthress, your health, an' a speedy uprise to you—an' the same to the masther, not forgettin' the sthranger—long life an' good health to him."

She then put the glass to her lips, and after several small sips, appearing to be so many unsuccessful attempts at overcoming her reluctance to drink it, she at length took

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"HE RAISED ITS LITTLE MOUTH TO HIS OWN, AND THEN IMPRINTED THE FATHER'S FIRST KISS UPON THE FRAGRANT LIPS OF HIS BELOVED FIRST-BORN."

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courage, and bolting it down, immediately applied her apron to her mouth, making at the same time two or three wry faces, gasping, as if to recover the breath which it did *not* take from her.

The midwife, in the mean time, felt that the advice just given to Nogher and Peggy contained a clause somewhat more detrimental to her importance than was altogether agreeable to her; and to sit calmly under any imputation that involved a diminution of her authority, was not within the code of her practice.

"If they go together," she observed, "it's right to fear God, no doubt; but that's no raison why they shouldn't pay respect to thim that can sarve thim *or otherwise*."

"Nobody says aginst that, Mrs. Moan," replied the other; "it's all fair, an' nothin' else."

"A midwife's nuttin' in your eyes, we suppose," rejoined Mrs. Moan; "but maybe's there's thim belongin' to you could tell to the contrary."

"Oblaged to you, we suppose, for your sarvices—an' we're not denyin' that, aither."

"For me sarvices—maybe thim same sarvices wasn't very sweet or treaclesome to some o' thim," she rejoined, with a mysterious and somewhat indignant toss of the head.

"Well, well," said the other in a friendly tone, "that makes no maxims one way or the other, only dhrink this—sure we're not goin' to quarrel about it, any how."

"God forbid, Honora More! but sure it ud ill become me to hear my own corree—no, no, avourneen," she exclaimed, putting back the glass; "I can't take it this-a-way; it doesn't agree wid me; you must put a grain o' shugar an' a dhrop o' bilin' wather to it. It may do very well *hard* for the sarvints, but I'm not used to it."

"I hird that myself afore," observed Nogher, "that she never dhrinks hard whiskey. Well, myself never tasted punch but wanst, an' be goxty its great dhrink. Death alive, Honora More," he continued, in his most insinuating manner, "make us all a sup. Sure, blood alive, this is not a common night, afther what God has sint us: Fardorougha himself would allow you, if he was here; deed, be dad, he as good as promised me he would; an' you know we have the young customer's health to drink yet."

"Throth, an' you ought," said the midwife; "the boy says nuttin but the thruth—it's not a common night; an' if God has given Fardorougha substance, he shouldn't begridge a little, if it was only to show a gratcful heart."

"Well, well," said Honora More—which means great Honora, in opposition to her daughter, Fardorougha's wife; this being an epithet adopted for the purpose of contradistinguishing the members of a family when called by the same name—"Well," said she, "I suppose it's as good. My own heart, dear knows, is not in a thrifle, only I have my doubts about Fardorougha. However, what's done can't be undone; so, once we mix it, he'll be too late to spake if he comes in, any way."

The punch was accordingly mixed, and they were in the act of sitting down to enjoy themselves with more comfort when Fardorougha entered. As before, he was silent and disturbed, neither calm nor stern, but laboring, one would suppose, under strong feelings of a decidedly opposite character. On seeing the punch made, his brow gathered into something like severity; he looked quickly at his mother-in-law, and was about to speak, but, pausing a moment, he sat down, and after a little time said in a kind voice—

"It's right, it's right—for *his* sake, an' on his account, have it; but, Honora, let there be no waste."

"Sure we had to make it for Mrs. Moan whether or not," said his mother-in-law—"she can't drink it hard, poor woman."

Mrs. Moan, who had gone to see her patient, having heard his voice again, made her appearance with the child in her arms, and with all the importance which such a burden usually bestows upon persons of her calling.

"Here," said she, presenting him the infant, "take a proper look at this fellow. That I may never, if a finer swaddy ever crossed my hands. Throth if you wor dead tomorrow he'd be mistaken for you—your born image—the sorra thing else—eh alanna—the Lord loves my son—faix, you've daddy's nose upon you anyhow—an' his chin to a turn. Oh, thin, Fardorougha, but there's many a couple rowlin' in wealth that 'ud be proud to have the likes of him; an' that must die an' let it all go to strangers, or to them that doesn't care about them, 'ceptin' to get grabbin' at what they have, that think every day a year that they're above the sod. What! manim-an—kiss your child, man alive. That I may never, but he looks at the darlin' as if it was a sod of turf. Throth you're not worthy of havin' such a bully."

Fardorougha, during this dialogue, held the child in his arms and looked upon it earnestly as before, but without betraying any visible indication of countenance that could enable a spectator to estimate the nature of what passed within him. At length there appeared in his eye a barely perceptible ex-

pression of benignity, which, however, soon passed away, and was replaced by a shadow of gloom and anxiety. Nevertheless, in compliance with the commands of the midwife, he kissed its lips, after which the servants all gathered round it, each lavishing upon the little urchin those hyperbolical expressions of flattery, which, after all, most parents are willing to receive as something approximating to gospel truth.

"Bedad," said Nogher, "that fellow 'ill be the flower o' the Donovans, if God spares him—be goxty, I'll engage he'll give the purty girls many a sore heart yet—he'll play the dickens wid 'em, or I'm not here—a wough! do you hear how the young rogue gives tongue at that? the sorra one o' the shaver but knows what I'm sayin'."

Nogher always had an eye to his own comfort, no matter under what circumstances he might be placed. Having received the full glass, he grasped his master's hand, and in the usual set phrases, to which, however, was added much *ex tempore* matter of his own, he drank the baby's health, congratulating the parents, in his own blunt way, upon this accession to their happiness. The other servants continued to pour out their praises in terms of delight and astonishment at his accomplishments and beauty, each, in imitation of Nogher, concluding with a toast in nearly the same words.

How sweet from all other lips is the praise of those we love! Fardorougha, who, a moment before, looked upon his infant's face with an unmoved countenance, felt incapable of withstanding the flattery of his own servants when uttered in favor of the child. His eye became complacent, and while Nogher held his hand, a slight pressure in return was proof sufficient that his heart beat in accordance with the hopes they expressed of all that the undeveloped future might bestow upon him.

When their little treat was over, the servants withdrew for the night, and Fardorougha himself, still laboring under an excitement so complicated and novel, retired rather to shape his mind to some definite tone of feeling than to seek repose.

How strange is life, and how mysteriously connected is the woe or the weal of a single family with the great mass of human society! We beg the reader to stand with us upon a low, sloping hill, a little to the left of Fardorougha's house, and, after having solemnized his heart by a glance at the starry gospel of the skies, to cast his eye upon the long, white-washed dwelling, as it shines faintly in the visionary distance of a moonlight night. How full of tranquil beauty is the hour, and how deep the silence, except when it is broken by the loud baying of the watch-dog, as he barks in sullen fierceness at his own echo! Or perhaps there is nothing heard but the *sugh* of the mountain river, as with booming sound it rises and falls in the distance, filling the ear of midnight with its wild and continuous melody. Look around, and observe the spirit of repose which sleeps on the face of nature; think upon the dream of human life, and of all the inexplicable wonders which are read from day to day in that miraculous page—the heart of man. Neither your eye nor imagination need pass beyond that humble roof before you, in which it is easy to perceive, by the lights passing at this unusual hour across the windows, that there is something added either to their joy or to their sorrow. There is the mother, in whose heart was accumulated the unwasted tenderness of years, forgetting all the past in the first intoxicating influence of an unknown ecstasy, and looking to the future with the eager aspirations of affection. There is the husband, too, for whose heart the lank devil of the avaricious—the famine-struck god of the miser—is even now contending with the almost extinguished love which springs up in a father's bosom on the sight of his first-born.

Reader, who can tell whether the entrancing visions of the happy mother, or the gloomy anticipations of her apprehensive husband, are most prophetic of the destiny which is before their child. Many indeed and various are the hopes and fears felt under that roof, and deeply will their lights and shadows be blended in the life of the being whose claims are so strong upon their love. There, for some time past the lights in the window have appeared less frequently—one by one we presume the inmates have gone to repose—no other is now visible—the last candle is extinguished, and this humble section of the great family of man is now at rest with the veil of a dark and fearful future unlifted before them.

There is not perhaps in the series of human passions any one so difficult to be eradicated out of the bosom as avarice, no matter with what seeming moderation it puts itself forth, or under what disguise it may appear. And among all its cold-blooded characteristics there is none so utterly unaccountable as that frightful dread of famine and ultimate starvation, which is also strong in proportion to the impossibility of its ever being realized. Indeed, when it arrives to this we should not term it a passion, but a malady, and in our opinion the narrow-hearted patient should be prudently separated from society, and treated as one laboring under an incurable species of monomania.

During the few days that intervened between our hero's birth and his christening, Fardorougha's mind was engaged in forming some fixed principle by which to guide his heart in the conflict that still went on between avarice and affection. In this task he imagined that the father predominated over the miser almost without a struggle; whereas, the fact was, that the subtle passion, ever more ingenious than the simple one, changed its external character, and came out in the shape of affectionate forecast and provident regard for the wants and prospects of his child. This gross deception of his own heart he felt as a relief; for, though smitten with the world, it did not escape him that the birth of his little one, all its circumstances considered, ought to have caused him to feel an enjoyment unalloyed by the care and regret which checked his sympathies as a parent. Neither was conscience itself altogether silent, nor the blunt remonstrances of his servants wholly without effect. Nay, so completely was his judgment overreached that he himself attributed this anomalous state of feeling to a virtuous effort of Christian duty, and looked upon the encroachments which a desire of saving wealth had made on his heart as a manifest proof of much parental attachment. He consequently loved his wealth through the medium of his son, and laid it down as a fixed principle that every act of parsimony on his part was merely one of prudence, and had the love of a father and an affectionate consideration for his child's future welfare to justify it.

The first striking instance of this close and griping spirit appeared upon an occasion which seldom fails to open, in Ireland at least, all the warm and generous impulses of our nature. When his wife deemed it necessary to make those hospitable preparations for their child's christening, which are so usual in the country, he treated her intention of complying with this old custom as a direct proof of unjustifiable folly and extravagance—nay, his remonstrance with her exhibited such remarkable good sense and prudence, that it was a matter of extreme difficulty to controvert it, or to perceive that it originated from any other motive than a strong interest in the true welfare of their child.

"Will our wasting meat and money, an' for that matthur health and time, on his christenin', aither give him more health or make us love him betther? It's not the first time, Honora, that I've heard yourself make little of some of our nabors for goin' beyant their ability in gettin' up big christenins. Don't be foolish now, thin when it comes to your own turn."

The wife took the babe up, and, after having gazed affectionately on its innocent features, replied to him, in a voice of tenderness and reproof—

"God knows, Fardorougha, an' if I *do* act wid folly, as you call it, in gettin' ready his christenin', surely, surely you oughtn't to blame the mother for that. Little I thought, acushla oge, that your own father 'ud begrudge you as good a christenin' as is put over any other nabor's child. I'm afraid, Fardorougha, he's not as much in your heart as he ought to be."

"It's a bad proof of love for him, Honora, to put to the bad what may an' would be sarviceable to him hereafter. You only think for the present; but I can't forget that he's to be settled in the world, an' you know yourself what poor means we have o' doin' that, an' that if we begin to be extravagant an' wasteful, bekase God has sent him, we may beg wid him afore long."

"There's no danger of us beggin' wid him. No," she continued, the pride of the mother having been touched, "my boy will never beg—no, avourneen—you never will—nor shame or disgrace will never come upon him aither. Have you no trust in God, Fardorougha?"

"God never helps them that neglect themselves, Honora."

"But if it was plasing to His will to remove him from us, would you ever forgive yourself not lettin' him have a christenin' like another child?" rejoined the persevering mother.

"The priest," replied the good man, "will do as much for the poor child as the rich; there's but one sacrament for both; anything else is waste, as I said, an' I won't give in to it. You don't considher that your way of it 'ud spend as much in one day as 'ud clothe him two or three years."

"May I never sin this day, Fardorougha, but one 'ud think you're tired of him already. By not givin' in to what's dacent you know you'll only fret me—a thing that no man wid half a heart 'ud do to any woman supportin' a babby as I am. A fretted nurse makes a child sick, as Molly Moan could you before she went; so that it's not on my own account I'm spakin', but on his—poor, weeny pet—the Lord love him! Look at his innocent purty little face, an' how can you have the heart, Fardorougha? Come, avourneen, give way to me this wanst; throth, if you do, you'll see how I'll nurse him, an' what a darlin' lump o' sugar I'll have him for you in no time!"

He paused a little at this delicate and affecting appeal of the mother; but, except by a quick glance that passed from her to their child, it was impossible to say whether or

not it made any impression on his heart, or in the slightest degree changed his resolution.

"Well, well," said he, "let me alone now. I'll think of it. I'll turn it over an' see what's best to be done; do you the same, Honora, an' may be your own sinse will bring you to my side of the question at last."

The next day, his wife renewed the subject with unabated anxiety; but, instead of expressing any change in her favor, Fardorougha declined even to enter into it at all. An evasive reply was all she could extract from him, with an assurance that he would in a day or two communicate the resolution to which he had finally come. She perceived, at once, that the case was hopeless, and, after one last ineffectual attempt to bring him round, she felt herself forced to abandon it. The child, therefore, much to the mother's mortification, was baptized without a christening, unless the mere presence of the godfather and godmother, in addition to Fardorougha's own family, could be said to constitute one.

Our readers, perhaps, are not aware that a cause of deep anxiety, hitherto unnoticed by us, operated with latent power upon Fardorougha's heart. But so strong in Ireland is the beautiful superstition—if it can with truth be termed so—that children are a blessing only when received as such, that, even though supported by the hardest and most shameless of all vices, avarice, Fardorougha had not nerve to avow this most unnatural source for his distress. The fact, however, was, that, to a mind so constituted, the apprehension of a large family was in itself a consideration, which he thought might, at a future period of their lives, reduce both him and his to starvation and death. Our readers may remember Nogher M'Cormick's rebuke to him, when he heard Fardorougha allude to this; and so accessible was he *then* to the feeling, that, on finding his heart at variance with it, he absolutely admitted his error, and prayed to God that he might be enabled to overcome it.

It was, therefore, on the day after the baptism of young Connor, for so had the child been called after his paternal grandfather, that, as a justification for his own conduct in the matter of the christening, he disclosed to his wife, with much reluctance and embarrassment, this undivulged source of his fears for the future, alleging it as a just argument for his declining to be guided by her opinion.

The indignant sympathies of the mother abashed, on this occasion, the miserable and calculating impiety of the husband; her reproaches were open and unshrinking, and her moral sense of his conduct just and beautiful.

"Fardorougha," said she, "I thought, up to this time, to this day, that there was nothing in your heart but too much of the world; but now I'm afeard, if God hasn't sed it, that the devil himself's there. You're frettin' for 'fraid of a family; but has God sent us any but this one yet? No—an' I wouldn't be surprised, if the Almighty should punish your guilty heart, by making the child he gave you, a curse, instead of a blessin'. I think, as it is, he has brought little pleasure to you for so far, and, if your heart hardens as he grows up, it's more unhappy you'll get every day you live."

"That's very fine talk, Honora; but to people in our condition, I can't see any very great blessin' in a houseful of childre. If we're able to provide for this one, we'll have raison to be thankful widout wishin' for more."

"It's my opinion, Fardorougha, you don't love the child."

"Change that opinion, then, Honora; I *do* love the child; but there's no needcessity for blowin it about to every one I meet. If I didn't love him, I wouldn't feel as I do about all the hardships that may be before him. Think of what a bad sason, or a failure of the craps, might bring us all to. God grant that we mayn't come to the bag and staff before he's settled in the world at all, poor thing."

"Oh, very well, Fardorougha; you may make yourself as unhappy as you like; for me, I'll put my trust in the Saviour of the world for my child. If you can trust in any one better than God, do so."

"Honora, there's no use in this talk—it'll do nothing aither for him or us—besides, I have no more time to discoorse about it."

He then left her; but, as she viewed his dark, inflexible features ere he went, an oppressive sense of something not far removed from affliction weighed her down. The child had been asleep in her arms during the foregoing dialogue, and, after his father had departed, she placed him in the cradle, and, throwing the corner of her blue apron over her shoulder, she rocked him into a sounder sleep, swaying herself at the same time to and fro, with that inward sorrow, of which, among the lower classes of Irish females, this motion is uniformly expressive.

It is not to be supposed, however, that, as the early graces of childhood gradually expanded (as they did) into more than ordinary beauty, the avarice of the father was not occasionally encountered in its progress by sudden gushes of love for his son. It was impossible for any parent, no matter how

strongly the hideous idol of mammon might sway his heart, to look upon a creature so fair and beautiful, without being frequently touched into something like affection. The fact was, that, as the child advanced towards youth, the two principles we are describing nearly kept pace one with the other. That the bad and formidable passion made rapid strides, must be admitted, but that it engrossed the whole spirit of the father, is not true. The mind and gentle character of the boy—his affectionate disposition, and the extraordinary advantages of his person—could not fail sometimes to surprise his father into sudden bursts of affection. But these, when they occurred, were looked upon by Fardorougha as so many proofs that he still entertained for the boy love sufficient to justify a more intense desire of accumulating wealth for his sake. Indeed, ere the lad had numbered thirteen summers, Fardorougha's character as a miser had not only gone far abroad throughout the neighborhood, but was felt, by the members of his own family, with almost merciless severity. From habits of honesty, and a decent sense of independence, he was now degraded to rapacity and meanness; what had been prudence, by degrees degenerated into cunning; and he who, when commencing life, was looked upon only as a saving man, had now become notorious for extortion and usury.

A character such as this, among a people of generous and lively feeling like the Irish, is in every state of life the object of intense and undisguised abhorrence. It was with difficulty he could succeed in engaging servants, either for domestic or agricultural purposes, and, perhaps, no consideration, except the general kindness which was felt for his wife and son, would have induced any person whatsoever to enter into his employment. Honora and Connor did what in them lay to make the dependents of the family experience as little of Fardorougha's griping tyranny as possible. Yet, with all their kind-hearted ingenuity and secret bounty, they were scarcely able to render their situation barely tolerable.

It would be difficult to find any language, no matter what pen might wield it, capable of portraying the love which Honora Donovan bore to her gentle, her beautiful, and her *only* son. Ah! there in that last epithet, lay the charm which wrapped her soul in him, and in all that related to his welfare. The moment she saw it was not the will of God to bless them with other offspring, her heart gathered about him with a jealous tenderness which trembled into agony at the idea of his loss.

Her love for him, *then*, multiplied itself into many hues, for he was in truth the prism, on which, when it fell, all the varied beauty of its colors became visible. Her heart gave not forth the music of a single instrument, but breathed the concord of sweet sounds, as heard from the blended melody of many. Fearfully different from this were the feelings of Fardorougha, on finding that he was to be the first and the last vouchsafed to their union. A single regret, however, scarcely felt, touched even him, when he reflected that if Connor were to be removed from them, their hearth must become desolate. But then came the fictitious conscience, with its nefarious calculations, to prove that, in their present circumstances, the dispensation which withheld others was a blessing to him that was given. Even Connor himself, argued the miser, will be the gainer by it, for what would my five loaves and three fishes be among so many? The pleasure, however, that is derived from the violation of natural affection is never either full or satisfactory. The gratification felt by Fardorougha, upon reflecting that no further addition was to be made to their family, resembled that which a hungry man feels who dreams he is partaking of a luxurious banquet. Avarice, it is true, like fancy, was gratified, but the enjoyment, though rich to that particular passion, left behind it a sense of unconscious remorse, which gnawed his heart with a slow and heavy pain, that operated like a smothered fire, wasting what it preys upon, in secrecy and darkness. In plainer terms, he was not happy, but so absorbed in the ruling passion—the pursuit of wealth—that he felt afraid to analyze his anxiety, or to trace to its true source the cause of his own misery.

In the mean time, his boy grew up the pride and ornament of the parish, idolized by his mother, and beloved by all who knew him. Limited and scanty was the education which his father could be prevailed upon to bestow upon him; but there was nothing that could deprive him of his natural good sense, nor of the affections which his mother's love had drawn out and cultivated. One thing was remarkable in him, which we mention with reluctance, as it places his father's character in a frightful point of view; it is this, that his love for that father was such as is rarely witnessed, even in the purest and most affectionate circles of domestic life. But let not our readers infer, either from what we have written, or from any thing we may write, that Fardorougha hated this lovely and delightful boy; on the contrary, earth contained not an object, except his money, which he loved *so well*. His af-

fection for him, however, was only such as could proceed from the dregs of a defiled and perverted heart. This is not saying much, but it is saying all. What in him was parental attachment, would in another man, to such a son, be unfeeling and detestable indifference. His heart sank on contemplating the pittance he allowed for Connor's education; and no remonstrance could prevail on him to clothe the boy with common decency. Pocket-money was out of the question, as were all those considerate indulgences to youth, that blunt, when timely afforded, the edge of early anxiety to know those amusements of life, which, if not innocently gratified before passion gets strong, are apt to produce, at a later period, that giddy intoxication, which has been the destruction of thousands. When Connor, however, grew up, and began to think for himself, he could not help feeling that, from a man so absolutely devoted to wealth as his father was, to receive even the slenderest proof of affection, was in this case no common manifestation of the attachment he bore him. There was still a higher and nobler motive. He could not close his ears to the character which had gone abroad of his father, and from that principle of generosity, which induces a man, even when ignorant of the quarrel, to take the weaker side, he fought his battles, until, in the end, he began to believe them just. But the most obvious cause of the son's attachment we have not mentioned, and it is useless to travel into vain disquisitions, for that truth which may be found in the instinctive impulses of nature. He was Connor's father, and though penurious in everything that regarded even his son's common comfort, he had never uttered a harsh word to him during his life, or denied him any gratification which could be had without money. Nay, a kind word, or a kind glance, from Fardorougha, fired the son's resentment against the world which traduced him; for how could it be otherwise, when the habitual defence made by him, when arraigned for his penury, was an anxiety to provide for the future welfare and independence of his son?

Many characters in life appear difficult to be understood, but if those who wish to analyze them only consulted human nature, instead of rushing into far-fetched theories, and traced with patience the effect which interest, or habit, or inclination is apt to produce on men of a peculiar temperament, when placed in certain situations, there would be much less difficulty in avoiding those preposterous exhibitions which run into caricature, or outrage the wildest combinations that can be formed from the common elements of humanity.

Having said this much, we will beg our readers to suppose that young Connor is now twenty-two years of age, and request them, besides, to prepare for the gloom which is about to overshadow our story.

We have already stated that Fardorougha was not only an extortioner, but a usurer. Now, as some of our readers may be surprised that a man in his station of life could practise usury or even extortion to any considerable extent, we feel it necessary to inform them that there exists among Irish farmers a class of men who stand, with respect to the surrounding poor and improvident, in a position precisely analogous to that which is occupied by a Jew or money-lender among those in the higher classes who borrow, and are extravagant upon a larger scale. If, for instance, a struggling small farmer have to do with a needy landlord or an unfeeling agent, who threatens to seize or eject, if the rent be not paid to the day, perhaps this small farmer is forced to borrow from one of those rustic Jews the full amount of the gale; for this he gives him, at a valuation dictated by the lender's avarice and his own distress, the oats, or potatoes, or hay, which he is not able to dispose of in sufficient time to meet the demand that is upon him. This property, the miser draws home, and stacks or houses it until the markets are high, when he disposes of it at a price which often secures for him a profit amounting to one-third, and occasionally one-half, above the sum lent, upon which, in the meantime, interest is accumulating. For instance, if the accommodation be twenty pounds, property to that amount at a ruinous valuation is brought home by the accommodator. This perhaps sells for thirty, thirty-five, or forty pounds, so that, deducting the labor of preparing it for market, there is a gain of fifty, seventy-five, or a hundred per cent., besides, probably, ten per cent. interest, which is altogether distinct from the former. This class of persons will also take a joint bond, or joint promissory note, or, in fact, any collateral security they know to be valid, and if the contract be not fulfilled, they immediately pounce upon the guarantee. They will, in fact, as a mark of their anxiety to assist a neighbor in distress, receive a pig from a widow, or a cow from a struggling small farmer, at thirty or forty per cent. beneath its value, and claim the merit of being a friend into the bargain. Such men are bitter enemies to paper money, especially to notes issued by private bankers, which they never take in payment. It is amusing, if a

person could forget the distress which occasions the scene, to observe one of these men producing an old stocking, or a long black leathern purse—or a calf-skin pocket-book with the hair on, and counting down, as if he gave out his heart's blood drop by drop, the specific sum, uttering, at the same time, a most lugubrious history of his own poverty, and assuring the poor wretch he is fleecing, that if he (the miser) gives way to his good nature, he must ultimately become the victim of his own benevolence. In no case, however, do they ever put more in the purse or stocking than is just then wanted, and sometimes they will be short a guinea or ten shillings, which they borrow from a neighbor, or remit to the unfortunate dupe in the course of the day. This they do in order to enhance the obligation, and give a distinct proof of their poverty. Let not, therefore, the gentlemen of the Minories, nor our P——s and our M——s nearer home, imagine for a moment that they engross the spirit of rapacity and extortion to themselves. To the credit of the class, however, to which they belong, such persons are not so numerous as formerly, and to the still greater honor of the peasantry be it said, the devil himself is not hated with half the detestation which is borne them. In order that the reader may understand our motive for introducing such a description as that we have now given, it will be necessary for us to request him to accompany a stout, well-set young man, named Bartle Flanagan, along a green ditch, which, planted with osiers, leads to a small meadow belonging to Fardorougha Donovan. In this meadow, his son Connor is now making hay, and on seeing Flanagan approach, he rests upon the top of his rake, and exclaims in a soliloquy :—

"God help you and yours, Bartle! If it was in my power, I take God to witness, I'd make up wid a willin' heart for all the hardship and misfortune my father brought upon you all."

He then resumed his labor, in order that the meeting between him and Bartle might take place with less embarrassment, for he saw at once that the former was about to speak to him.

"Isn't the weather too hot, Connor, to work bareheaded? I think you ought to keep on your hat."

"Bartle, how are you?—off or on, it's the same thing; hat or no hat, it's broilin' weather, the Lord be praised! What news, Bartle?"

"Not much, Connor, but what you know—a family that was strugglin', but honest, brought to dissolation. We're broken up; my father and mother's both livin' in a cabin they tuck from Billy Nuthy; Mary and Alick's gone to sarvice, and myself's just on my way to hire wid the last man I ought to go to—your father, that is, supposin' we can agree."

"As heaven's above me, Bartle, there's not a man in the county this day sorrier for what has happened than myself! But the truth is, that when my father heard of Tom Grehan, that was your security, havin' gone to America, he thought every day a month till the note was due. My mother an' I did all we could, but you know his temper; 'twas no use. God knows, as I said before, I'm heart sorry for it."

"Every one knows, Connor, that if your mother an' you had your way an' will, your father wouldn't be sich a screw as he is."

"In the meantime, don't forget that he is my father, Bartle, an' above all things, remimber that I'll allow no man to speak disparagingly of him in my presence."

"I believe you'll allow, Connor, that he was a scourge an' a curse to us, an' that none of us ought to like a bone in his skin."

"It couldn't be expected you would, Bartle; but you must grant, after all, that he was only recoverin' his own. Still, when you know what my feeling is upon the business, I don't think it's generous in you to bring it up between us."

"I could bear his harrishin' us out of house an' home," proceeded the other, "only for one thought that still crasses in an me."

"What is that, Bartle?—God knows I can't help feelin' for you," he added, smote with the desolation which his father had brought upon the family.

"He lent us forty pounds," proceeded the young man; "and when he found that Tom Grehan, our security, went to America, he came down upon us the minute the note was due, canted all we had at half price, and turned us to starve upon the world; now, I could bear that, but there's one thing——"

"That's twice you spoke about that one thing," said Connor, somewhat sharply, for he felt hurt at the obstinacy of the other, in continuing a subject so distressing to him; "but," he continued, in a milder tone, "tell me, Bartle, for goodness' sake, what it is, an' let us put an' end to the discoorse. I'm sure it must be unpleasant to both of us."

"It doesn't signify," replied the young man, in a desponding voice—"*she's* gone; it's all over wid me there; I'm a beggar—I'm a beggar!"

"Bartle," said Connor, taking his hand, "you're too much downhearted; come to us, but first go to my father; I know you'll

find it hard to deal with him. Never mind that; whatever he offers you, close wid him, an' take my word for it that my mother and I between us will make you up dacent wages; an' sorry I am that it's come to this wid you, poor fellow!"

Bartle's cheek grew pale as ashes; he wrung Connor's hand with all his force, and fixed an unshrinking eye on him as he replied—

"Thank you Connor, *now*—but I hope I'll live to thank you better *yet*, and if I do, you needn't thank me for any return I may make you or yours. I will close wid your father, an' take whatsomever he'll order me; for, Connor," and he wrung his hand again—"Connor O'Donovan, I haven't a house or home this day, nor a place under God's canopy where to lay my head, except upon the damp floor of my father's naked cabin. Think of that, Connor, an' think if I can forget it; still," he added, "you'll see, Connor—Connor, *you'll see how I'll forgive it.*"

"It's a credit to yourself to spake as you do," replied Connor; "call this way, an' let me know what's done, an' I hope, Bartle, you an' I will have some pleasant days together."

"Ay, an' pleasant nights, too, I hope," replied the other: "to be sure I'll call; but if you take my advice, you'd tie a handkerchy about your head; it's mad hot, an' enough to give one a faver bareheaded."

Having made this last observation, he leaped across a small drain that bounded the meadow, and proceeded up the fields to Fardorougha's house.

Bartle Flanagan was a young man, about five feet six in height, but of a remarkably compact and athletic form. His complexion was dark, but his countenance open, and his features well set and regular. Indeed his whole appearance might be termed bland and prepossessing. If he ever appeared to disadvantage it was whilst under the influence of resentment, during which his face became pale as death, nay, almost livid; and, as his brows were strong and black, the contrast between them and his complexion changed the whole expression of his countenance into that of a person whose enmity a prudent man would avoid. He was not quarrelsome, however, nor subject to any impetuous bursts of passion; his resentments, if he retained any, were either dead or silent, or, at all events, so well regulated that his acquaintances looked upon him as a young fellow of a good-humored and friendly disposition. It is true, a hint had gone abroad that on one or two occasions he was found deficient in courage; but, as the circumstances referred to were rather unimportant, his conduct by many was attributed rather to good sense and a disinclination to quarrel on frivolous grounds, than to positive cowardice. Such he was, and such he is, now that he has entered upon the humble drama of our story.

On arriving at Fardorougha's house, he found that worthy man at dinner, upon a cold bone of bacon and potatoes. He had only a few moments before returned from the residence of the County Treasurer, with whom he went to lodge, among other sums, that which was so iniquitously wrung from the ruin of the Flanagans. It would be wrong to say that he felt in any degree embarrassed on looking into the face of one whom he had so oppressively injured. The recovery of his usurious debts, no matter how merciless the process, he considered only as an act of justice to himself, for his conscience having long ago outgrown the perception of his own inhumanity, now only felt compunction when death or the occasional insolvency of a security defeated his rapacity.

When Bartle entered, Fardorougha and he surveyed each other with perfect coolness for nearly half a minute, during which time neither uttered a word. The silence was first broken by Honora, who put forward a chair, and asked Flanagan to sit down.

"Sit down, Bartle," said she, "sit down, boy; an' how is all the family?"

"'Deed, can't complain," replied Bartle, "as time goes; an' how are you, Fardorougha? although I needn't ax—you're takin' care of number one, any how."

"I'm middlin', Bartle, middlin'; as well as a man can be that has his heart broke every day in the year strivin' to come by his own, an' can't do it; but I'm a fool, an' ever was—sarvin' others an' ruinin' myself."

"Bartle," said Mrs. Donovan, "are you unwell, dear? you look as pale as death. Let me get you a drink of fresh milk."

"If he's weak," said Fardorougha, "an' he looks weak, a drink of fresh wather 'ud be betther for him; ever an' always a drink of wather for a weak man, or a weak woman aither; it recovers them sooner."

"Thank you, kindly, Mrs. Donovan, an' I'm obliged to you, Fardorougha, for the wather; but I'm not a bit weak; it's only the heat o' the day ails me—for sure enough it's broilin' weather."

"'Deed it is," replied Honora, "killin' weather to them that has to be out undher it."

"If it's good for nothin' else, it's good for the hay-makin'," observed Fardorougha.

"I'm tould, Misther Donovan," said Bartle, "that you want a sarvint man: now, if you

do, I want a place, an' you see I'm comin' to you to look for one."

"Heaven above, Bartle!" exclaimed Honora, "what do you mean? Is it one of Dan Flanagan's sons goin' to sarvice?"

"Not one, but all of them," replied the other, coolly, "an' his daughters, too, Mrs. Donovan; but it's all the way o' the world. If Mr. Donovan 'll hire me I'll thank him."

"Don't be *Mistherin'* me, Bartle; Misther them that has means an' substance," returned Donovan.

"Oh, God forgive you, Fardorougha!" exclaimed his honest and humane wife. "God forgive you! Bartle, from my heart, from the core o' my heart, I pity you, my poor boy. An' is it to this, Fardorougha, you've brought them?—Oh, Saviour o' the world!"

She fixed her eyes upon the victim of her husband's extortion, and in an instant they were filled with tears.

"What did I do," said the latter, "but strive to recover my own? How could I afford to lose forty pounds? An' I was tould for sartin that your father knew Grehan was goin' to Amerika when he got him to go security. Whisht, Honora, you're as foolish a woman as riz this day; haven't you your sins to cry for?"

"God knows I have, Fardorougha, an' more than my own to cry for."

"I dare say you did hear as much," said Bartle, quietly replying to the observation of Fardorougha respecting his father; "but you know it's a folly to talk about spilt milk. If you want a sarvint I'll hire; for, as I said a while ago, *I* want a place, an' except wid you I don't know where to get one."

"If you come to me," observed the other, "you must go to your duty, an' observe the fast days, but not the holydays."

"Sarvints isn't obliged to observe them," replied Bartle.

"But I always put it in the bargain," returned the other.

"As to that," said Bartle, "I don't much mind it. Sure it'll be for the good o' my sowl, any way. But what wages will you be givin'?"

"Thirty shillings every half year;—that's three pounds—sixty shillings a year. A great deal o' money. I'm sure I dunna where it's to come from."

"It's very little for a year's hard labor," replied Bartle, "but little as it is, Fardorougha, owin' to what has happened betwixt us, believe me, I'm right glad to take it."

"Well, but Bartle, you know there's fifteen shillins of the ould account still due, and you must allow it out o' your wages; if you don't, it's no bargain."

Bartle's face became livid; but he was perfectly cool;—indeed, so much so that he smiled at this last condition of Fardorougha. It was a smile, however, at once so ghastly, dark, and frightful, that, by any person capable of tracing the secret workings of some deadly passion on the countenance, its purport could not have been mistaken.

"God knows, Fardorougha, you might let *that* pass—considher that you've been hard enough upon us."

"God knows I say the same," observed Honora. "Is it the last drop o' the heart's blood you want to squeeze out, Fardorougha?"

"The last drop! What is it but my right? Am I robbin' him? Isn't it due? Will he, or can he deny *that?* An' if it's due isn't it but honest in him to pay it? They're not livin' can say I ever defrauded them of a penny. I never broke a bargain; an' yet you open on me, Honora, as if I was a rogue! If I hadn't that boy below to provide for, an' settle in the world, what 'ud I care about money? It's for *his* sake I look afther my right."

"I'll allow the money," said Bartle. "Fardorougha's right; it's due, an' I'll pay him—ay will I, Fardorougha, settle wid you to the last farden, or beyant it if you like."

"I wouldn't take a farden beyant it, in the shape of debt. Them that's decent enough to make a present, may—for that's a horse of another color."

"When will I come home?" inquired Bartle.

"You may stay at home now that you're here," said the other. "An' in the mane time, go an' help Connor put that hay in lap-cocks. Anything you want to bring here you can bring afther your day's work to-night."

"Did you ate your dinner, Bartle?" said Honora; "bekase if you didn't I'll get you something."

"It's not to this time o' day he'd be without his dinner, I suppose," observed his new master.

"You're very right, Fardorougha," rejoined Bartle; "I'm thankful to you, ma'am, I did ate my dinner."

"Well, you'll get a rake in the barn, Bartle," said his master; "an' now tramp down to Connor, an' I'll see how you'll handle yourselves, both o' you, from this till night."

Bartle accordingly proceeded towards the meadow, and Fardorougha, as was his custom, throwing his great coat loosely about his shoulders, the arms dangling on each side of him, proceeded to another part of his farm.

Flanagan's step, on his way to join Con-

nor, was slow and meditative. The kindness of the son and mother touched him; for the line between their disposition and Fardorougha's was too strong and clear to allow the slightest suspicion of their participation in the spirit which regulated his life. The father, however, had just declared that his anxiety to accumulate money arose from a wish to settle his son independently in life; and Flanagan was too slightly acquainted with human character to see through this flimsy apology for extortion. He took it for granted that Fardorougha spoke truth, and his resolution received a bias from the impression, which, however, his better nature determined to subdue. In this uncertain state of mind he turned about almost instinctively, to look in the direction which Fardorougha had taken, and as he observed his diminutive figure creeping along with his great coat about him, he felt that the very sight of the man who had broken up their hearth and scattered them on the world, filled his heart with a deep and deadly animosity that occasioned him to pause as a person would do who finds himself unexpectedly upon the brink of a precipice.

Connor, on seeing him enter the meadow with the rake, knew at once that the terms had been concluded between them; and the excellent young man's heart was deeply moved at the destitution which forced Flanagan to seek for service with the very individual who had occasioned it.

"I see, Bartle," said he, "you have agreed."

"We have," replied Bartle. "But if there had been any other place to be got in the parish—(an' indeed only for the state I'm in)—I wouldn't have hired myself to him for nothing, or next to nothing, as I have done."

"Why, what did he promise?"

"Three pounds a year, an' out o' that I'm to pay him fifteen shillings that my father owes him still."

"Close enough, Bartle, but don't be cast down; I'll undertake that my mother an' I will double it—an' as for the fifteen shillings I'll pay them out o' my own pocket—when I get money. I needn't tell you that we're all kept upon the tight crib, and that little cash goes far with us; for all that, we'll do what I promise, go as it may."

"It's more than I ought to expect, Connor; but yourself and your mother, all the counthry would put their hands undher both your feets."

"I would give a great dale, Bartle, that my poor father had a little of the feelin' that's in my mother's heart; but it's his way, Bartle, an' you know he's my father, an' has been kinder to me than to any livin' creature on this earth. I never got a harsh word from him yet. An' if he kept me stinted in many things that I was entitled to as well as other persons like me, still, Bartle, he loves me, an' I can't but feel great affection for him, love the money as he may."

This was spoken with much seriousness of manner not unmingled with somewhat of regret, if not sorrow. Bartle fixed his eye upon the fine face of his companion, with a look in which there was a character of compassion. His countenance, however, while he gazed on him, maintained his natural color—it was not pale.

"I am sorry, Connor," said he slowly, "I am sorry that I hired with your father."

"An' I'm glad of it," replied the other; "why should you be sorry?"

Bartle made no answer for some time, but looked into the ground, as if he had not heard him.

"Why should you be sorry, Bartle?"

Nearly a minute elapsed before his abstraction was broken. "What's that?" said he at length. "What were you asking me?"

"You said you were sorry."

"Oh, ay!" returned the other, interrupting him; "but I didn' mind what I was sayin': 'twas thinkin' o' somethin' else I was—of home, Bartle, an' what we're brought to; but the best way's to dhrop all discoorse about that forever."

"You'll be my friend if you do," said Connor.

"I will, then," replied Bartle; "we'll change it. Connor, were you ever in love?"

O'Donovan turned quickly about, and, with a keen glance at Bartle, replied,

"Why, I don't know; I believe I might, once or so."

"*I am*," said Flanagan, bitterly; "*I am*, Connor."

"An' who's the happy crature, will you tell us?"

"No," returned the other; "but if there's a wish that I'd make against my worst enemy, 'twould be, that he might love a girl above his means; or if he was her aquil, or even near her aquil, that he might be brought"——he paused, but immediately proceeded, "Well, no matter, I am, indeed, Connor."

"An' is the girl fond o' you?"

"I don't know; my mind was made up to tell her but it's past that now; I know she's wealthy and proud both, and so is all her family."

"How do you know she's proud when you never put the subject to her?"

"I'm not sayin' she's proud, in one sinse; wid respect to herself, I believe, she's humble enough; I mane, she doesn't give herself many airs, but her people's as proud as the

very sarra, an' never match below them ; still, if I'd opportunities of bein' often in her company, I'd not fear to trust to a sweet tongue for comin' round her."

"Never despair, Bartle," said Connor ; "you know the ould proverb, 'a faint heart ;' however, settin' the purty crature aside, whoever she is, I think if we divided ourselves—you to that side, an' me to this—we'd get this hay lapped in half the time ; or do you take which side you plase."

"It's a bargain," said Bartle ; "I don't care a trawneen ; I'll stay where I am, thin, an' do you go beyant ; let us hurry, too, for, if I'm not mistaken, it's too sultry to be long without rain, the sky, too, is gettin' dark."

"I observed as much myself," said Connor ; "an' that was what made me spake."

Both then continued their labor with redoubled energy, nor ceased for a moment until the task was executed, and the business of the day concluded.

Flanagan's observation was indeed correct, as to the change in the day and the appearance of the sky. From the hour of five o'clock the darkness gradually deepened, until a dead black shadow, fearfully still and solemn, wrapped the whole horizon. The sun had altogether disappeared, and nothing was visible in the sky but one unbroken mass of darkness, unrelieved even by a single pile of clouds. The animals, where they could, had betaken themselves to shelter ; the fowls of the air sought the covert of the hedges, and ceased their songs ; the larks fled from the mid heaven ; and occasionally might be seen a straggling bee hurrying homewards, careless of the flowers which tempted him in his path, and only anxious to reach his hive before the deluge should overtake him. The stillness indeed was awful, as was the gloomy veil which darkened the face of nature, and filled the mind with that ominous terror which presses upon the heart like a consciousness of guilt. In such a time, and under the aspect of a sky so much resembling the pall of death, there is neither mirth nor laughter, but that individuality of apprehension, which, whilst it throws the conscience in upon its own records, and suspends conversation, yet draws man to his fellows, as if mere contiguity were a safeguard against danger.

The conversation between the two young men as they returned from their labor, was short but expressive.

"Bartle," said Connor, "are you afeard of thundher? The rason I ax," he added, "is, bekase your face is as white as a sheet."

"I have it from my mother," replied Flanagan, "but at all evints such an evenin' as this is enough to make the heart of any man quake."

"I feel my spirits low, by rason of the darkness, but I'm not afraid. It's well for them that have a clear conscience ; they say that a stormy sky is the face of an angry God——"

"An' the thundher His voice," added Bartle ; "but why are the brute bastes an' the birds afraid, that commit no sin?"

"That's true," said his companion ; "it must be natural to be afraid, or why would *they* indeed?—but some people are naturally more timersome than others."

"I intinded to go home for my other clo'es an' linen this evenin'," observed Bartle, "but I won't go out to-night."

"I must thin," said Connor ; "an', with the blessin' o' God, will too ; come what may."

"Why, what is there to bring you out, if it's a fair question to ax?" inquired the other.

"A promise, for one thing ; an' my own inclination—my own heart—that's nearer the thruth—for another. It's the first meetin' that I an' her I'm goin' to ever had."

"*Thighum, Thighum*, I undherstand," said Flanagan ; "well, I'll stay at home ; but, sure it's no harm to wish you success—an' that, Connor, is more than *I'll* ever have where I wish for it most."

This closed their dialogue, and both entered Fardorougha's house in silence.

Up until twilight, the darkness of the dull and heavy sky was unbroken ; but towards the west there was seen a streak whose color could not be determined as that of blood or fire. By its angry look, it seemed as if the sky in that quarter were about to burst forth in one awful sweep of conflagration. Connor observed it, and very correctly anticipated the nature and consequences of its appearance ; but what will not youthful love dare and overcome? With an undismayed heart he set forward on his journey, which we leave him to pursue, and beg permission, meanwhile, to transport the reader to a scene distant about two miles farther towards the inland part of the country.

PART II.

THE dwelling of Bodagh Buie O'Brien, to which Connor is now directing his steps, was a favorable specimen of that better class of farm-houses inhabited by our most extensive and wealthy agriculturists. It was a large, whitewashed, ornamentally thatched building, that told by its external aspect of the good living, extensive comforts, and substantial opulence which prevailed within. Stretched before its hall-door was a small

lawn, bounded on the left by a wall that separated it from the farm-yard into which the kitchen door opened. Here were stacks of hay, oats, and wheat, all upon an immense scale, both as to size and number; together with threshing and winnowing machines, improved ploughs, carts, cars, and all the other modern implements of an extensive farm. Very cheering, indeed, was the din of industry that arose from the clank of machinery, the grunting of hogs, the cackling of geese, the quacking of ducks, and all the various other sounds which proceeded from what at first sight might have appeared to be rather a scene of confusion, but which, on closer inspection, would be found a rough yet well-regulated system, in which every person had an allotted duty to perform. Here might Bodagh Buie be seen, dressed in a gray broad-cloth coat, broad kerseymere breeches, and lambs' wool stockings, moving from place to place with that calm, sedate, and contented air, which betokens an easy mind and a consciousness of possessing a more than ordinary share of property and influence. With hands thrust into his small-clothes pockets, and a bunch of gold seals suspended from his fob, he issued his orders in a grave and quiet tone, differing very little in dress from an absolute *Squireen*, save in the fact of his Caroline hat being rather scuffed, and his strong shoes begrimed with the soil of his fields or farm-yard. Mrs. O'Brien was, out of the sphere of her own family, a person of much greater pretension than the Bodagh her husband; and, though in a different manner, not less so in the discharge of her duty as a wife, a mother, or a mistress. In appearance, she was a large, fat, good-looking woman, eternally in a state of motion and bustle, and, as her education had been extremely scanty, her tone and manner, though brimful of authority and consequence, were strongly marked with that ludicrous vulgarity which is produced by the attempt of an ignorant person to accomplish a high style of gentility. She was a kind-hearted, charitable woman, however; but so inveterately conscious of her station in life, that it became, in her opinion, a matter of duty to exhibit a refinement and elevation of language suitable to a matron who could drive every Sunday to Mass on her own jaunting car. When dressed on these occasions in her rich rustling silks, she had, what is called in Ireland, a comfortable *raghoola* look, but at the same time a carriage so stiff and rustic, as utterly overcame all her attempts, dictated as they were by the simplest vanity, at enacting the arduous and awful character of a *Squireen's* wife. Their family consisted of a son and daughter; the former, a young man of a very amiable disposition, was, at the present period of our story, a student in Maynooth College, and the latter, now in her nineteenth year, a promising pupil in a certain seminary for young ladies, conducted by that notorious Master of Arts, Little Cupid. Oona, or Una, O'Brien, was in truth a most fascinating and beautiful *brunette;* tall in stature, light and agile in all her motions, cheerful and sweet in temper, but with just as much of that winning caprice, as was necessary to give zest and piquancy to her whole character. Though tall and slender, her person was by no means thin; on the contrary, her limbs and figure were very gracefully rounded, and gave promise of that agreeable fulness, beneath or beyond which no perfect model of female proportion can exist. If our readers could get one glance at the hue of her rich cheek, or fall for a moment under the power of her black mellow eye, or witness the beauty of her white teeth, while her face beamed with a profusion of dimples, or saw her while in the act of shaking out her *invincible locks*, ere she bound them up with her white and delicate hands—then, indeed, might they understand why no war of the elements could prevent Connor O'Donovan from risking life and limb sooner than disappoint her in the promise of their *first* meeting.

Oh that first meeting of pure and youthful love! With what a glory is it ever encircled in the memory of the human heart! No matter how long or how melancholy the lapse of time since its past existence may be, still, still, is it remembered by our feelings when the recollection of every tie but itself has departed.

The charm, however, that murmured its many-toned music through the soul of Una O'Brien was not, upon the evening in question, wholly free from a shade of melancholy for which she could not account; and this impression did not result from any previous examination of her love for Connor O'Donovan, though many such she had. She knew that in this the utmost opposition from both her parents must be expected; nor was it the consequence of a consciousness on her part, that in promising him a clandestine meeting, she had taken a step which could not be justified. Of this, too, she had been aware before; but, until the hour of appointment drew near, the heaviness which pressed her down was such as caused her to admit that the sensation, however painful and gloomy, was new to her, and bore a character distinct from anything that could proceed from the various lights in which she had previously considered her attachment. This was, moreover, heightened by the boding

aspect of the heavens and the dread repose of the evening, so unlike anything she had ever witnessed before. Notwithstanding all this, she was sustained by the eager and impatient buoyancy of first affection; which, when imagination pictured the handsome form of her young and manly lover, predominated for the time over every reflection and feeling that was opposed to itself. Her mind, indeed, resembled a fair autumn landscape, over which the cloud-shadows may be seen sweeping for a moment, whilst again the sun comes out and turns all into serenity and light.

The place appointed for their interview was a small paddock shaded by alders, behind her father's garden, and thither, with trembling limbs and palpitating heart, did the young and graceful daughter of Bodagh Buie proceed.

For a considerable time, that is to say, for three long years before this delicious appointment, had Connor O'Donovan and Una been wrapped in the elysium of mutual love. At mass, at fair, and at market, had they often and often met, and as frequently did their eyes search each other out, and reveal in long blushing glances the state of their respective hearts. Many a time did he seek an opportunity to disclose what he felt, and as often, with confusion, and fear, and delight, did she afford him what he sought. Thus did one opportunity after another pass away, and as often did he form the towering resolution to reveal his affection if he were ever favored with another. Still would some disheartening reflection, arising from the uncommon gentleness and extreme modesty of his character, throw a damp upon his spirit. He questioned his own penetration; perhaps she was in the habit of glancing as much at others as she glanced at him. Could it be possible that the beautiful daughter of Bodagh Buie, the wealthiest man, and of his wife, the proudest woman, within a large circle of the country, would love the son of Fardorougha Donovan, whose name had, alas, become so odious and unpopular? But then the blushing face, and dark lucid eyes, and the long earnest glance, rose before his imagination, and told him that, let the difference in the character and the station of their parents be what it might, the fair dark daughter of O'Brien was not insensible to him, nor to the anxieties he felt.

The circumstance which produced the first conversation they ever had arose from an incident of a very striking and singular character. About a week before the evening in question, one of Bodagh Buie's bee-skeps hived, and the young colony, though closely watched and pursued, directed their course to Fardorougha's house, and settled in the mouth of the chimney. Connor, having got a clean sheet, secured them, and was about to submit them to the care of the Bodagh's servants, when it was suggested that the duty of bringing them home devolved on himself, inasmuch as he was told they would not remain, unless placed in a new skep by the hands of the person on whose property they had settled. While on his way to the Bodagh's he was accosted in the following words by one of O'Brien's servants:

"Connor, there's good luck before you, or the bees wouldn't pick *you* out amongst all the rest o' the neighbors. You ought to hould up your head, man. Who knows what manin's in it?"

"Why, do you b'lieve that bees sittin' wid one is a sign o' good luck?"

"Surely I do. Doesn't every one know it to be thrue? Connor, you're a good-lookin' fellow, an' I need scarcely tell you that we have a purty girl at home; can you lay that an' that together? Arrah, be my sowl, the richest honey ever the same bees 'll make, is nothin' but alloways, compared wid that purty mouth of her own! A honey-comb is a fool to it."

"Why, did you ever thry, Mike?"

"Is it me? Och, och, if I was only high enough in this world, maybe I wouldn't be spakin' sweet to her; no, no, be my word! thry, indeed, for the likes o' me! Faith, but I know a sartin young man that she does be often spakin' about."

Connor's heart was in a state of instant commotion.

"An' who—who is *he*—who is that sartin young man, Mike?"

"Faith, the son o' one that can run a shillin' farther than e'er another man in the country. Do you happen to be acquainted wid one Connor O'Donovan, of Lisnamona?"

"Connor O'Donovan—that's good, Mike—in the mane time don't be goin' it on us. No, no;—an' even if she did, it isn't to *you* she spake about any one, Michael ahagur!"

"No, nor it wasn't to me—sure I didn't say it was—but don't you know my sister's at sarvice in the Bodagh's family? Divil the word o' falsity I'm tellin' you; so, if you haven't the heart to spake for yourself, I wouldn't give knots o' straws for you; and now, there's no harm done I hope—moreover, an' by the same token, you needn't go to the trouble o' puttin' up an advertisement to let the parish know what I've tould you."

"Hut, tut, Mike, it's all folly. Una Dhun O'Brien to think of *me!*—nonsense, man; that cock would never fight."

"Very well; divil a morsel of us is forcin' you to b'lieve it. I suppose the mother o'

you has your *wooden spoon* to the fore still. I'd kiss the Bravery you didn't come into the world wid a *silver ladle* in your mouth, anyhow. In the mane time, we're at the Bodagh's—an' have an eye about you afther what you've heard—*Nabocklish!*"

This, indeed, was important intelligence to Connor, and it is probable that, had he not heard it, another opportunity of disclosing his passion might have been lost.

Independently of this, however, he was not proof against the popular superstition of the bees, particularly as it appeared to be an augury to which his enamored heart could cling with all the hope of young and passionate enthusiasm.

Nor was it long till he had an opportunity of perceiving that she whose image had floated in light before his fancy, gave decided manifestations of being struck by the same significant occurrence. On entering the garden, the first person his eye rested upon was Una herself, who, as some of the other hives were expected to swarm, had been engaged watching them during the day. His appearance at any time would have created a tumult in her bosom, but, in addition to this, when she heard that the bees which had rested on Connor's house, had swarmed from *her own hive,* to use the words of Burns—

> She looked—she reddened like the rose,
> Syne pale as ony lily,

and, with a shy but expressive glance at Connor, said, in a low hurried voice, "These belong *to me.*"

Until the moment we are describing, Connor and she, notwithstanding that they frequently met in public places, had never yet spoken; nor could the words now uttered by Una be considered as addressed to him, although from the glance that accompanied them it was sufficiently evident that they were intended for him alone. It was in vain that he attempted to accost her; his confusion, her pleasure, his timidity, seemed to unite in rendering him incapable of speaking at all. His lips moved several times, but the words, as they arose, died away unspoken.

At this moment, Mike, with waggish good-humor, and in a most laudable fit of industry, reminded the other servants, who had been assisting to secure the bees, that as they (the bees) were now safe, no further necessity existed for their presence.

"Come, boys—death-alive, the day's passin'—only think, Miss Una, that we have all the hay in the Long-shot meadow to get into cocks yet, an' here we're idlin' an' ghostherin' away our time like I dunna what. They're achamin', Miss Una—divil a thing else, an' what'll the masther say if the same meadow's not finished to-night?"

"Indeed, Mike," replied Una; "if the meadow *is* to be finished this night, there's little time to be lost."

"Come, boys," exclaimed Mike, "you hear what Miss Una says—if it's to be finished to-night there's but little time to be lost—turn out—march. Miss Una can watch the bees widout our help. Good evenin', Misther Donovan; be my word, but you're entitled to a taste o' *honey* any way, for bringing back Miss Una's bees to her."

Mike, after having uttered this significant opinion relative to his sense of justice, drove his fellow-servants out of the garden, and left the lovers together. There was now a dead silence, during the greater part of which, neither dared to look at the other; at length each hazarded a glance; their eyes met, and their embarrassment deepened in a tenfold degree. Una, on withdrawing her gaze, looked with an air of perplexity from one object to another, and at length, with downcast lids, and glowing cheeks, her eyes became fixed on her own white and delicate finger.

"Who would think," said she, in a voice tremulous with agitation, "that the sting of a bee could be so painful."

Connor advanced towards her with a beating heart. "Where have you been stung, Miss O'Brien?" said he, in a tone shaken out of it's fulness by what he felt.

"In the finger," she replied, and she looked closely into the spot as she uttered the words.

"Will you let me see it?" asked Connor.

She held her hand towards him without knowing what she did, nor was it till after a strong effort that Connor mastered himself so far as to ask her in which finger she felt the pain. In fact, both saw at once that their minds were engaged upon far different thoughts, and that their anxiety to pour out the full confession of their love was equally deep and mutual.

As Connor put the foregoing question to her, he took her hand in his.

"In what finger?" she replied, "I don't—indeed—I—I believe in the—the—but what—what is this?—I am very—very weak."

"Let me support you to the summer-house, where you can sit," returned Connor, still clasping her soft delicate hand in his; then, circling her slender waist with the other, he helped her to a seat under the thick shade of the osiers.

Una's countenance immediately became pale as death, and her whole frame trembled excessively.

"You are too weak even to sit without

support," said Connor, "your head is droopin'. For God's sake, lean it over on me. Oh! I'd give ten thousand lives to have it on my breast only for one moment!"

Her paleness still continued; she gazed on him, and, as he gently squeezed her hand, a slight pressure was given in return. He then drew her head over upon his shoulder, where it rather fell than leaned; a gush of tears came from her eyes, and the next moment, with sobbing hearts, they were encircled in each other's arms.

From this first intoxicating draught of youthful love, they were startled by the voice of Mrs. O'Brien calling upon her daughter, and, at the same time, to their utter dismay, they observed the portly dame sailing, in her usual state, down towards the arbor, with an immense bunch of keys dangling from her side.

"Oonagh, Miss—Miss Oonagh—where are you, Miss, Ma Colleen?—Here's a litther," she proceeded, when Una appeared, "from Mrs. Fogarty, your school-misthress, to your fadher—statin' that she wants you to finish your Jiggraphy at the dancin', wid a new dancin'-teacher from *Dubling*. Why—Eah! what ails you, Miss, Ma Colleen? What the dickens wor you cryin' for?"

"These nasty bees that stung me," returned the girl. "Oh, for goodness sake, mother dear, don't come any farther, except you wish to have a whole hive upon you!"

"Why, sure, they wouldn't sting any one that won't meddle wid them," replied the mother in a kind of alarm.

"The sorra piu they care, mother—don't come near them; I'll be in, by an' by. Where's my father?"

"He's in the house, an' wants you to answer Mrs. Fogarty, statin' feder you'll take a month's larnin' on the *flure* or not."

"Well, I'll see her letter in a minute or two, but you may tell my father he needn't wait—I won't answer it to-night at all events."

"You must answer it on the nail," replied her mother, "becase the messager's waitin' in the kitchen 'ithin."

"That alters the case altogether," returned Una, "and I'll follow you immediately."

The good woman then withdrew, having once more enjoined the daughter to avoid delay, and not to detain the messenger.

"You must go instantly," she said to Connor. "Oh, what would happen me if they knew that I lov——that I—" a short pause ensued, and she blushed deeply.

"Say, what you were goin' to say," returned Connor; "Oh, say *that one word*, and all the misfortunes that ever happened to man, can't make me unhappy! Oh, God! an' is it possible? Say that word—Oh! say it—say it!"

"Well, then," she continued, "if they knew that *I love* the son of Fardorougha Donovan, what would become of me? Now go, for fear my father may come out."

"But when will I see you again?"

"Go," said she anxiously; "go, you can easily see me."

"But when?—when? say on Thursday."

"Not so soon—not so soon," and she cast an anxious eye towards the garden gate.

"When then—say this day week."

"Very well—but go—maybe my father has heard from the servants that you are here."

"Dusk is the best time."

"Yes—yes—about dusk; under the alders, in the little green field behind the garden."

"Show me the wounded finger," said he with a smile, "before I go."

"There," said she, extending her hand; "but for Heaven's sake go."

"I'll tell you how to cure it," said he, tenderly; "honey is the medicine; put that sweet finger to your own sweeter lip—and, afterwards, *I'll* carry home the wound."

"But not the medicine, *now*," said she, and, snatching her hand from his, with light, fearful steps, she fled up the garden and disappeared.

Such, gentle reader, were the circumstances which brought our young and artless lovers together in the black twilight of the singularly awful and ominous evening which we have already described.

Connor, on reaching the appointed spot, sat down; but his impatience soon overcame him; and, while hurrying to and fro, under the alders, he asked himself in what was this wild but rapturous attachment to terminate? That the proud Bodagh, and his prouder wife, would never suffer their beautiful daughter, the heiress of all their wealth, to marry the son of Fardorougha, the miser, was an axiom, the truth of which pressed upon his heart with a deadly weight. On the other hand, would his father, or rather could he, change his nature so far as to establish him in life, provided Una and he were united without the consent of her parents? Alas! he knew his father's parsimony too well; and, on either hand, he was met by difficulties that appeared to him to be insurmountable. But again came the delightful and ecstatic consciousness, that, let their parents act as they might, Una's heart and his were bound to each other by ties which, only to think of, was rapture. In the midst of these reflections, he heard her light foot approach, but with a step more slow and melancholy than he could have expected from the ardor of their love.

When she approached, the twilight was

just sufficient to enable him to perceive that her face was pale, and tinged apparently with melancholy, if not with sorrow. After the first salutations were over, he was proceeding to inquire into the cause of her depression, when, to his utter surprise, she placed her hands upon her face, and burst into a fit of grief.

Those who have loved need not be told that the most delightful office of that delightful passion is to dry the tears of the beloved one who is dear to us beyond all else that life contains. Connor literally performed this office, and inquired, in a tone so soothing and full of sympathy, why she wept, that her tears for a while only flowed the faster. At length her grief abated, and she was able to reply to him.

"You ask me why I am crying," said the fair young creature; "but, indeed, I cannot tell you. There has been a sinking of the heart upon me during the greater part of this day. When I thought of our meeting I was delighted; but again some heaviness would come over me that I can't account for."

"I know what it is," replied Connor, "a very simple thing; merely the terrible calm an' blackness of the evenin'. I was sunk myself a little."

"I ought to cry for a better reason," she returned. "In meeting you I have done—an' am doing—what I ought to be sorry for—that is, a wrong action that my conscience condemns."

"There is nobody perfect, my dear Una," said Connor; "an' none without their failins; they have little to answer for that have no more than you."

"Don't flatter me," she replied; "if you love me as you say, never flatter me while you live; *I* will always speak what I feel, and I hope *you'll* do the same."

"If I could spake what I feel," said he, "you would still say I flattered you—it's not in the power of any words that ever were spoken, to tell how I love you—how much my heart an' soul's fixed upon you. Little you know, my own dear Una, how unhappy I am this minute, to see you in low spirits. What do you think is the occasion of it? Spake now, as you say you will do, that is, as you feel."

"Except it be that *my heart* brought me to meet you t night contrary to *my conscience*, I do not know. Connor, Connor, that heart is so strongly in your favor, that if *you* were not to be happy neither could its poor owner."

Connor for a moment looked into the future, but, like the face of the sky above him, all was either dark or stormy; his heart sank, but the tenderness expressed in Una's last words filled his whole soul with a vehement and burning passion, which he felt must regulate his destiny in life, whether for good or evil. He pulled her to his breast, on which he placed her head; she looked up fondly to him, and, perceiving that he wrought under some deep and powerful struggle, said in a low, confiding voice, whilst the tears once more ran quietly down her cheeks, "Connor, what I said is true."

"My heart's burnin'—my heart's burnin'!" he exclaimed. "It's not love I feel for you, Una—it's more than love; oh, what is it? Una, Una, this I know, that I cannot live long without you, or from you; if I did, I'd go wild or mad through the world. For the last three years you have never been out of my mind, I may say awake or asleep; for I believe a night never passed during that time that I didn't drame of you—of the beautiful young crature. Oh! God in heaven, can it be thrue that she loves me at last? Say them blessed words again, Una; oh, say them again! But I'm too happy—I can hardly bear this delight."

"It is true that I love you, and if our parents could think as we do, Connor, how easy it would be for them to make us happy, but—"

"It's too soon, Una; it's too soon to spake of that. Happy! don't we love one another? Isn't that happiness? Who or what can deprive us of that? We are happy without them; we can be happy in spite of them; oh, my own fair girl! sweet, sweet life of my life, and heart of my heart! Heaven—heaven itself would be no heaven to me, if you weren't with me!"

"Don't say that, Connor dear; it's wrong. Let us not forget what is due to religion, if we expect our love to prosper. You may think this strange from one that has acted contrary to religion in coming to meet you against the will and knowledge of her parents; but beyond that, dear Connor, I hope I never will go. But is it true that you've loved me so long?"

"It is," said he; "the second Sunday in May next was three years, I knelt opposite you at mass. You were on the left hand side of the altar, I was on the right; my eyes were never off you; indeed, you may remember it."

"I have a good right," said she, blushing and hiding her face on his shoulder. "I ought to be ashamed to acknowledge it, an' me so young at the time; little more than sixteen. From that day to this, my story has been just your own. Connor, can you tell me how I found it out, but I *knew* you loved me?"

"Many a thing was to tell you that, Una dear. Sure my eyes were never off you, whenever you wor near me; an' wherever you were, there was I certain to be too. I never missed any public place if I thought you would be at it, an' that merely for the sake of seein' you. An', now will you tell *me* why it was that I could 'a sworn *you* lov'd *me?*"

"You have answered for us both," she replied. "As for me, if I only chance to hear your name mentioned my heart would beat; if the talk was about you I could listen to nothing else, and I often felt the color come and go on my cheek."

"Una, I never thought I could be born to such happiness. Now that I know that you love me, I can hardly think that it was love I felt for you all along; it's wonderful—it's wonderful!"

"What is so wonderful?" she inquired.

"Why, the change that I feel since knowin' that you love me; since I had it from *your own lips*, it has overcome me—I'm a child—I'm anything, anything you choose to make me; it was never love—it's only since I found you loved me that my heart's burnin' as it is."

"I'll make you happy if I can," she replied, "and keep you so, I hope."

"There's one thing that will make me still happier than I am," said Connor.

"What is it? If it's proper and right I'll do it."

"Promise me that if I live you'll never marry any one else than me."

"You wish then to have the promise all on one side," she replied with a smile and a blush, each as sweet as ever captivated a human heart.

"No, no, no, my darling Una, *acushla gra gal machree*, no! I will promise the same to you."

She paused, and a silence of nearly a minute ensued.

"I don't know that it's right, Connor; I have taken one wrong step as it is, but, well as I love you, I won't take another; whatever I do I must feel that it's proper. I'm not sure that this *is*."

"Don't you say you love me, Una?"

"I do; you know I do."

"I have only another question to ask; could you, or would you, love me as you do, and marry another?"

"I could not, Connor, and would not, and will not. I am ready to promise; I may easily do it; for God knows the very thought of marrying another, or being deprived of you, is more than I can bear."

"Well, then," returned her lover, seizing her hand, "I take God to witness that, whilst you are alive an' faithful to me, I will never marry any woman but yourself. Now," he continued, "put your right hand into mine, and say the same words."

She did so, and was in the act of repeating the form, "I take God to witness——" when a vivid flash of lightning shot from the darkness above them, and a peal of thunder almost immediately followed, with an explosion so loud as nearly to stun both. Una started with terror, and instinctively withdrew her hand from Connor's.

"God preserve us!" she exclaimed; "that's awful. Connor, I feel as if the act I am goin' to do is not right. Let us put it off at all events, till another time."

"Is it because there comes an accidental brattle of thunder?" he returned. "Why, the thunder would come if we were never to change a promise. You have mine, now, Una dear, an' I'm sure you wouldn't wish me to be bound an' yourself free. Don't be afraid, darling; give me your hand, an' don't tremble so; repeat the words at wanst, an' let it be over."

He again took her hand, when she repeated the form in a distinct, though feeble voice, observing, when it was concluded,

"Now, Connor, I did this to satisfy you, but I still feel like one who has done a wrong action. I am yours now, but I cannot help praying to God that it may end happily for us both."

"It must, darling Una—it must end happily for us both. How can it be otherwise? For my part, except to see you my wife, I couldn't be happier than I am this minute; exceptin' that, my heart has all it wished for. Is it possible—Oh! is it possible that this is not a dream, my heart's life? But if it is—if it is—I never more will wish to waken."

Her young lover was deeply affected as he uttered these words, nor was Una proof against the emotion they produced.

"I could pray to God, this moment, with a purer heart than I ever had before," he proceeded, "for makin' my lot in life so happy. I feel that I am better and freer from sin than I ever was yet. If we're faithful and true to one another, what can the world do to us?"

"I couldn't be otherwise than faithful to you," she replied, "without being unhappy myself; an' I trust it's no sin to love each other as we do. Now let us——God bless me, what a flash! and here's the rain beginning. That thunder's dreadful; Heaven preserve us! It's an awful night! Connor, you must see me as far as the corner of the garden; as for you, I wish you were safe at home."

"Hasten, dear," said he, "hasten ; it's no night for you to be out in, now that the rain's coming. As for me, if it was ten times as dreadful I won't feel it. There's but one thought—one thought in my mind, and that I wouldn't part with for the wealth of the universe."

Both then proceeded at a quick pace until they reached the corner of Bodagh's garden, where, with brief but earnest reassurances of unalterable attachment, they took a tender and affectionate farewell.

It is not often that the higher ranks can appreciate the moral beauty of love as it is experienced by those humbler classes to whom they deny the power of feeling in its most refined and exalted character. For our parts we differ so much from them in this, that, if we wanted to give an illustration of that passion in its purest and most delicate state, we would not seek for it in the saloon or the drawing-room, but among the green fields and the smiling landscapes of rural life. The simplicity of humble hearts is more accordant with the unity of affection than any mind can be that is distracted by the competition of rival claims upon its gratification. We do not say that the votaries of rank and fashion are insensible to love ; because, how much soever they may be conversant with the artificial and unreal, still they are human, and must, to a certain extent, be influenced by a principle that acts wherever it can find a heart on which to operate. We say, however, that their love, when contrasted with that which is felt by the humble peasantry, is languid and sickly ; neither so pure, nor so simple, nor so intense. Its associations in high life are unfavorable to the growth of a healthy passion ; for what is the glare of a lamp, a twirl through the insipid maze of the ball-room, or the unnatural distortions of the theatre, when compared to the rising of the summer sun, the singing of birds, the music of the streams, the joyous aspect of the varied landscape, the mountain, the valley, the lake, and a thousand other objects, each of which transmits to the peasant's heart silently and imperceptibly that subtle power which at once strengthens and purifies the passion? There is scarcely such a thing as solitude in the upper ranks, nor an opportunity of keeping the feelings unwasted, and the energies of the heart unspent by the many vanities and petty pleasures with which fashion forces a compliance, until the mind falls from its natural dignity, into a habit of coldness and aversion to everything but the circle of empty trifles in which it moves so giddily. But, the enamored youth who can retire to the beautiful solitude of the still glen to brood over the image of her he loves, and who, probably, sits under the very tree where his love was avowed and returned ; he, we say, exalted with the fulness of his happiness, feels his heart go abroad in gladness upon the delighted objects that surround him, for everything that he looks upon is as a friend ; his happy heart expands over the whole landscape ; his eye glances to the sky ; he thinks of the Almighty Being above him, and though without any capacity to analyze his own feelings—love—the love of some humble, plain but modest girl—kindles by degrees into the sanctity and rapture of religion.

Let not our readers of rank, then, if any such may honor our pages with a perusal, be at all surprised at the expression of Connor O'Donovan when, under the ecstatic power of a love so pure and artless as that which bound his heart and Una's together, he exclaimed, as he did, "*Oh! I could pray to God this moment with a purer heart than I ever had before!*" Such a state of feeling among the people is neither rare nor anomalous ; for, however, the great ones and the wise ones of the world may be startled at our assertion, we beg to assure them that love and religion are more nearly related to each other than those, who have never felt either in its truth and purity, can imagine.

As Connor performed his journey home, the thunder tempest passed fearfully through the sky ; and, though the darkness was deep and unbroken by anything but the red flashes of lightning, yet, so strongly absorbed was his heart by the scene we have just related, that he arrived at his father's house scarcely conscious of the roar of elements which surrounded him.

The family had retired to bed when he entered, with the exception of his parents, who, having felt uneasy at his disappearance, were anxiously awaiting his return, and entering into fruitless conjectures concerning the cause of an absence so unusual.

"What," said the alarmed mother, "what in the wide world could keep him so long out, and on sich a tempest as is in it? God protect my boy from all harm an' danger, this fearful night! Oh, Fardorougha, what 'ud become of us if anything happened him? As for me—my heart's wrapped up in him ; without our darlin' it 'ud break, break, Fardorougha."

"Hut ; he's gone to some neighbor's an' can't come out till the storm is over ; he'll soon be here now that the thunder an' lightnin's past."

"But did you never think, Fardorougha, what 'ud become of you, or what you'd do or how you'd live, if anything happened him?

which the Almighty forbid this night and forever! Could you live widout him?"

The old man gazed upon her like one who felt displeasure at having a contingency so painful forced upon his consideration. Without making any reply, however, he looked thoughtfully into the fire for some time, after which he rose up, and, with a querulous and impatient voice, said,

"What's the use of thinkin' about sich things? Lose him! why would I lose him? I couldn't lose him—I'd as soon lose my own life—I'd rather be dead at wanst than lose him."

"God knows your love for him is a quare love, Fardorougha," rejoined the wife; "you wouldn't give him a guinea if it 'ud save his life, or allow him even a few shillings now an' then, for pocket-money, that he might be aquil to other young boys like him."

"No use, no use in that, except to bring him into drink an' other bad habits; a bad way, Honora, of showin' one's love for him. If you had your will you'd spoil him; I'm keepin' whatsomever little shillin's we've scraped together to settle him dacently in life; but, indeed, that's time enough yet; he's too young to marry for some years to come, barrin' he got a fortune."

"Well, one thing, Fardorougha, if ever two people were blessed in a good son, praise be God we are that!"

"We are, Honor, we are; there's not his aquil in the parish—achora machree that he is. When I'm gone he'll know what I've done for him."

"Whin you're gone; why, Saver of arth, sure you wouldn't keep him out of his——husth!——here he is, God be thanked! poor boy he's safe. Oh, thin, *vich no Hoiah*, Connor jewel, were you out undher this terrible night?"

"Connor, avich machree," added the father, "you're lost! My hand to you, if he's worth three hapuns; sthrip an' throw my Cothamore about you, an' draw in to the fire; you're fairly lost."

"I'm worth two lost people yet," said Connor, smiling; "mother, did you ever see a pleasanter night?"

"Pleasant, Connor, darlin'! Oh thin it's you may say so, I'm sure!"

"Father, you're a worthy—only your Cothamore's too scimpt for me. Faith, mother, although you think I'm jokin', the divil a one o' me is; a pleasanter night—a happier night I never spent. Father, you ought to be proud o' me, an' stretch out a bit with the cash; faith, I'm nothin' else than a fine handsome young fellow."

"Be me soul an' he ought to be proud out of you, Connor, whether you're in arnest or not," observed the mother, "an' to stretch out wid the *arrighad* too if you want it."

"Folly on, Connor, folly on! your mother 'll back you, I'll go bail, say what you will; but sure you know all I have must be yours yet, acushla."

Connor now sat down, and his mother stirred up the fire, on which she placed additional fuel. After a little time his manner changed, and a shade of deep gloom fell upon his manly and handsome features. "I don't know," he at length proceeded, "that, as we three are here together, I could do betther than ask your advice upon what has happened to me to-night."

"Why, what has happened you, Connor?" said the mother alarmed; "plase God, no harm, I hope."

"Who else," added the father, "would you be guided by, if not by your mother an' myself?"

"No harm, mother, dear," said Connor in reply to her; "harm! Oh! mother, mother, if you knew it; an' as for what *you* say, father, it's right; what advice but my mother's an' yours ought I to ask?"

"An' God's too," added the mother.

"An' my heart was nevir more *ris* to God than it was', an' is this night," replied their ingenuous boy.

"Well, but what has happened, Connor?" said his father; "if it's anything where our advice can serve you, of coorse we'll advise you for the best."

Connor then, with a glowing heart, made them acquainted with the affection which subsisted between himself and Una O'Brien, and ended by informing them of the vow of marriage which they had that night solemnly pledged to each other.

"You both know her by sight," he added, "an' afther what I've sed, can you blame me for sayin' that I found this a pleasant and a happy night?"

The affectionate mother's eyes filled with tears of pride and delight, on hearing that her handsome son was loved by the beautiful daughter of Bodagh Buie, and she could not help exclaiming, in the enthusiasm of the moment,

"She's a purty girl—the purtiest indeed I ever laid my two livin' eyes upon, and by all accounts as good as she's purty; but I say that, face to face, you're as good, ay, an' as handsome, Fardorougha, as she is. God bless her, any way, an' mark her to grace and happiness, *ma colleen dhas dhun*."

"He's no match for her," said the father, who had listened with an earnest face, and compressed lips, to his son's narrative; "he's no match for her—by four hundred guineas."

Honora, when he uttered the previous part

of his observation, looked upon him with a flash of indignant astonishment; but when he had concluded, her countenance fell back into its original expression. It was evident that, while she, with the feelings of a woman and a mother, instituted a parallel between their personal merits alone, the husband viewed their attachment through that calculating spirit which had regulated his whole life.

"You're thinkin' of her money now," she added; "but remimber, Fardorougha, that it wasn't born wid her. An' I hope, Connor, it's not for her money that you have any *grah* for her?"

"You may swear that, mother; I love her little finger beither than all the money in the king's bank."

"Connor, avich, your mother has made a fool of you, or you wouldn't spake the nonsense you spoke this minute."

"My word to you, father, I'll take all the money I'll get; but what am I to do? Bodagh Buie an' his wife will never consent to allow her to marry me, I can tell you; an' if she marries me without their consent, you both know I have no way of supportin' her, except you, father, assist me."

"That won't be needful, Connor; you may manage them; they won't see her want; she's an *only* daughter; they *couldn't* see her want."

"An' isn't he an *only* son, Fardorougha?" exclaimed the wife. "An' my sowl to happiness but I believe you'd see *him* want."

"Any way," replied her husband, "I'm not for matches against the consint of parents; they're not lucky; or can't you run away wid her, an' thin refuse marryin' her except they come down wid the cash?"

"Oh, father!" exclaimed Connor, "father, father, to become a villain!"

"Connor," said his mother, rising up in a spirit of calm and mournful solemnity, "never heed; go to bed, achora, go to bed."

"Of coorse I'll never heed, mother," he replied; "but I can't help sayin' that, happy as I was awhile agone, my father is sendin' me to bed with a heavy heart. When I asked your advice, father, little I thought it would be to do——but no matter; I'll never be guilty of an act that 'ud disgrace my name."

"No, avillish," said his mother, "you never will; God knows it's as much an' more than you an' other people can do, to keep the name we have in decency."

"It's fine talk," observed Fardorougha, "but what I advise has been done by hundreds that wor married an' happy afterwards; how-an-iver you needn't get into a passion, either of you; I'm not pressin' you, Connor, to it."

"Connor, achree," said his mother, "go to bed, an' instead of the advice you got, ax God's; go, avillish!"

Connor, without making any further observation, sought his sleeping-room, where, having recommended himself to God, in earnest prayer, he lay revolving all that had occurred that night, until the gentle influence of sleep at length drew him into oblivion.

"Now," said his mother to Fardorougha, when Connor had gone, "you must sleep by yourself; for, as for me, my side I'll not stretch on the same bed wid you to-night."

"Very well, I can't help that," said her husband; "all I can say is this, that I'm not able to put sinse or prudence into you or Connor; so, since you won't be guided by me, take your own coorse. Bodagh Buie's very well able to provide for them; an' if he won't do so *before* they marry, why let Connor have nothing to say to her."

"I'll tell you what, Fardorougha, God wouldn't be in heaven, or you'll get a cut heart yet, either through your son or your money; an' that it may not be through my darlin' boy, O, grant, sweet Saver o' the earth, this night! I'm goin' to sleep wid Biddy Casey, an' you'll find a clane nightcap on the rail o' the bed; an', Fardorougha, afore you put it an, kneel down an' pray to God to change your heart—for it wants it—it wants it."

In Ireland the first object of a servant man, after entering the employment of his master, is to put himself upon an amicable footing with his fellow-servants of the other sex. Such a step, besides being natural in itself, is often taken in consequence of the *esprit du corps* which prevails among persons of that class. Bartle Flanagan, although he could not be said to act from any habit previously acquired in service, went to work with all the tact and adroitness of a veteran. The next morning, after having left the barn where he slept, he contrived to throw himself in the way of Biddy Duggan, a girl, who, though vain and simple, was at the same time conscientious and honest. On passing from the barn to the kitchen, he noticed her returning from the well with a pitcher of water in each hand, and as it is considered an act of civil attention for the male servant, if not otherwise employed, to assist the female in small matters of the kind, so did Flanagan, in his best manner and kindest voice, bid her good-morning and offer to carry home the pitcher.

"It's the least I may do," said he, "now that I'm your fellow-servant; but before you go farther, lay down your burden, an' let us chat awhile."

"Indeed," replied Biddy, "it's little we expected ever to see your father's son goin' to earn his bread undher another man's roof."

"Pooh! Biddy! there's greater wondhers in the world than that, woman alive! But tell me—pooh—ay, is there a thousand quarer things—but I say, Biddy, how do you like to live wid this family?"

"Why, troth indeed, only for the withered ould *lepreehaun* himself, divil a dacenter people ever broke bread."

"Yet, isn't it a wondher that the ould fellow is what he is, an' he so full o' money?"

"Troth, there's one thing myself wondhers at more than *that*."

"What, Biddy? let us hear it."

"Why, that *you* could be mane an' shabby enough to come as a sarvint to ate the bread of the man that ruined yees!"

"Biddy," replied Flanagan, "I'm glad you've said it; but do you think that I have so bad a heart as too keep revinge in against an inimy? How could I go to my knees at night, if I—no, Biddy, we must be Christians. Well! let us drop that; so you tell me the mother an' son are kind to you."

"As good-hearted a pair as ever lived."

"Connor, of course, can't but be *very* kind to so good-looking a girl as you are, Biddy," said Bartle, with a knowing smile.

"Very kind! good-looking! ay, indeed, I'm sure o' that, Bartle; behave! an' don't be gettin' an wid any o' your palavers. What 'ud make Connor be kind to the likes of me, that way?"

"I don't see why you oughtn't an' mightn't—you're as good as him, if it goes to that."

"Oh, yis, indeed!"

"Why, you know you'r handsome."

"Handsome," replied the vain girl, tightening her apron-strings, and assuming a sly, coquettish look; "Bartle, go 'an mind your business, and let me bring home my pitchers; it's time the breakwist was down. Sich nonsense!"

"Very well, you're not, thin; you've a bad leg, a bad figure, an' a bad face, an' it would be a terrible thing all out for Connor O'Donovan to fall in cousate wid you."

"Well, about Connor I could tell you something;—me! tut! go to the sarra;—faix, you don't know them that Connor's afther, nor the collogin' they all had about it no longer ago than last night itself. I suppose they thought I was asleep, but it was like the hares, wid my eyes open."

"An' it's a pity, Biddy, ever the same two eyes should be shut. Begad, myself's beginning to feel quare somehow, when I look at them."

A glance of pretended incredulity was given in return, after which she proceeded—

"Bartle, don't be bringin' yourself to the fair wid sich folly. My eyes is jist as God made them; but I can tell you that before a month o' Sundays passes, I wouldn't be surprised if you seen Connor married to—you wouldn't guess!"

"Not I; divil a hap'orth I know about who he's courtin'."

"No less than our great beauty, Bodagh Buie's daughter, Una O'Brien. Now, Bartle, for goodness sake, don't let this cross your lips to a livin' mortal. Sure I heard him tellin' all to the father and mother last night—they're promised to one another. Eh! blessed saints, Bartle, what ails you? you're as white as a sheet. What's wrong? and what did you start for?"

"Nothin'," replied Flanagan, coolly, "but a stitch in my side. I'm subject to that—it pains me very much while it lasts, and laves me face, as you say, the color of dimity; but about Connor, upon my throth, I'm main proud to hear it; she's a party girl, an' besides he'll have a fortune that'll make a man of him. I am, in throth, heart proud to hear it. It's a pity Connor's father isn't as dacent as himself. Arrah, Biddy, where does the ould codger keep his money?"

"Little of it in the house any way—sure, whenever he scrapes a guinea together he's away wid it to the county——county——och, that countryman that keeps the money for the people."

"The treasurer; well, much good may his thrash do him, Biddy, that's the worst I wish him. Come now and I'll lave your pitchers at home, and remember you owe me something for this."

"Good will, I hope."

"*That* for one thing," he replied, as they went along; "but we'll talk more about it when we have time; and I'll thin tell you the truth about what brought me to hire wid Fardorougha Donovan."

Having thus excited that most active principle called female curiosity, both entered the kitchen, where they found Connor and his mother in close and apparently confidential conversation—Fardorougha himself having as usual been abroad upon his farm for upwards of an hour before any of them had risen.

The feelings with which they met that morning at breakfast may be easily understood by our readers without much assistance of ours. On the part of Fardorougha there was a narrow, selfish sense of exultation, if not triumph, at the chance that lay before his son of being able to settle himself independently in life, without the necessity of making any demand upon the hundreds which lay so safely in the keeping of the

County Treasurer. His sordid soul was too deeply imbued with the love of money to perceive that what he had hitherto looked upon as a proof of parental affection and foresight, was nothing more than a fallacy by which he was led day after day farther into his prevailing vice. In other words, now that love for his son, and the hope of seeing him occupy a respectable station in society, ought to have justified the reasoning by which he had suffered himself to be guided, it was apparent that the prudence which he had still considered to be his duty as a kind parent, was nothing else than a mask for his own avarice. The idea, therefore, of seeing Connor settled without any aid from himself, filled his whole soul with a wild, hard satisfaction, which gave him as much delight as perhaps he was capable of enjoying. The advice offered to his son on the preceding night appeared to him a matter so reasonable in itself, and the opportunity offered by Una's attachment so well adapted for making it an instrument to work upon the affections of her parents, that he could not for the life of him perceive why they should entertain any rational objection against it.

The warm-hearted mother participated so largely in all that affected the happiness of her son, that, if we allow for the difference of sex and position, we might describe their feelings as bearing, in the character of their simple and vivid enjoyment, a very remarkable resemblance. This amiable woman's affection for Connor was reflected upon Una O'Brien, whom she now most tenderly loved, not because the fair girl was beautiful, but because she had plighted her troth to that son who had been during his whole life her own solace and delight.

No sooner was the morning meal concluded, and the servants engaged at their respective employments, than Honor, acting probably under Connor's suggestion, resolved at once to ascertain whether her husband could so far overcome his parsimony as to establish their son and Una in life; that is, in the event of Una's parents opposing their marriage, and declining to render them any assistance. With this object in view, she told him, as he was throwing his great-coat over his shoulders, in order to proceed to the fields, that she wished to speak to him upon a matter of deep importance.

"What is it?" said Fardorougha, with a hesitating shrug, "what is it? This is ever an' always the way when you want *money;* but I tell you I have no money. You wor born to waste and extravagance, Honor, an' there's no curin' you. What is it you want? an' let me go about my business."

"Throw that ould threadbare Cothamore off o' you," replied Honor, "and beg of God to give you grace to sit down, an' have common feeling and common sense."

"If it's money to get does either for yourself or Connor, there's no use in it. I needn't sit; you don't want a stitch, either of you."

Honor, without more ado, seized the coat, and, flinging it aside, pushed him over to a seat on which she forced him to sit down.

"As heaven's above me," she exclaimed, "I dunna what'll come over you at all, at all. Your money, your thrash, your dirt an' filth, ever, ever, an' for evermore in your thought, heart and sowl. Oh, Chierna! to think of it, an' you know there is a God above you, an' that you must meet Him, an' that *widout* your money too!"

"Ay, ay, the money's what you want to come at; but I'll not sit here to be heethor'd. What is it, I say again, you want?"

"Fardorougha ahagur," continued the wife, checking herself, and addressing him in a kind and affectionate voice, "maybe I *was* spakin' too harsh to you, but sure it was an' is for your own good. How an' ever, I'll thry kindness, and if you have a heart at all, you can't but show it when you hear what I'm goin' to say."

"Well, well, go an," replied the pertinacious husband; "but—money—ay, ay, is there. I feel, by the way you're comin' about me, that there is money at the bottom of it."

The wife raised her hands and eyes to heaven, shook her head, and after a slight pause, in which she appeared to consider her appeal a hopeless one, she at length went on in an earnest but subdued and desponding spirit—

"Fardorougha, the time's now come that will show the world whether you love Connor or not."

"I don't care a pin about the world; you an' Connor know well enough that I love him."

"Love for one's child doesn't come out merely in words, Fardorougha; actin' for their benefit shows it better than spakin'. Don't you grant that?"

"Very well, may be I do, and again may be I don't; there's times when the one's better than the other; but go an; may be I do grant it."

"Now tell me where in this parish, ay, or in the next five parishes to it, you'd find sich a boy for a father or mother to be proud out of, as Connor, your own darlin' as you often call him?"

"Divil a one, Honor; *damnho* to the one; I won't differ wid you in *that*."

"You won't differ wid me! the divil thank you for that. You won't indeed! but *could* you, I say, if you wor willin'?"

"I tell you I could *not*."

"Now there's sinse an' kindness in that. Very well, you say you're gatherin' up all the money you can *for him*."

"For him—*him*," exclaimed the unconscious miser, "why, what do you mane—for—well—ay—yes, yes, I did say for him; it's for *him* I'm keeping it—it *is*, I tell you."

"Now, Fardorougha, you know he's ould enough to be settled in life on his own account, an' you *heard* last night the girl he can get, if you stand to him, as he ought to expect from a father that lóves him."

"Why, last night, thin, didn't I give my—"

"Whist, ahagur! hould your tongue awhile, and let me go on. Thruth's best—he dotes on that girl to sueh a degree, that if he doesn't get her, he'll never see another happy day while he's alive."

"All *feasthalagh*, Honor—that won't pass wid me; I know otherwise myself. Do you think that if I hadn't got *you*, I'd been unhappy four-an'-twenty hours, let alone my whole life? I tell you that's *feasthalagh*, an' won't pass. He wouldn't eat an ounce the less if he was never to get her. You seen the breakfast he made this mornin'; I didn't begrudge it to *him*, but may I never stir if that Flanagan wouldn't ate a horse behind the saddle; he has a stomach that'd require a king's ransom to keep it."

"You know nothing of what I'm spakin' about," replied his wife. "I wasn't *Una dhas dhun* O'Brien in my best days; an' be the vestment, you warn't Connor, that has more feelin', an' spirit, an' generosity in the nail of his little finger than ever you had in your whole carcass. I tell you if he doesn't get married to that girl he'll break his heart. Now how can he marry her except you take a good farm for him, and stock it dacently, so that he may have a home sich as she desarves to bring her to?"

"How do you know but they'll give her a fortune when they find her bent on him?"

"Why, it's not unpossible," said the wife, immediately changing her tactics, "it's not unpossible, but I can tell you it's very unlikely."

"The best way, then, in my opinion, 'ud be to spake to Connor about breaking it to the family."

"Why, that's fair enough," said the wife. "I wondher myself I didn't think of it, but the time was so short since last night."

"It is short," replied the miser, "far an' away too short to expect any one to make up their mind about it. Let them not be rash themselves aither, for I tell you that when people marry in haste, they're apt to have time enough to repint at laysure."

"Well, but Fardorougha acushla, now hear me, throth it's thruth and sinse what you say; but still, avourneen, listen; now set in case that the Bodagh and his wife don't consint to their marriage, or to do anything for them, won't you take them a farm and stock it bravely? Think of poor Connor, the darlin' fine fellow that he is. Oh, thin, Saver above, but it's he id go to the well o' the world's end to ase you, if your little finger only ached. He would, or for myself, and yet his own father to trate him wid sich—"

It was in vain she attempted to proceed; the subject was one in which her heart felt too deep an interest to be discussed without tears. A brief silence ensued, during which Fardorougha moved uneasily on his seat, took the tongs, and mechanically mended the fire, and, peering at his wife with a countenance twitched as if by *tic douloureux*, stared round the house with a kind of stupid wonder, rose up, then sat instantly down, and in fact exhibited many of those unintelligible and uncouth movements, which, in persons of his east, may be properly termed the hieroglyphics of human action, under feelings that cannot be deciphered either by those on whom they operate, or by those who witness them.

"Yes," said he, "Connor is all you say, an' more—an' more—an'—an'—a rash act is the worst thing he could do. It's betther, Honor, to spake to him as I sed, about lettin' the matther be known to Una's family out of hand."

"And thin, if they refuse, you can show them a ginerous example, by puttin' them into a dacent farm. Will you promise me that, Fardorougha? If you do, all's right, for they're not livin' that ever knew you to break your word or your promise."

"I'll make no promise, Honor; I'll make no promise; but let the other plan be tried first. Now don't be pressin' me; he is a noble boy, and would, as you say, thravel round the earth to keep my little finger from pain; but let me alone about it now—let me alone about it."

This, though slight encouragement, was still, in Honor's opinion, quite as much as, if not more, than she expected. Without pressing him, therefore, too strongly at that moment, she contented herself with a full-length portrait of their son, drawn with all the skill of a mother who knew, if her husband's heart could be touched at all, those points at which she stood the greatest chance of finding it accessible.

For a few days after this the subject of Connor's love was permitted to lie undebated, in the earnest hope that Fardorougha's heart might have caught some slight spark of natu-

ral affection from the conversation which had taken place between him and Honor. They waited, consequently, with patience for some manifestation on his part of a better feeling, and flattered themselves that his silence proceeded from the struggle which they knew a man of his disposition must necessarily feel in working up his mind to any act requiring him to part with that which he loved better than life, his money. The ardent temperament of Connor, however, could ill brook the pulseless indifference of the old man; with much difficulty, therefore, was he induced to wait a whole week for the issue, though sustained by the mother's assurance, that, in consequence of the impression left on her by their last conversation, she was certain the father, if not urged beyond his wish, would declare himself willing to provide for them. A week, however, elapsed, and Fardorougha moved on in the same hard and insensible spirit which was usual to him, wholly engrossed by money, and never, either directly or indirectly, appearing to remember that the happiness and welfare of his son were at stake, or depending upon the determination to which he might come.

Another half week passed, during which Connor had made two unsuccessful attempts to see Una, in order that some fixed plan of intercourse might be established between them, at least until his father's ultimate resolution on the subject proposed to him should be known. He now felt deeply distressed, and regretted that the ardor of his attachment had so far borne him away during their last meeting, that he had forgotten to concert measures with Una for their future interviews.

He had often watched about her father's premises from a little before twilight until the whole family had gone to bed, yet without any chance either of conversing with her, or of letting her know that he was in the neighborhood. He had gone to chapel, too, with the hope of seeing her, or snatching a hasty opportunity of exchanging a word or two, if possible; but to his astonishment she had not attended mass—an omission of duty of which she had not been guilty for the last three years. What, therefore, was to be done? For him to be detected lurking about the Bodagh's house might create suspicion, especially after their interview in the garden, which very probably had, through the officiousness of the servants, been communicated to her parents. In a matter of such difficulty he bethought him of a confidant, and the person to whom the necessity of the case directed him was Bartle Flanagan. Bartle, indeed, ever since he entered into his father's service, had gained rapidly upon Connor's good will, and on one or two occasions well-nigh succeeded in drawing from him a history of the mutual attachment which subsisted between him and Una. His good humor, easy language, and apparent friendship for young O'Donovan, together with his natural readiness of address, or, if you will, of manner, all marked him out as admirably qualified to act as a confidant in a matter which required the very tact and talent he possessed.

"Poor fellow," thought Connor to himself, "it will make him feel more like one of the family than a servant. If he can think that he's trated as my friend and companion, he may forget that he's ating the bread of the very man that drove him an' his to destruction. Ay, an' if we're married, I'm not sure but I'll have him to give me away too."

This resolution of permitting Flanagan to share his confidence had been come to by Connor upon the day subsequent to that on which he had last tried to see Una. After his return home, disappointment on one hand, and his anxiety concerning his father's liberality on the other, together with the delight arising from the certainty of being beloved, all kept his mind in a tumult, and permitted him to sleep but little. The next day he decided on admitting Bartle to his confidence, and reposing this solemn trust to his integrity. He was lying on his back in the meadow—for they had been ricking the hay from the lapcocks—when that delicious languor which arises from the three greatest provocatives to slumber, want of rest, fatigue, and heat, so utterly overcame him, that, forgetting his love, and all the anxiety arising from it, he fell into a dreamless and profound sleep.

From this state he was aroused after about an hour by the pressure of something sharp and painful against his side, near the region of the heart, and on looking up, he discovered Bartle Flanagan standing over him with a pitchfork in his hand, one end of which was pressed against his breast, as if he had been in the act of driving it forward into his body. His face was pale, his dark brows frightfully contracted, and his teeth apparently set together, as if working under some fearful determination. When Connor awoke, Flanagan broke out into a laugh that no language could describe. The character of mirth which he wished to throw into his face, jarred so terrificaliy with its demoniacal expression when first seen by Connor, that, even unsuspecting as he was, he started up with alarm, and asked Flanagan what was the matter. Flanagan, however, laughed on—peal after peal succeeded—he tossed the pitchfork aside, and, clapping both his hands upon his face, continued the paroxysms until he recovered his composure.

"Oh," said he, "I'm sick, I'm as wake as a child wid laughin'; but, Lord bless us, after all, Connor, what is a man's life worth whin he has an enemy near him? There was I, ticklin' you wid the pitchfork, strivin' to waken you, and one inch of it would have baked your bread for life. Didn't you feel me, Connor?"

"Divil a bit, till the minute before I ris."

"Then the divil a purtier jig you ever danced in your life; wait till I show you how your left toe wint."

He accordingly lay down and illustrated the pretended action, after which he burst out into another uncontrollable fit of mirth.

"'Twas just for all the world," said he, "as if I had tied a string to your toe, for you groaned an' grunted, an' went on like I dunna what; but, Connor, what makes you so sleepy to-day as well as on Monday last?"

"That's the very thing," replied the unsuspicious and candid young man, "that I wanted to spake to you about."

"What! about sleepin' in the meadows?"

"Divil a bit o' that, Bartle, not a morsel of sleepin' in the meadows is consarned in what I'm goin' to mintion to you. Bartle, didn't you tell me, the day you hired wid my father, that you wor in love?"

"I did, Connor, I did."

"Well, so am I; but do you know who I'm in love with?"

"How the divil, man, could I?"

"Well, no swearin', Bartle; keep the commandments, my boy. I'll tell you in the mane time, an' that's more than you did me, you close-mouth-is-a-sign-of-a-wise-head spalpeen!"

"Did you ever hear tell of one *Colleen dhas dhun*, as she's called, known by the name of Una or Oona O'Brien, daughter to one Bodagh Buie O'Brien, the richest man, barrin' a born gintleman, in the three parishes?"

"All very fair, Connor, for you or any one else to be in love wid her—ay, man alive, for myself, if it goes to that—but, *but*, Connor, avouchal, are you sure that iver you'll bring her to be in love wid you?"

"Bartle," said Connor, seriously, and after a sudden change in his whole manner, "in this business I'm goin' to trate you as a friend, and a brother. She loves me, Bartle, and a solemn promise of marriage has passed between us."

"Connor," said Bartle, "it's wondherful, it's wondherful! you couldn't believe what a fool I am—fool! no, but a faint-hearted, cowardly villain."

"What do you mane, Bartle? what the dickens are you drivin' at!"

"Driven at! whenever I happen to have an opportunity of makin' a drive that id—hut! I'm talkin' balderdash. Do you see here, Connor," said he, putting his hand to his neck, "do you see here?"

"To be sure I do. Well, what about *there?*"

"Be my sowl, I'm very careful of—hut!—sure I may as well tell you the whole truth—I sed I was in love; well, man, that was thrue, an'," he added in a low, pithy whisper, "I was near—no, Connor, I won't but go an; it's enough for you to know that I was an' am in love, an' that it'll go hard wid me if ever *any one else* is married to the girl *I'm* in love wid. Now that my business is past, let me hear yours, poor fellow, an' I'm devilish glad to know, Connor, that—that—why, tunder an' ouns, that you're not as I am. Be the crass that saved us, Connor, I'm glad of that!"

"Why, love will set you mad, Bartle, if you don't take care of yourself; an', faith, I dunna but it may do the same with myself, if I'm disappointed. However, the truth is, you must sarve me in this business. I struv to see her twiste, but couldn't, an' I'm afraid of bein' seen spyin' about their place."

"The truth is, Connor, you want to make me a go-between—a blackfoot; very well, I'll do that same on your account, an' do it well, too, I hope."

It was then arranged that Flanagan, who was personally known to some of the Bodagh's servants, should avail himself of that circumstance, and contrive to gain an interview with Una, in order to convey her a letter from O'Donovan. He was further enjoined by no means to commit it to the hands of any person save those of Una herself, and, in the event of his not being able to see her, then the letter was to be returned to Connor. If he succeeded, however, in delivering it, he was to await an answer, provided she found an opportunity of sending one; if not, she was to inform Connor, through Flanagan, at what time and place he could see her. This arrangement having been made, Connor immediately wrote the letter, and, after having despatched Flanagan upon his errand, set himself to perform, by his individual labor, the task which his father had portioned out for both. Ere Bartle's return, Fardorougha came to inspect their progress in the meadow, and, on finding that the servant was absent, he inquired sharply into the cause of it.

"He's gone on a message for me," replied Connor, with the utmost frankness.

"But that's a bad way for him to mind his business," said the father.

"I'll have the task that you set both of us finished," replied the son, "so that you'll lose nothin' by his absence, at all events."

"It's wrong, Connor, it's wrong; where did you sind him to?"

"To Bodagh Buie's wid a letter to Una."

"It's a waste of time, an' a loss of work; about that business I have something to say to your mother an' you to-night, afther the supper, when the rest goes to bed."

"I hope, father, you'll do the dacent thing still."

"No; but I hope, son, you'll do the wise thing still; how-an-ever let me alone now; if you expect me to do anything, you mustn't drive me as your mother does. To-night we'll make up a plan that'll outdo Bodagh Buie. Before you come home, Connor, throw a stone or two in that gap, to prevent the cows from gettin' into the hay; it won't cost you much throuble. But, Connor, did you ever see sich a gut as Bartle has? He'll brake me out o'house an' home feedin' him; he has a stomach for ten-penny-nails; be my word it 'ud be a charity to give him a dose of oak bark to make him dacent; he's a divil at aitin', an' little good may it do him!"

The hour of supper arrived without Bartle's returning, and Connor's impatience began to overcome him, when Fardorougha, for the first time, introduced the subject which lay nearest his son's heart.

"Connor," he began, "I've been thinkin' of this affair with Una O'Brien; an' in my opinion there's but one way out of it; but if you're a fool an' stand in your own light, it's not my fault."

"What is the way, father?" inquired Connor.

"The very same I tould your mother an' you before – run away wid her—I mane make a runaway match of it—then refuse to marry her unless they come down wid the money. You know afther runnin' away wid *you* nobody else ever would marry *her;* so that rather than see their child disgraced, never fear but they'll pay down on the nail, or maybe bring you both to live wid 'em."

"My sowl to glory, Fardorougha," said the wife, "but you're a bigger an' cunninner ould rogue than I ever took you for! By the scapular upon me, if I had known how you'd turn out, the sorra carry the ring ever you'd put on *my* finger!"

"Father," said Connor, "I must be disobedient to you in this at all events. It's plain you'll do nothing for us; so there's no use in sayin' anything more about it. I have no manes of supportin' her, an' I swear I'll never bring her to poverty. If I had money to carry me, I'd go to America an' thry my fortune there; but I have not. Father, it's too hard that you should stand in my way when you could so easily make me happy. Who have you sich a right to assist as your son—your only son, an' your only child too?"

This was spoken in a tone of respect and sorrow at once impressive and affectionate. His fine features were touched with something beyond sadness or regret, and, as the tears stood in his eyes, it was easy to see that he felt much more deeply for his father's want of principle than for anything connected with his own hopes and prospects. In fact, the tears that rolled silently down his cheeks were the tears of shame and sorrow for a parent who could thus school him to an act of such unparalleled baseness. As it was, the genius of the miser felt rebuked by the natural delicacy and honor of his son; the old man therefore shrunk back abashed, confused, and moved at the words which he had heard—simple and inoffensive though they were.

"Fardorougha," said the wife, wiping her eyes, that were kindling into indignation, "we're now married goin' an—"

"I think, mother," said Connor, "the less we say about it now the better—with my own good will I'll never speak on the subject."

"You're right, avourneen," replied the mother; "you're right; I'll say nothing—God sees it's no use."

"What would you have me do?" said the old man, rising and walking about in unusual distress and agitation; "you don't know me—I can't do it—*I can't* do it. You say, Honor, I don't care about him—I'd give him my blood—I'd give him my blood to save a hair of his head. My life an' happiness depinds on him; but who knows how he an' his wife might mismanage that money if they got it—both young an' foolish? It wasn't for nothing it came into my mind what I'm afeard will happen to me yet."

"And what was that, Fardorougha?" asked the wife.

"Sich foreknowledge doesn't come for nothing, Honor. I've had it an' felt it hangin' over me this many a long day, that I'd come to starvation yit; an' I see, that if you force me to do as you wish, that it 'ill happen. I'm as sure of it as that I stand before you. I'm an unfortunate man wid sich a fate before me; an' yet I'd shed my blood for my boy—I would, an' he ought to know that I would; but he wouldn't ax me to starve for him—would you, Connor, avick machree, would you ax your father to starve? I'm unhappy—unhappy—an' my heart's breakin'!"

The old man's voice failed him as he uttered the last words; for the conflict which he felt evidently convulsed his whole frame. He wiped his eyes, and, again sitting down, he wept bitterly and in silence, for many minutes.

A look of surprise, compassion, and deep distress passed between Connor and his mother. The latter also was very much affected, and said,

"Fardorougha, dear, maybe I spake sometimes too cross to you; but if I do, God above knows it's not that I bear you ill will, but bekase I'm troubled about poor Connor. But I hope I won't spake angry to you again; at all events, if I do, remimber it's only the mother pladin' for her son—the only son an' child that God was plazed to sind her."

"Father," added Connor, also deeply moved, "don't distress yourself about me—don't, father dear. Let things take their chance; but come or go what will, any good fortune that might happen me wouldn't be sweet if it came by givin' you a sore heart."

At this moment the barking of the dog gave notice of approaching footsteps; and in a few moments the careless whistle of Bartle Flanagan was heard within a few yards of the door.

"This is Bartle," said Connor; "maybe, father, his answer may throw some light upon the business. At any rate, there's no secret in it; we'll all hear what news he brings us."

He had scarcely concluded when the latch was lifted, but Bartle could not enter.

"It's locked and bolted," said Fardorougha; "as he sleeps in the barn I forgot that he was to come in here any more to-night—open it, Connor."

"For the sake of all the money you keep in the house, father," said Connor, smiling, "it's hardly worth your while to be so timorous; but God help the county treasurer if *he* forgot to bar his door—Asy, Bartle, I'm openin' it."

Flanagan immediately entered, and, with all the importance of a confidant, took his seat at the fire.

"Well, Bartle," said Connor, "what news?"

"Let the boy get his supper first," said Honor; "Bartle, you must be starved wid hunger."

"Faith, I'm middlin' well, I thank you, that same way," replied Bartle; "divil a one o' me but's as ripe for my supper as a July cherry; an' wid the blessin' o' Heaven upon my endayvors I'll soon show you what good execution is."

A deep groan from Fardorougha gave back a fearful echo to the truth of this formidable annunciation.

"Aren't you well, Fardorougha?" asked Bartle.

"Throth I'm not, Bartle; never was more uncomfortable in my life."

Flanagan immediately commenced his supper, which consisted of flummery and new milk—a luxury among the lower ranks which might create envy in an epicure. As he advanced in the work of destruction, the gray eye of Fardorougha, which followed every spoonful that entered his mouth, scintillated like that of a cat when rubbed down the back, though from a directly opposite feeling. He turned and twisted on the chair, and looked from his wife to his son, then turned up his eyes, and appeared to feel as if a dagger entered his heart with every additional dig of Bartle's spoon into the flummery. The son and wife smiled at each other; for they could enjoy those petty sufferings of Fardorougha with a great deal of good-humor.

"Bartle," said Connor, "what's the news?"

"Divil a word worth telling; at laste that I can hear."

"I mane from Bodagh Buie's."

Bartle stared at him; "Bodagh Buie's!—what do I know about Bodagh Buie? are you ravin'?"

"Bartle," said Connor, smiling, "my father and mother knows all about it—an' about your going to Una with the letter. I have no secrets from them."

"Hoot toot! That's a horse of another color; but you wouldn't have me, widout knowin' as much, to go to betray trust. In the mane time, I may as well finish my supper before I begin to tell you what-som-ever I happen to know about it."

Another deep groan from Fardorougha followed the last observation.

At length the work of demolition ceased, and after Honor had put past the empty dish, Bartle, having wiped his mouth, and uttered a hiccup or two, thus commenced to dole out his intelligence:—

"Whin I went to the Bodagh's," said Bartle, "it was wid great schamin' an' throuble I got a sight of Miss Una at all, in regard of —(hiccup)—in regard of her not knowin' that there was any sich message for her—(hiccup). But happenin' to know Sally Laffan, I made bould to go into the kitchen to ax, you know, how was her aunt's family up in Skelgy, when who should I find before me in it but Sally an' Miss Una—(hiccup). (Saver of earth this night! *from Fardorougha.*) Of coorse I shook hands wid her—wid Sally, I mane; an', 'Sally,' says I, 'I was sent in wid a message from the masther to you; he's in the haggard an' wants you.' So, begad, on—(hiccup) out she goes, an' the coast bein' clear, 'Miss Una,' says I, 'here's a scrap of a letther from Misther Connor O'Donovan; read it, and if you can write him an answer, do; if you

haven't time say whatever you have to say by me.' She go—(hiccup) she got all colors when I handed it to her; an' run away, sayin' to me, 'wait for a while, an' don't go till I see you.' In a minute or two Sally comes in agin as mad as the dickens wid me, 'The curse o' the crows an' you!' says she, 'why did you make me run a fool's erran' for no rason? The masther wasn't in the haggard, an' didn't want me good or bad.'"

"Bartle," said the impatient lover, "pass all that over for the present, an' let us know the answer, if she sent any."

"Sent any! be my sowl, she did so! After readin' your letther, an' findin' that she could depind on *me*, she said that for fear of any remarks bein' made about my waitin', espishally as I live at present in this family, it would be better she thought to answer it by word o' mouth. 'Tell him,' said she, 'that I didn't think he wa—(hiccup) (Queen o' heaven!) was so dull an' ignorant o' the customs of the country, as not to know that whin young people want to see one another they stay away from mass wid an expectation that'—begad, I disremimber exactly her own words; but it was as much as to say that she staid at home on last Sunday expectin' to see you."

"Well, but Bartle, what else?—short an' sweet, man."

"Why, she'll meet you on next Thursday night, God willin', in the same place; an' whin I axed her where, she said you knew it yourself."

"An' is that all?"

"No, it's not all; she sed it 'ud be better to mention the thing to her father. Afther thinkin' it over she says, 'as your father has the na—(hiccup) (Saints above!) the name of being so rich, she doesn't know if a friend 'ud interfere but his consint might be got;' an' that's all I have to say about it, barrin' that she's a very purty girl, an' I'd advise you not to be *too sure of her yet*, Bartle. So now I'm for the barn—Good night, Far—(hiccup) (at my cost, you do it!) Fardorougha."

He rose and proceeded to his sleeping-place in the barn, whither Connor, who was struck by his manner, accompanied him.

"Bartle," said O'Donovan, "did you take anything since I saw you last?"

"Only a share of two naggins wid my brother Antony at Peggy Finigan's."

"I noticed it upon you," observed Connor; "but I don't think they did."

"An' if they did, too, it's not high thrason, I hope."

"No; but, Bartle, I'm obliged to you. You've acted as a friend to me, an' I won't forget it to you."

"An' I'm so much obliged to you, Connor, that I'll remimber your employin' me in this the longest day I have to live. But, Connor?"

"Well, Bartle."

"I'd take the sacrament, that, after all, a ring you'll never put on her."

"And what makes you think so, Bartle?"

"I don't—I do—(hiccup) don't know; but somehow something or another tells it to me that you won't; others is fond of her, I suppose, as well as yourself; and of coorse they'll stand betune you."

"Ay, but I'm sure of her."

"But you're not; wait till I see you man and wife, an' thin I'll say so. Here's myself, Bartle, is in love, an' dhough I don't expect ever the girl will or would marry me, be the crass of heaven, no other man will have her. Now, how do you know but you may have some one like me—like me, Connor, to stand against you?"

"Bartle," said Connor, laughing, "your head's a little moidher'd; give me your hand; whish! the devil take you, man! don't wring my fingers off. Say your prayers, Bartle, an' go to sleep. I say agin I won't forget your kindness to me this night."

Flanagan had now deposited himself upon his straw bed, and, after having tugged the bedclothes about him, said, in the relaxed, indolent voice of a man about to sleep,

"Good night, Connor; throth my head's a little soft to-night—good night."

"Good night, Bartle."

"Connor?"

"Well?"

"Didn't I stand to you to-night? Very well—goo—(hiccup) good night."

On Connor's return, a serious conclave was held upon the best mode of procedure in a manner which presented difficulties that appeared to be insurmountable. The father, seizing upon the advice transmitted by Una herself, as that which he had already suggested, insisted that the most judicious course was to propose for her openly, and without appearing to feel that there was any inferiority on the part of Connor.

"If they talk about wealth, Connor," said he, "say that you are my son, an' that—that—no—no—I'm too poor for such a boast, but say that you will be able to take good care of anything you get."

At this moment the door, which Connor had not bolted, as his father would have done, opened, and Bartle, wrapped in the treble folds of a winnow-cloth, made a distant appearance.

"Beg pardon, Connor; I forgot to say that Una's brother, the young priest out o' Maynooth, will be at home from his uncle's, where it appears he is at present; an' Miss

Una would wish that the proposal 'ud be made while *he's* at his father's. She says he'll stand her friend, come or go what will. I forgot, begad, to mintion it before—so beg pardon, an' wishes you all good-night!"

This information tended to confirm them in the course recommended by Fardorougha. It was accordingly resolved upon that he (Fardorougha) himself should wait upon Bodagh Buie, and in the name of his son formally propose for the hand of his daughter.

To effect this, however, was a matter of no ordinary difficulty, as they apprehended that the Bodagh and his wife would recoil with indignation at the bare notion of even condescending to discuss a topic which, in all probability, they would consider as an insult. Not, after all, that there existed, according to the opinion of their neighbors, such a vast disparity in the wealth of each; on the contrary, many were heard to assert, that of the two Fardorougha had the heavier purse. His character, however, was held in such abhorrence by all who knew him, and he ranked, in point of personal respectability and style of living, so far beneath the Bodagh, that we question if any ordinary occurrence could be supposed to fall upon the people with greater amazement than a marriage, or the report of a marriage, between any member of the two families. The O'Donovans felt, however, that it was better to make the experiment already agreed on, than longer to remain in a state of uncertainty about it. Should it fail, the position of the lovers, though perhaps rendered somewhat less secure, would be such as to suggest, so far as they themselves were concerned, the necessity of a more prompt and effectual course of action. Fardorougha expressed his intention of opening the matter on the following day; but his wife, with a better knowledge of female character, deemed it more judicious to defer it until after the interview which was to take place between Connor and Una on the succeeding Thursday. It might be better, for instance, to make the proposal first to Mrs. O'Brien herself, or, on the other hand, to the Bodagh; but touching that and other matters relating to what was proposed to be done, Una's opinion and advice might be necessary.

Little passed, therefore, worthy of note, during the intermediate time, except a short conversation between Bartle and Connor on the following day, as they returned to the field from dinner.

"Bartle," said the other, "you wor a little soft last night; or rather a good deal so."

"Faith, no doubt o' that—but when a man meets an old acquaintance or two, they don't like to refuse a thrate. I fell in wid three or four *boys*—all friends o' mine, an' we had a sup on account o' what's expected."

As he uttered these words, he looked at Connor with an eye which seemed to say—you are not in a certain secret with which I am acquainted.

"Why," replied Connor, "what do you mane, Bartle? I thought you were with your brother—at laste you tould me so."

Flanagan started on hearing this.

"Wid my brother," said he—"why, I—I—what else could I tell you? He was along wid the boys when I met them."

"Took a sup on account o' what's expected!—an' what's the manin'o' that, Bartle?"

"Why, what would it mane—but—but—your marriage?"

"An' thunder an' fury?" exclaimed Connor, his eyes gleaming; "did you go to betray trust, an' mintion Una's name an' mine, afther what I tould you?"

"Don't be foolish, Connor," replied Flanagan; "is it mad you'd have me to be? I said there was something expected soon, that 'ud surprise them; and when they axed me what it was—honor bright! I gave them a knowin' wink, but said nothin'. Eh! was that breakin' trust? Arrah, be me sowl, Connor, you don't trate me well by the words you spoke this blessed minute."

"An' how does it come, Bartle, my boy, that you had one story last night, an' another to-day?"

"Faix, very aisily, bekase I forget what I sed last night—for sure enough I was more *cut* than you thought—but didn't I keep it well in before the ould couple?"

"You did fairly enough; I grant that—but the moment you got into the barn a blind man could see it."

"Bekase I didn't care a button wanst I escaped from the eye of your father; anyhow, bad luck to it for whiskey; I have a murdherin' big heddick all day afther it."

"It's a bad weed, Bartle, and the less a man has to do with it, the less he'll be throubled afther wid a sore head or a sore conscience."

"Connor, divil a one, but you're the moral of a good boy; I dunna a fault you have but one."

"Come, let us hear it."

"I'll tell you some day, but not now, not now—but *I will* tell you—an' I'll let you know the raison thin that I don't mintion it now; in the mane time I'll sit down an' take a smoke."

"A smoke! why, I never knew you smoked."

"Nor I, myself, till last night. This tindher-box I was made a present of to light

my pipe, when not near a coal. Begad, now that I think of it, I suppose it was smokin' that knocked me up so much last night, an' made my head so sick to-day."

"It helped it, I'll engage; if you will take my advice, it's a custom you won't larn."

"I have a good deal to throuble me, Connor; you know I have; an' what we are brought down to now; I have more nor you'd believe to think of; as much, any way, as'll make this box an' steel useful, I hope, when I'm frettin'."

Flanagan spoke truth, in assuring Connor that the apology given for his intoxication on the preceding night had escaped his memory. It was fortunate for him, indeed, that O'Donovan, like all candid and ingenuous persons, was utterly devoid of suspicion, otherwise he might have perceived, by the discrepancy in the two accounts, as well as by Flanagan's confusion, that he was a person in whom it might not be prudent to entrust much confidence.

PART III.

The tryste between Connor and Una was held at the same place and hour as before, and so rapid a progress had love made in each of their hearts, that we question if the warmth of their interview, though tender and innocent, would be apt to escape the censure of our stricter readers. Both were depressed by the prospect that lay before them, for Connor frankly assured her that he feared no earthly circumstances could ever soften his father's heart so far as to be prevailed upon to establish him in life.

"What then can I do, my darling Una? If your father and mother won't consent—as I fear they won't—am I to bring you into the miserable cabin of a day laborer? for to this the son of a man so wealthy as my father is, must sink. No, Una dear, I have sworn never to bring you to poverty, and I will not."

"Connor," she replied somewhat gravely, "I thought you had formed a different opinion of me. You know but little of your own Una's heart, if you think she wouldn't live with you in a cabin a thousand and a thousand times sooner than she would live with any other in a palace. I love you for your own sake, Connor; but it appears you don't think so."

Woman can never bear to have her love undervalued, nor the moral dignity of a passion which can sacrifice all worldly and selfish considerations to its own purity and attachment, unappreciated. When she uttered the last words, therefore, tears of bitter sorrow, mingled with offended pride, came to her aid. She sobbed for some moments, and again went on to reproach him with forming so unfair an estimate of her affection.

"I repeat that I loved you for yourself only, Connor, and think of what *I* would feel, if *you* refused to spend your life in a cottage with me. If I thought you wished to marry me, not because I am Una O'Brien, but the daughter of a wealthy man, my heart would break, and if I thought you were not true-minded, and pure-hearted, and honorable, I would rather be dead than united to you at all."

"I love you so well, and so much, Una, that I doubt I'm not worthy of you—and it's fear of seeing you brought down to daily labor that's crushing and breaking my heart."

"But, dear Connor—what is there done by any cottager's wife that I don't do every day of my life? Do you think my mother lets me pass my time in idleness, or that I myself could bear to be unemployed even if she did; I can milk, make butter, spin, sew, wash, knit, and clean a kitchen; why, you have no notion," she added, with a smile, "what a clever cottager's wife I'd make!"

"Oh, Una," said Connor, now melting into tenderness greater than he had ever before felt; "Una dear, it's useless—it's useless—I can't, no, I couldn't—and I will not live without you, even if we were to beg together—but what is to be done?"

"Now, while my brother John is at home, is the time to propose it to my father and mother, who look upon him with eyes of such affection and delight that I am half-inclined to think their consent may be gained."

"Maybe, darling, his consent will be as hard to gain as their own."

"Now," she replied, fondly, "only you're a hard-hearted thing that's afraid to live in a cottage with me, I could tell you some good news—or rather you doubt me—and fear that I wouldn't live in one with you."

A kiss was the reply, after which he said—

"With you, my dear Una, now that you're satisfied, I would live and die in a prison—with *you*, with *you*—in whatever state of life we may be placed, *with* you, but *without* you—never, I could not—I could not——"

"Well, we are young, you know, and neither of us proud—and I am not a lazy girl—indeed, I am not; but you forget the good news."

"I forget that, and everything else but yourself, darling, while I'm in your company. O heavens! if you were once my

own, and that we were never to be separated!"

"Well, but the good news!"

"What is it, dear?"

"I have mentioned our affection to my brother, and he has promised to assist us. He has heard of your character, and of your mother's, and says that it's unjust to visit upon you——"

She paused—"You know, my dear Connor, that you must not be offended with anything I say."

"I know, my sweet treasure, what you're going to say," replied Connor, with a smile; "nobody need be delicate in saying that my father loves the money, and knows how to put guinea to guinea; that's no secret. I wish he loved it less, to be sure, but it cannot be helped; in the mean time, *ma colleen dhas dhun*—O, how I love them words! God bless your brother! he must have a kind heart, Una dear, and he must love you very much when he promises to assist us."

"He has, and will; but, Connor, why did you send such a disagreeable, forward, and prying person, as your father's servant to bring me your message? I do not like him—he almost stared me out of countenance."

"Poor fellow," said Connor, "I feel a good dale for him, and I think he's an honest, good-hearted boy, and besides, he's in love himself."

"I know he was always a starer, and I say again *I don't* like him."

"But, as the case stands, dear Una, I have no one else to trust to—at all events, he's in our secret, and the best way, if he's not honest, is to keep him in it; at laste, if we put him out of it now, he might be talking to our disadvantage."

"There's truth in that, and we must only trust him with as little of our real secrets as possible; I cannot account for the strong prejudice I feel against him, and have felt for the past two years. He always dressed above his means, and once or twice attempted to speak to me."

"Well, but I know he's in love with some one, for he told me so; poor fellow, I'm bound, my dear Una, to show him any kindness in my power."

After some further conversation, it was once more decided that Fardorougha should, on the next day, see the Bodagh and his wife, in order to ascertain whether their consent could be obtained to the union of our young and anxious lovers. This step, as the reader knows, was every way in accordance with Fardorougha's inclination. Connor himself would have preferred his mother's advocacy to that of a person possessing such a slender hold on their good-will as his other parent. But upon consulting with her, she told him that the fact of the proposal coming from Fardorougha might imply a disposition on his part to provide for his son. At all events, she hoped that contradiction, the boast of superior wealth, or some fortunate collision of mind and principle, might strike a spark of generous feeling out of her husband's heart, which nothing, she knew, under strong excitement, such as might arise from the bitter pride of the O'Brien's, could possibly do. Besides, as she had no favorable expectations from the interview, she thought it an unnecessary and painful task to subject herself to the insults which she apprehended from the Bodagh's wife, whose pride and importance towered far and high over those of her consequential husband.

This just and sensible view of the matter, on the part of the mother, satisfied Connor, and reconciled him to the father's disinclination to be accompanied by her to the scene of conflict; for, in truth, Fardorougha protested against her assistance with a bitterness which could not easily be accounted for.

"If your mother goes, let her go by herself," said he; "for I'll not interfere in't if she does. I'll take the dirty Bodagh and his fat wife my own way, which I can't do if Honor comes to be snibbin' and makin' little o' me afore them. Maybe I'll pull down their pride for them better than you think, and in a way they're not prepared for; them an' their janting car!"

Neither Connor nor his mother could help being highly amused at the singularity of the miserable pomp and parsimonious display resorted to by Fardorougha, in preparing for this extraordinary mission. Out of an old strongly locked chest he brought forth a *gala* coat, which had been duly aired, but not thrice worn within the last twenty years. The progress of time and fashion had left it so odd, *outre*, and ridiculous, that Connor, though he laughed, could not help feeling depressed on considering the appearance his father must make when dressed, or rather disfigured, in it. Next came a pair of knee-breeches by the same hand, and which, in compliance with the taste of the age that produced them, were made to button so far down as the calf of the leg. Then appeared a waistcoat, whose long pointed flaps reached nearly to the knees. Last of all was produced a hat not more than three inches deep in the crown, and brimmed so narrowly, that a spectator would almost imagine the leaf had been cut off. Having pranked himself out in these habiliments, contrary to the strongest expostulations of both wife and son, he took his staff and set forth. But lest the reader should expect a more accurate description of

his person when dressed, we shall endeavor at all events to present him with a loose outline. In the first place, his head was surmounted with a hat that resembled a flat skillet, wanting the handle; his coat, from which avarice and penury had caused him to shrink away, would have fitted a man twice his size, and, as he had become much stooped, its tail, which, at the best, had been preposterously long, now nearly swept the ground. To look at him behind, in fact, he appeared all body. The flaps of his waistcoat he had pinned up with his own hands, by which piece of exquisite taste, he displayed a pair of thighs so thin and disproportioned to his small-clothes, that he resembled a boy who happens to wear the breeches of a full-grown man, so that to look at him in front he appeared all legs. A pair of shoes, polished with burned straw and buttermilk, and surmounted by two buckles, scoured away to skeletons, completed his costume. In this garb he set out with a crook-headed staff, into which long use, and the habit of griping fast whatever he got in his hand, had actually worn the marks of his forefinger and thumb.

Bodagh Buie, his wife, and their two children, were very luckily assembled in the parlor, when the nondescript figure of the deputy-wooer made his appearance on that part of the neat road which terminated at the gate of the little lawn that fronted the hall-door. Here there was another gate to the right that opened into the farm or kitchen yard, and as Fardorougha hesitated which to enter, the family within had an opportunity of getting a clearer view of his features and person.

"Who is that quare figure standing there?" inquired the Bodagh; "did you ever see sich a——ah, thin, who can he be?"

"Somebody comin', to see some of the sarvints, I suppose," replied his wife; "why, thin, it's not unlike little Dick *Croaitha*, the fairyman."

In sober truth, Fardorougha was so completely disguised by his dress, especially by his hat, whose shallowness and want of brim, gave his face and head so wild and eccentric an appearance, that we question if his own family, had they not seen him dress, could have recognized him! At length he turned into the kitchen-yard, and, addressing a laborer whom he met, asked—

"I say, nabor, which is the right way into Bodagh Buie's house?"

"There's two right ways into it, an' you may take aither o' them—but if you want any favor from him, you had better call him *Mr.* O'Brien. The Bodagh's a name was first given to his father, an' he bein' a dacenter man, doesn't like it, although it sticks to him; so there's a lift for you, my hip-striddled little codger."

"But which is the right door o' the house?"

"There it is, the kitchen—peg in—that's *your* intrance, barrin' you're a gintleman in disguise, an' if be, why turn out again to that other gate, strip off your shoes, and pass up ginteely on your tipytoes, and give a thunderin' whack to the green ring that's hangin' from the door. But see, friend," added the man, "maybe you'd do one a sarvice?"

"How," said Fardorougha, looking earnestly at him; "what is it?"

"Why, to lave us a lock o' your hair before you go," replied the wag, with a grin.

The miser took no notice whatsoever of this, but was turning quietly out of the yard, to enter by the lawn, when the man called out in a commanding voice—

"Back here, you codger!—tundher an' thump!—back I say! *You* won't be let in that way—thramp back, you leprechaun, into the kitchen—eh! you won't—well, well, take what you'll get—an' that'll be the way back agin."

'Twas at this moment that the keen eye of Una recognized the features of her lover's father, and a smile, which she felt it impossible to subdue, settled upon her face, which became immediately mantled with blushes. On hurrying out of the room she plucked her brother's sleeve, who followed her to the hall.

"I can scarcely tell you, dear John," she said, speaking rapidly, "it's Fardorougha O'Donovan, Connor's father; as you know his business, John, stay in the parlor;" she squeezed his hand, and added with a smile on her face, and a tear in her eye, "I fear it's all over with me—I don't know whether to laugh or cry—but stay, John dear, an' fight my battle—Una's battle."

She ran upstairs, and immediately one of the most beggarly, sordid, and pusillanimous knocks that ever spoke of starvation and misery was heard at the door.

"I will answer it myself," thought the amiable brother; "for if my father or mother does, he surely will not be allowed in."

John could scarcely preserve a grave face, when Fardorougha presented himself.

"Is *Misther* O'Brien widin?" inquired the usurer, shrewdly availing himself of the hint he received from the servant.

"My father is," replied John; "have the goodness to step in."

Fardorougha entered immediately, followed by young O'Brien, who said,

"Father, this is Mr. O'Donovan, who, it appears, has some important business with the family."

"Don't be mistherin' *me*," replied Fardorougha, helping himself to a seat; "I'm too poor to be misthered."

"With this family!" exclaimed the father in amazement; "what business can Fardorougha Donovan have with *this* family, John?"

"About our children," replied the miser; "about my son and your daughter."

"An' what about them?" inquired Mrs. O'Brien; "do you dar to mintion them in the same day together?"

"Why not," said the miser; "ay, an' on the same night, too?"

"Upon my reputaytion, Mr. O'Donovan, you're extramely kind—now be a little more so, and let us undherstand you," said the Bodagh.

"Poor Una!" thought John, "all's lost; he will get himself kicked out to a certainty."

"I think it's time we got them married," replied Fardorougha; "the sooner it's done the better, and the safer for both o' them; especially for the *colleen*."

"*Dar a Lorha*, he's cracked," said Mrs. O'Brien; "sorra one o' the poor soul but's cracked about his money."

"Poor sowl, woman alive! wor you never poor yourself?"

"Yis I wor; an' I'm not ashamed to own it; but, *Chierna*, Frank," she added, addressing her husband, "there's no use in spakin' to him."

"Fardorougha," said O'Brien, seriously, "what brought you here?"

"Why, to tell you an' your wife the state that my son, Connor, and your daughter's in about one another; an' to advise you both, if you have sinse, to get them married afore worse happen. It's *your* business more nor *mine*."

"You're right," said the Bodagh, aside to his wife; "he's sartinly deranged. Fardorougha," he added, "have you lost any money lately?"

"I'm losin' every day," said the other; "I'm broke assistin' them that won't thank me, let alone paying me as they ought."

"Then you have lost nothing more than usual?"

"If I didn't, I tell you there's a good chance of losin' it before me;—can a man call any money of his safe that's in another man's pocket?"

"An' so you've come to propose a marriage between your son and my daughter, yet you lost no money, an' you're not mad!"

"Divil a morsel o' me is mad—but you'll be so if you refuse to let this match go an."

"Out wid him—*a shan roghara*," shouted Mrs. O'Brien, in a state of most dignified offence; "*Damho orth*, you ould knave! is it the son of a misert that has fleeced an' robbed the whole counthry side that we 'ud let our daughther, that resaved the finish to her edication in a Dubling boardin' school, marry wid?—*Vic na hoiah* this day!"

"You had no sich scruple yourself, ma'am," replied the bitter usurer, "when you bounced at the son of the onld Bodagh Buie, an' every one knows what *he* was."

"He!" said the good woman; "an' is it runnin' up comparishments betuxt yourself an' him you are afther? Why, Saint Pcter wouldn't thrive on your money, you nager."

"Maybe Saint Pethur thruv on worse—but havn't you thruv as well on the Bodagh's, as if it had been *honestly* come by? I defy you an' the world both—to say that ever I tuck a penny from any one, more than my right. Lay that to the mimory of the ould Bodagh, an' see if it'll fit. It's no *light guinea*, any how."

Had Fardorougha been a man of ordinary standing and character in the country, from whom an insult *could* be taken, he would no doubt have been by a very summary process expelled the parlor. The history of his querulous and irascible temper, however, was so well known, and his offensive eccentricity of manner a matter of such established fact, that the father and son, on glancing at each other, were seized with the same spirit, and both gave way to an uncontrollable fit of laughter.

"Is it a laughin' stock you're makin' of it?" said Mrs. O'Brien, highly indignant.

"Faith, achora, it may be *no* laughin' stock afther all," replied the Bodagh.

"I think, mother," observed John, "that you and my father had better treat the matter with more seriousness. Connor O'Donovan is a young man not to be despised by any person at all near his own class of life who regards the peace and welfare of a daughter. His character stands very high; indeed, in every way unimpeachable."

The bitter scowl which had sat upon the small dark features of Fardorougha, when replying to the last attack of Mrs. O'Brien, passed away as John spoke. The old man turned hastily around, and, surveying the eulogist of his son, said,

"God bless you, asthore, for thim words! and they're thrue—thrue as the gospel, arrah what are you both so proud of? I defy you to get the aquil of my son in the barony of Lisnamona, either for face, figure or temper! I say he's fit to be a husband for as good a girl as ever stood in your daughter's shoes; an' from what I hear of her, she's as good a girl as ever the Almighty put breath in. God bless you, young man! you're a credit yourself to any parents."

"An' we have nothin' to say aginst your son, nor aginst your wife aither," replied the Bodagh; "an' if your own name was as clear—if you wor looked upon as they are—tut, I'm spakin' nonsense! How do I know whether ever your son and my daughter spoke a word to one another or not?"

"I'll go bail Oona never opened her lips to him," said her mother; "I'll go bail she had more spirit."

"An' I'll go bail she can't live widout him, an' will have him whether *you* like it or not," said Fardorougha.

"Mother," observed John, "will you and my father come into the next room for a minute—I wish to say a word or two to each of you; and will you, Fardorougha, have the goodness to sit here till we return?"

"Divil a notion," replied O'Donovan, "I have of stirrin' my foot till the thing's settled one way or other."

"Now," said young O'Brien, when they got into the back parlor, "it's right that you both should know to what length the courtship between Una and Connor O'Donovan has gone."

"Coortship! *Vich no hoiah!* sure she wouldn't go to coort wid the son o' that ould schamer."

"I'm beginning to fear that it's too thrue," observed the Bodagh; "and if she has—but let us hear John."

"It's perfectly true, indeed, mother, that she *has*," said the son. "Yes, and they are both this moment pledged, betrothed, promised, *solemnly* promised to each other; and in my opinion the old man within is acting a more honorable part than either of you give him credit for."

"Well, well, well," exclaimed the mother; "who afther that would ever thrust a daughter? The girl that we rared up as tindher as a chicking, to go to throw herself away upon the son of ould Fardorougha Donovan, the misert! Confusion to the ring ever he'll put an her! I'd see her *stretched* * first."

"I agree with you in that, Bridget," said the husband; "if it was only to punish her thrachery and desate, I'll take good care a ring will never go on them; but how do you know all this, John?"

"From Una's own lips, father."

The Bodagh paced to and fro in much agitation; one hand in his small-clothes pocket, and the other twirling his watch-key as rapidly as he could. The mother, in the meantime, had thrown herself into a chair, and gave way to a violent fit of grief.

"And you have this from Una's own lips?"

"Indeed, father, I have; and it is much to her credit that she was candid enough to place such confidence in her brother."

"Pledged and promised to one another. Bridget, who could believe this?"

"Believe it! I don't believe it—it's only a schame of the hussy to get him. Oh, thin, Queen of Heaven this day, but it's black news to us!"

"John," said the father, "tell Una to come down to us."

"Father, I doubt that's rather a trying task for her. I wish you wouldn't insist."

"Go off, sir; she must come down immediately, I'll have it from her own lips, too."

Without another word of remonstrance the son went to bring her down. When the brother and sister entered the room, O'Brien still paced the floor. He stood, and, turning his eyes upon his daughter with severe displeasure, was about to speak, but he appeared to have lost the power of utterance; and, after one or two ineffectual attempts, the big tears fairly rolled down his cheeks.

"See, see," said the mother, "see what you have brought us to. Is it thrue that you're promised to Fardorougha's son?"

Una tottered over to a chair, and the blood left her cheeks; her lips became dry, and she gasped for breath.

"Why, don't you think it worth your while to answer me?" continued the mother.

The daughter gave a look of deep distress and supplication at her brother; but when she perceived her father in tears, her head sank down upon her bosom.

"What! what! Una," exclaimed the Bodagh, Una——" But ere he could complete the question, the timid creature fell senseless upon the floor.

For a long time she lay in that friendly trance, for such, in truth, it was to a delicate being, subjected to an ordeal so painful as that she was called upon to pass through. We have, indeed, remarked that there is in the young, especially in those of the softer sex, a feeling of terror, and shame, and confusion, when called upon by their parents to disclose a forbidden passion, that renders its avowal perhaps the most formidable task which the young heart can undergo. It is a fearful trial for the youthful, and one which parents ought to conduct with surpassing delicacy and tenderness, unless they wish to drive the ingenuous spirit into the first steps of falsehood and deceit.

"Father," said John, "I think you may rest satisfied with what you witness; and I am sure it cannot make you or mother happy to see poor Una miserable."

Una, who had been during the greater part of her swoon supported in her weeping and alarmed mother's arms, now opened her eyes,

* Dead.

and, after casting an affrighted look about the room, she hid her face in her mother's bosom, and exclaimed, as distinctly as the violence of sobbing grief would permit her:

"Oh, mother dear, have pity on me! bring me up stairs and I will tell *you*."

"I do, I do pity you," said the mother, kissing her; "I know you'll be a good girl yet, Oona."

"Una," said her father, placing his hand gently on her shoulder, "was I ever harsh to you, or did I ——"

"Father dear," she returned, interrupting him, "I would have told you and my mother, but that I was afraid."

There was something so utterly innocent and artless in this reply, that each of the three persons present felt sensibly affected by its extreme and childlike simplicity.

"Don't be afraid of me, Una," continued the Bodagh, "but answer me truly, like a good girl, and I swear upon my reputaytion, that I won't be angry. Do you love the son of this Fardorougha?"

"Not, father, because he's Fardorougha's son," said Una, whose face was still hid in her mother's bosom; "I would rather he wasn't."

"But you *do* love him?"

"For three years he has scarcely been out of my mind."

Something that might be termed a smile crossed the countenance of the Bodagh at this intimation.

"God help you for a foolish child!" said he; "you're a poor counsellor when left to defend your own cause."

"She won't defend it by a falsehood, at all events," observed her trustworthy and affectionate brother.

"No, she wouldn't," said the mother; "and I did her wrong a while ago, to say that she'd schame anything about it."

"And are you and Connor O'Donovan promised to aich other?" inquired the father again.

"But it wasn't *I* that proposed the promise," returned Una.

"Oh, the desperate villain," exclaimed her father, "to be guilty of such a thing! but you took the promise Una—you did—you did—I needn't ask."

"No," replied Una.

"No!" reechoed the father; "then you did not give the promise?"

"I mean," she rejoined, "that you needn't ask."

"Oh, faith, that alters the case extremely. Now, Una, this—all this promising that has passed between you and Connor O'Donovan is all folly. If you prove to be the good obedient girl that I hope you are, you'll put him out of your head, and then you can give back to one another whatever promises you made."

This was succeeded by a silence of more than a minute. Una at length arose, and, with a composed energy of manner, that was evident by her sparkling eye and bloodless cheek, she approached her father, and calmly kneeling down, said slowly but firmly:

"Father, if *nothing else* can satisfy you, *I will* give back my promise; but then, father, it will break my heart, for I know—I feel—how I love him, and how I am loved by him."

"I'll get you a better husband," replied her father—"far more wealthy and more respectable than he is."

"I'll give back the promise," said she; "but the man is not living, except Connor O'Donovan, that will ever call me wife. More wealthy! more respectable!—Oh, it was only *himself* I loved. Father, I'm on my knees before you, and before my mother. I have only one request to make—Oh, don't break your daughter's heart!"

"God direct us," exclaimed her mother; "it's hard to know how to act. If it would go so hard upon her, sure—"

"Amen," said her husband; "may God direct us to the best! I'm sure God knows," he continued, now much affected, "that I would rather break my own heart than yours, Una. Get up, dear—rise. John, how would *you* advise us?"

"I don't see any serious objection, after all," replied the son, "either you or my mother can have to Connor O'Donovan. He is every way worthy of her, if he is equal to his character; and as for wealth, I have often heard it said that his father was a richer man than yourself."

"After all," said the mother, "she might be very well wid him."

"I'll tell you what I'll do, then," said the Bodagh—"let us see the ould man himself, and if he settles his son dacently in life, as he can do if he wishes, why, I won't see the poor, foolish, innocent girl breaking her heart."

Una, who had sat with her face still averted, now ran to her father, and, throwing her arms about his neck, wept aloud, but said nothing.

"Ay, ay," said the latter, "it's very fine now that you have everything your own way, you girsha; but, sure, you're all the daughter we have, achora, and it would be too bad not to let you have a *little* of your own opinion in the choice of a husband. Now go up stairs, or where you please, till we see what can be done with Fardorougha himself."

With smiling face and glistening eyes Una passed out of the room, scarcely sensible whether she walked, ran, or flew, while the others went to renew the discussion with Fardorougha.

"Well," said the miser, "you found out, I suppose, that she can't do widout him?"

"Provided we consent to the marriage," asked the Bodagh, "how will you settle your son in life?"

"Who would I settle in life if I wouldn't settle my only son?" replied the other; "who else is there to get all I have?"

"That's very true," observed the Bodagh; "but state plainly what you'll do for him on his marriage."

"Do you consint to the marriage all of yees?"

"That's not the question," said the other.

"Divil a word I'll answer till I know whither yees do or not," said Fardorougha. "Say at once that you consint, and then I'll spake—I'll say what I'll do."

The Bodagh looked inquiringly at his wife and son. The latter nodded affirmatively. "We do consent," he added.

"That shows your own sinse," said the old man. "Now what fortune will you portion your *colleen* wid?"

"That depinds upon what *you'll* do for your son," returned the Bodagh.

"And that depinds upon what *you'll* do for your daughter," replied the sagacious old miser.

"At this rate we're not likely to agree."

"Nothin's asier; you have only to spake out; besides it's your business, bein' the colleen's father."

"Try him, and name something fair," whispered John.

"If I give her a farm of thirty acres of good land, stocked and all, what will *you* do for Connor?"

"More than that, five times over; I'll give him all I have. An' now when will we marry them? Throth it was best to make things clear," added the knave, "and undherstand one another at wanst. When will we marry them?"

"Not till you say out openly and fairly the exact amount of money you'll lay down on the nail—an' that before even a ring goes upon them."

"Give it up, acushla," said the wife, "you see there's no screwin' a promise out of him, let alone a penny."

"What 'ud yees have me do?" said the old man, raising his voice. "Won't he have all I'm worth? Who else is to have it? Am I to make a beggar of myself to please you? Can't they live on your farm till I die, an' thin it'll all come to them?"

"An' no thanks to you for that, Fardorougha," said the Bodagh. "No, no; I'll never buy a pig in a poke. If you won't act generously by your son, go home, in the name of goodness, and let us hear no more about it."

"Why, why?" asked the miser, "are yees mad to miss what I can leave him? If you knew how much it is, you'd snap——; but God help me! what am I sayin'? I'm poorer than anybody thinks. I am—I am; an' will starve among you all, if God hasn't sed it. Do you think I don't love my son as well, an' a thousand times better, than you do your daughter? God alone sees how my heart's in him—in my own Connor, that never gave me a sore heart—my brave, my beautiful boy!"

He paused, and the scalding tears here ran down his shrunk and furrowed cheeks, whilst he wrung his hands, started to his feet, and looked about him like a man encompassed by dangers that threatened instant destruction.

"If you love your son so well," said John, mildly, "why do you grudge to share your wealth with him? It is but natural and it is your duty."

"Natural! what's natural?—to give away—is it to love him you mane? It is, it's *un*natural to give it away. He's the best son—the best—what do you mane, I say?—let me alone—let me alone—I could give him my blood, my blood—to sich a boy; but, you want to kill me—you want to kill me, an' thin you'll get all; but he'll cross you, never fear—my boy will save me—he's not tired of me—he'd give up fifty girls sooner than see a hair of his father's head injured—so do your best, while I have Connor, I'm not afraid of yees. Thanks be to God that sent him!" he exclaimed, dropping suddenly on his knees—"oh, thanks be to God that sent him to comfort an' protect his father from the schames and villainy of them that 'ud bring him to starvation for their own ends!"

"Father," said John, in a low tone, "this struggle between avarice and natural affection is awful. See how his small gray eyes glare, and the froth rises white to his thin shrivelled lips. What is to be done?"

"Fardorougha," said the Bodagh, "it's over; don't distress yourself—keep your money—there will be no match between our childhre."

"Why? why won't there?" he screamed—"why won't there, I say? Havn't *you* enough for them until *I* die? Would you see your child breakin' her heart? Bodagh, you have no nather in you—no bowels for your *colleen dhas*. But I'll spake for her—I'll argue wid you till this time to-morrow,

or I'll make you show feelin' to her—an' if you don't—if you don't—"

"Wid the help o' God, the man's as mad as a March hare," observed Mrs. O'Brien, "and there's no use in losin' breath wid him."

"If it's not insanity," said John, "I know not what it is."

"Young man," proceeded Fardorougha, who evidently paid no attention to what the mother and son said, being merely struck by the voice of the latter, "young man, you're kind, you have sinse and feelin'—spake to your father—don't let him destroy his child—don't ax him to starve me, that never did him harm. He loves you—he loves you, for he can't but love you—sure, I know how I love my own darlin' boy. Oh, spake to him—here I go down on my knees to you, to beg, as you hope to see God in heaven, that't you'll make him not break his daughter's heart! She's your own sister—there's but the two of yees, an' oh, don't desart her in this throuble—this heavy, heavy throuble!"

"I won't interfere farther in it," replied the young man, who, however, felt disturbed and anxious in the extreme.

"Mrs. O'Brien," said he, turning imploringly, and with a wild, haggard look to the Bodagh's wife, "I'm turnin' to you—you're her mother—Oh think, think"—

"I'll think no more about it," she replied. "You're mad, an' thank God, we know it. Of coorse it'll run in the family, for which reas*ing* my daughter 'ill never be joined to the son of a madman."

He then turned as a last resource to O'Brien himself. "Bodagh, Bodagh, I say," here his voice rose to a frightful pitch, "I enthrate, I order, I command you to listen to me! Marry them—don't kill your daughter, an' don't, don't, dare to kill my son. If you do I'll curse you till the marks of your feet will scorch the ground you tread on. Oh," he exclaimed, his voice now sinking, and his reason awaking apparently from exhaustion, "what is come over me? what am I sayin'?—but it's all for my son, my son." He then rose, sat down, and for more than tweny minutes wept like an infant, and sobbed and sighed as if his heart would break.

A feeling very difficult to be described hushed his amazed auditory into silence; they felt something like pity towards the unfortunate old man, as well as respect for that affection which struggled with such moral heroism against the frightful vice that attempted to subdue this last surviving virtue in the breast of the miser.

On his getting calm, they spoke to him kindly, but in firm and friendly terms communicated their ultimate determination, that, in consequence of his declining to make an adequate provision for the son, the marriage could by no means take place. He then got his hat, and attempted to reach the road which led down to the little lawn, but so complete was his abstraction, and so exhausted his faculties, that it was not without John's assistance he could reach the gate which lay before his eyes. He first turned out of the walk to the right, then crossed over to the left, and felt surprised that a wall opposed him in each direction.

"You are too much disturbed," said John, "to perceive the way, but I will show you."

"I suppose I thought it was at home I was," he replied, "bekase at my own house one must turn aither to the right or to the left, as, indeed, I'm in the custom of doin'."

Whilst Fardorougha was engaged upon his ill-managed mission, his wife, who felt that all human efforts at turning the heart of her husband from his wealth must fail, resolved to have recourse to a higher power. With this purpose in view, she put on her Sunday dress, and informed Connor that she was about to go for a short time from home.

"I'll be back if I can," she added, "before your father; and, indeed, it's as .good not to let him know anything about it."

"About what, mother? for I know as little about it as he does."

"Why, my dear boy, I'm goin' to get a couple o' masses sed, for God to turn his heart from that cursed *airaghid* it's fixed upon. Sure it houlds sich a hard grip of his poor sowl, that it'll be the destruction of him here an' hereafther. It'll kill him afore his time, an' then I thrimble to think of his chance above."

"The object is a good one, sure enough, an' it bein' for a spiritual purpose the priest won't object to it."

"Why would he, dear, an' it for the good of his sowl? Sure, when Pat Lanigan was jealous, his wife got three masses sed for him; and, wid the help o' God, he was cured sound and clane."

Connor could not help smiling at this extraordinary cure for jealousy, nor at the simple piety of a heart, the strength of whose affection he knew so well. After her return she informed the son, that, in addition to the masses to be said against his father's avarice, she had some notion of getting another said towards his marriage with Una.

"God help you, mother," said Connor, laughing; "for I think you're one of the innocentest women that ever lived; but whisht!" he added, "here's my father—God grant that he may bring good news!"

When Fardorougha entered he was paler or rather sallower than usual; and, on his

thin, puckered face, the lines that marked it were exhibited with a distinctness greater than ordinary. His eyes appeared to have sunk back more deeply into his head; his cheeks had fallen farther into his jaws; his eyes were gleamy and disturbed; and his whole appearance bespoke trouble and care and the traces of a strong and recent struggle within him.

"Father," said Connor, with a beating heart, "for Heaven's sake, what news—what tidings? I trust in God it's good."

"They have no bowels, Connor—they have no bowels, thim O'Briens."

"Then you didn't succeed."

"The father's as great a *bodagh* as him he was called after—they're a bad pack—an' you mustn't think of any one belongin' to them."

"But tell us, man dear," said the wife, "what passed—let us know it all."

"Why, they would do nothin'—they wouldn't hear of it. I went on my knees to them—ay, to every one of them, barrin' the colleen herself; but it was all no use—it's to be no match."

"And why, father, did you go on your knees to *any* of them," said Connor; "I'm sorry you did *that*."

"I did it on your account, Connor, an' I'd do it again on your account, poor boy."

"Well, well, it can't be helped."

"But tell me, Fardorougha," inquired Honor, "was any of the fault your own—what did *you* offer to do for Connor?"

"Let me alone," said he, peevishly; "I won't be cross-questioned about it. My heart's broke among you all—what did *I* offer to do for Connor? The match is knocked up, I tell you—and it must be knocked up. Connor's young, an' it'll be time enough for him to marry this seven years to come."

As he said this, the fire of avarice blazed in his eyes, and he looked angrily at Honor, then at the son; but, while contemplating the latter, his countenance changed from anger to sorrow, and from sorrow to a mild and serene expression of affection.

"Connor, avick," said he, "Connor, sure you'll not blame *me* in this business? sure you won't blame your poor, heart-broken father, let thim say what they will, sure you won't, avilish?"

"Don't fret on my account, father," said the son; "why should I blame you? God knows you're *strivin'* to do what you would wish for me."

"No, Honor, I know *he* wouldn't; no," he shouted, leaping up, "he wouldn't make a saicrefize o' me! Connor, save me, save me," he shrieked, throwing his arms about his neck; "save me; my heart's breakin'—somethin's tearin' me different ways inside; I can cry, you see; I can cry, but I'm still as hard as a stone; it's terrible this I'm sufferin'—terrible all out for a weak ould man like me. Oh, Connor, avick, what 'ill I do? Honor, achora, what 'ill become o' me—amn't I strugglin', strugglin' against it, whatever it is; don't yees pity me? Don't ye, avick machree, don't ye, Honor? Oh, don't yees pity me?"

"God pity you!" said the wife, bursting into tears; "what will become of you? Pray to God, Fardorougha, pray to Him. No one alive can change your heart but God. I wint to the priest to-day, to get two masses said to turn your heart from that cursed money. I didn't intind to tell you, but I do, bekase it's your duty to pray now above all times, an' to back the priest as well as you can."

"It's the best advice, father, you could get," said the son, as he helped the trembling old man to his seat.

"An' who bid you thin to go to lavish money that way?" said he, turning snappishly to Honor, and relapsing again into the peevish spirit of avarice; "Saver o' Heaven, but you'll kill me, woman, afore you have done wid me! How can I stand it, to have my hard-earned——an' for what? to turn *my* heart from money? I don't want to be turned from it—I don't wish it! Money!—I have no money—nothin'—nothin'—an' if there's not better decreed for me, I'll be starved yet—an' is it any wondher? to be robbin' me the way you're doin'!"

His wife clasped her hands and looked up towards heaven in silence, and Connor, shaking his head despairingly, passed out to join Flanagan at his labor, with whom he had not spoken that day. Briefly, and with a heavy heart, he communicated to him the unsuccessful issue of his father's interference, and asked his opinion as to how he should conduct himself under circumstances so disastrous to his happiness and prospects. Bartle advised him to seek another interview with Una, and, for that purpose, offered, as before, to ascertain, in the course of that evening, at what time and place she would see him. This suggestion, in itself so natural, was adopted, and as Connor felt, with a peculiar acuteness, the pain of the situation in which he was placed, he manifested little tendency to conversation, and the evening consequently passed heavily and in silence.

Dusk, however, arrived, and Bartle prepared himself to execute the somewhat difficult commission he had so obligingly undertaken. He appeared, however, to have caught a portion of Connor's despondency, for, when about to set out, he said "that he felt his spirits sunk and melancholy; just," he added, "as if some misfortune, Connor, was afore

aither or both of us ; for my part I'd stake my life that things will go *ashanghran* one way or other, an' that you'll never call Una O'Brien your wife."

"Bartle," replied the other, "I only want you to do my message, an' not be prophesyin' ill—bad news comes to soon, without your tellin' us of it aforehand. God knows, Bartle dear, I'm distressed enough as it is, and want my spirits to be kept up rather than put down."

"No, Connor, but you want somethin' to divart your mind off this business altogether, for a while ; an' upon my sannies it 'ud be a charity for some friend to give you a fresh piece of fun to think of—so keep up your heart, how do you know but I may do that much for you myself? But I want you to lend me the loan of a pair of shoes ; divil a tatther of these will be together soon, barrin' I get them mended in time ; you can't begrudge that, any how, an' me wearin' them on your own business."

"Nonsense, man—to be sure I will ; stop an' I'll bring them out to you in half a shake."

He accordingly produced a pair of shoes, nearly new, and told Bartle that if he had no objection to accept of them as a present, he might consider them as his own.

This conversation took place in Fardorougha's barn, where Flanagan always slept, and kept his small deal trunk.

He paused a moment when this good-natured offer was made to him ; but as it was dark no particular expression could be discovered on his countenance,

"No!" said he vehemently ; "may I go to perdition if I ought!—Connor—Connor O' Donovan—you'd turn the div——"

"Hut, Bartle, don't be angry—whin I offered them, I didn't mane to give you the slightest offence ; it's enough for you to tell me you won't have them without gettin' into a passion."

"Have what? what are you spakin' about?"

"Why—about the shoes ; what else?"

"Yes, faith, sure enough—well, ay, the shoes!—don't think of it,Connor—I'm hasty; too much so, indeed, an' that's my fault. I'm like all good-natured people in that respect ; however, I'll borry them for a day or two, till I get my own patched up some way. But, death alive, why did you get at this season o' the year three rows of sparables in the soles o' them?"

"Bekase they last longer, of coorse ; and now, Bartle, be off, and don't let the grass grow under your feet till I see you again."

Connor's patience, or rather his impatience, that night, was severely taxed. Hour after hour elapsed, and yet Bartle did not return. At length he went to his father's sleeping-room, and informed him of the message he had sent through Flanagan to Una.

"I will sleep in the barn to-night, father," he added ; "an' never fear, let us talk as we may, but we'll be up early enough in the morning, plase God. I couldn't sleep, or go to sleep, till I hear what news he brings back to us ; so do you rise and secure the door, an' I'll make my shakedown wid Bartle this night."

The father who never refused him anything *un*pecuniary (if we may be allowed the word), did as the son requested him, and again went to bed, unconscious of the thundercloud which was so soon to burst upon them both.

Bartle, however, at length returned, and Connor had the satisfaction of hearing that his faithful Una would meet him the next night, if possible, at the hour of twelve o'clock, in her father's haggard. Her parents, it appeared, had laid an injunction upon her never to see him again ; she was watched, too, and, unless when the household were asleep, she found it altogether impracticable to effect any appointment whatsoever with her lover. She could not even promise with certainty to meet him on that night, but she desired him to come, and if she failed to be punctual, not to leave the place of appointment for an hour. After that, if she appeared not, then he was to wait no longer. Such was the purport of the message which *Flanagan* delivered him.

Flanagan was the first up the next morning, for the purpose of keeping an appointment which *he* had with Biddy Neil, whom we have already introduced to the reader. On being taxed with meanness by this weak but honest creature, for having sought service with the man who had ruined his family, he promised to acquaint her with the true motive which had indueed him to enter into Fardorougha's employment. Their conversation on this point, however, was merely a love scene, in which Bartle satisfied the credulous girl, that to an attachment for herself of some months' standing, might be ascribed his humiliation in becoming a servant to the oppressor and destroyer of his house. He then passed from themselves and their prospects to Connor and Una O'Brien, with whose attachment for each other, as the reader knows, he was first made acquainted by his fellow-servant.

"It's terrible, Biddy," said he, "to think of the black and revengeful heart that Connor bears to Bodagh Buie and his family merely bekase they rufuse to let him marry Una. I'm afeard, Biddy darlin', that there'll

be dark work about it on Connor's side; an' if you hear of anything bad happenin' to the Bodagh, you'll know where it comes from."

"I don't b'lieve it, Bartle, nor I won't b'lieve it—not, any way, till I hear that it happens. But what is it he intends to do to them?"

"That's more than I know myself," replied Bartle; "I axed as much, an' he said till it was done nobody would be the wiser."

"That's quare," said the girl, "for a better heart than Connor has, the Saver o' the world never made."

"You think so, agra, but wait; do you watch, and you'll find that he don't come in to-night. I know nothin' myself of what he's about, for he's as close as his father's purse, an' as deep as a draw-well; but this I know, that he has black business on his hands, whatever it is. I trimble to think of it!"

Flanagan then got tender, and, after pressing his suit with all the eloquence he was master of, they separated, he to his labor in the fields, and she to her domestic employment, and the unusual task of watching the motions of her master's son.

Flanagan, in the course of the day, suggested to Connor the convenience of sleeping that night *also* in the barn. The time of meeting, he said was too late, and his father's family, who were early in their hours, both night and morning, would be asleep even before they set out. He also added, that lest any of the O'Briens or their retainers should surprise him and Una, he had made up his mind to accompany him, and act as a *vidette* during their interview.

Connor felt this devotion of Bartle to his dearest interests, as every grateful and generous heart would.

"Bartle," said he, "when we are married, if it's ever in my power to make you aisy in life, may I never prosper if I don't do it! At all events, in some way I'll reward you."

"If you're ever able, Connor, I'll have no objection to be behoulden to you; that is, if you're *ever able*, as you say."

"And if there's a just God in heaven, Bartle, who sees my heart, however things may go against me for a time, I say I *will* be able to sarve you, or any other friend that desarves it. But about sleepin' *in* to-night—of coorse I wouldn't be knockin' up my father, and disturbin' my poor mother for no rason; so, of coorse, as I said, I'll sleep in the barn; it makes no difference one way or other."

"Connor," said Flanagan, with much solemnity, "if Bodagh Buie's wise, he'll marry you and his daughter as fast as he can."

"An' why, Bartle?"

"Why, for rasons you know nothin' about. Of late he's got very much out o' favor, in regard of not comin' *in* to what *people* wish."

"Speak plainer, Bartle; I'm in the dark now."

"There's work goin' on in the counthry, that you and every one like you ought to be *up* to; but you know nothin', as I said, about it. Now Bodagh Buie, as far as I hear—for I'm in the dark myself nearly as much as you—Bodagh Buie houlds out against them; an' not only that, I'm tould, but gives them hard words, an' sets them at defiance."

"But what has all this to do with me marrying his daughter?"

"Why, he wants some one badly to stand his friend wid them; an' if you were married to her, you should on his account become one o' thim; begad, as it is, you ought, for to tell the truth there's talk—strong talk too—about payin' him a nightly visit that mayn't sarve him."

"Then, Bartle, *you're* consarned in this business."

"No, faith, not yet; but I suppose I must, if I wish to be *safe* in the counthry; an' so must you too, for the same rason."

"And, if not *up*, how do you know so much about it?"

"From one o' themselves, that wishes the Bodagh well; ay, an' let me tell you, he's a marked man, an' the night was appointed to visit him; still it was put back to thry if he could be managed, but he couldn't; an' all I know about it is that the time to remimber him is settled, an' he's *to get it*, an', along wid other things, he'll be ped for turnin' off—however, I can't say any more about *that*."

"How long is it since you knew this?"

"Not long—only since last night, or you'd a got it before this. The best way, I think, to put him on his guard 'ud be to send him a scrape of a line wid no name to it."

"Bartle," replied Connor, "I'm as much behoulden to you for this, as if it had been myself or my father that was *marked*. God knows you have a good heart, an' if you don't sleep sound, I'm at a loss to know who ought."

"But it's hard to tell *who* has a good heart, Connor; I'd never say any one has till I'd seen them well thried."

At length the hour for setting out arrived, and both, armed with good oaken cudgels, proceeded to Bodagh Buie's haggard, whither they arrived a little before the appointed hour. An utter stillness prevailed around the place—not a dog barked—not a breeze blew, nor did a leaf move on its stem, so calm and warm was the night. Neither moon nor stars shone in the firmament, and the darkness seemed kindly to throw its

dusky mantle over this sweet and stolen interview of our young lovers. As yet, however, Una had not come, nor could Connor, on surveying the large massy farm-house of the Bodagh, perceive any appearance of light, or hear a single sound, however faint, to break the stillness in which it slept. Bartle, immediately after their arrival in the haggard, separated from his companion, in order, he said, to give notice of interruption, should Una be either watched or followed.

"Besides, you know," he added, "sweethearts like nobody to be present but themselves, when they do be spakin' soft to one another. So I'll just keep dodgin' about, from place to place wid my eye an' ear both open, an' if any intherloper comes I'll give yees the hard word."

Heavily and lazily creep those moments during which an impatient lover awaits the approach of his mistress; and woe betide the wooer of impetuous temperament who is doomed, like our hero, to watch a whole hour and a half in vain. Many a theory did his fancy body forth, and many a conjecture did he form, as to the probable cause of her absence. Was it possible that they watched her even in the dead hour of night? Perhaps the grief she felt at her father's refusal to sanction the match had brought on indisposition; and—oh, harrowing thought!—perhaps they had succeeded in prevailing upon her to renounce him and his hopes forever. But no; their affection was too pure and steadfast to admit of a supposition so utterly unreasonable. What, then, could have prevented her from keeping an appointment so essential to their future prospects, and to the operations necessary for them to pursue? Some plan of intercourse—some settled mode of communication must be concerted between them; a fact as well known to herself as to him.

"Well, well," thought he, "whatever's the reason of her not coming, I'm sure the fault is not hers; as it is, there's no use in waitin' this night any longer."

Flanagan, it appeared, was of the same opinion, for in a minute or two he made his appearance, and urged their return home. It was clear, he said, that no interview *could* take place that night, and the sooner they reached the barn and got to bed the better.

"Folly me," he added; "we can pass through the yard, cross the road before the hall-door, and get over the stile, by the near way through the fields that's behind the orchard."

Connor, who was by no means so well acquainted with the path as his companion, followed him in the way pointed out, and in a few minutes they found themselves walking at a brisk pace in a direction that led homewards by a shorter cut. Connor's mind was too much depressed for conversation, and both were proceeding in silence, when Flanagan started in alarm, and pointed out the figure of some one walking directly towards them. In less than a minute the person, whoever he might be, had come within speaking distance, and, as he shouted "Who comes there?" Flanagan bolted across the ditch, along which they had been going, and disappeared. "A friend," returned Connor, in reply to the question.

The other man advanced, and, with a look of deep scrutiny, peered into his face. "A friend," he exclaimed; "faith, it's a quare hour for a friend to be out. Who are you, eh? Is this Connor O'Donovan?"

"It is; but you have the advantage of me."

"If your father was here he would know Phil Curtis, any way."

"I ought to 'a known the voice myself," said Connor; "Phil, how are you? an' what's bringin' *yourself* out at this hour?"

"Why, I want to buy a couple o' milk cows in the fair o' Kilturbit, an' I'm goin' to catch my horse, an' make ready. It's a stiff ride from this, an' by the time I'm there it 'ill be late enough for business, I'm thinkin'. There was some one wid you; who was it?"

"Come, come," said Connor, good-humoredly, "he was out coortin', and doesn't wish to be known; and Phil, as you *had* the luck to meet me, I beg you, for Heaven's sake, not to breathe that you seen me near Bodagh Buie's to-night; I have various reasons for it."

"It's no secret to me as it is," replied Curtis; "half the parish knows it; so make your mind asy on that head. Good night, Connor! I wish you success, anyhow; you'll be a happy man if you get her; although, from what I hear has happened, you have a bad chance, except herself stands to you."

The truth was, that Fardorougha's visit to the Bodagh, thanks to the high tones of his own shrill voice, had drawn female curiosity, already suspicious of the circumstances, to the keyhole of the parlor-door, where the issue and object of the conference soon became known. In a short time it had gone among the servants, and from them was transmitted, in the course of that and the following day, to the tenants and day-laborers! who contrived to multiply it with such effect, that, as Curtis said, it was indeed no secret to the greater part of the parish.

Flanagan soon rejoined Connor, who, on taxing him with his flight, was informed, with an appearance of much regret, that a

debt of old standing due to Curtis had occasioned it.

"And upon my saunies, Connor, I'd rather any time go up to my neck in wather than meet a man that I owe money to, whin I can't pay him. I knew Phil very well, even before he spoke, and that was what made me cut an' run."

"What!" said Connor, looking towards the east, "can it be day-light so soon?"

"Begad, it surely cannot," replied his companion.

"Holy mother above us, what is this?"

Both involuntarily stood to contemplate the strange phenomenon which presented itself to their observation; and, as it was certainly both novel and startling in its appearance, we shall pause a little to describe it more minutely.

The night, as we have already said, was remarkably dark, and warm to an unusual degree. To the astonishment, however, of our two travellers, a gleam of light, extremely faint, and somewhat resembling that which precedes the rising of a summer sun, broke upon their path, and passed on in undulating sweeps for a considerable space before them. Connor had scarcely time to utter the exclamation just alluded to, and Flanagan to reply to him, when the light around them shot farther into the distance and deepened from its first pale hue into a rich and gorgeous purple. Its effect, however, was limited within a circle of about a mile, for they could observe that it got faint gradually, from the centre to the extreme verge, where it melted into utter darkness.

"They must mean something extraordinary," said Connor; "whatever it is, it appears to be behind the hill that divides us from Bodagh's Buie's house. Blessed earth! it looks as if the sky was on fire!"

The sky, indeed, presented a fearful but sublime spectacle. One spot appeared to glow with the red-white heat of a furnace, and to form the centre of a fiery cupola, from which the flame was flung in redder and grosser masses, that darkened away into wild and dusky indistinctness, in a manner that corresponded with the same light, as it danced in red and frightful mirth upon the earth. As they looked, the cause of this awful phenomenon soon became visible. From behind the hill was seen a thick shower of burning particles rushing up into the mid air, and presently the broad point of a huge pyramid of fire, wavering in terrible and capricious power, seemed to disport itself far up in the very depths of the glowing sky. On looking again upon the earth they perceived that this terrible circle was extending itself over a wider circumference of country, marking every prominent object around them with a dark blood-red tinge, and throwing those that were more remote into a visionary but appalling relief.

"*Dhar Chriestha*," exclaimed Flanagan, "I have it; *thim* I spoke about has paid Bodagh Buie the visit they promised him."

"Come round the hip o' the hill," said Connor, "till we see where it really is; but I'll tell you what, Bartle, if you be right, woe betide you! all the water in Europe wouldn't wash you free in my mind, of being connected in this same Ribbon business that's spreading through the country. As sure as that sky—that fearful sky's above us, you must prove to me and others how you came to know that this hellish business was to take place. God of heaven! let us run—surely it couldn't be the dwelling-house!"

His speed was so great that Bartle could find neither breath nor leisure to make any reply.

"Thank God!" he exclaimed; "oh, thank God it's not the house, and there lives are safe! but blessed Father, there's the man's whole haggard in flames!"

"Oh, the *netarnal* villains!" was the simple exclamation of Flanagan.

"Bartle," said his companion, "you heard what I said this minute?"

Their eyes met as he spoke, and for the first time O'Donovan was struck by the pallid malignity of his features. The servant gazed steadily upon him, his lips slightly but firmly drawn back, and his eye, in which was neither sympathy nor alarm, charged with the spirit of a cool and devilish triumph.

Connor's blazed at the bare idea of his villainy, and, in a fit of manly and indignant rage, he seized Flanagan and hurled him headlong to the earth at his feet. "You have hell in your face, you villain!" he exclaimed; "and if I thought that—it I did—I'd drag you down like a dog, an' pitch you head-foremost into the flames!"

Bartle rose, and, in a voice wonderfully calm, simply observed, "God knows, Connor, if I know either your heart or mine, you'll be sorry for this treatment you've given me for no rason. You know yourself that, as soon as I heard anything of the ill-will against the Bodagh, I tould it to you, in ordher—mark that—in ordher that you might let *him* know it the best way you thought proper; an' for *that* you've knocked me down!"

"Why, I believe you may be right, Bartle—there's truth in that—but I can't forgive you the *look* you gave me."

"That red light was in my face, maybe; I'm sure if that wasn't it, I can't tell—I was myself wonderin' at your own looks, the

same way; but then it was that quare light that was in your face."

"Well, well, maybe I'm wrong—I hope I am. Do you think we could be of any use there?"

"Of use! an' how would we account for bein' there at all, Connor? how would *you* do it, at any rate, widout maybe bringin' the girl into blame?"

"You're right agin, Bartle; I'm not half so cool as you are; our best plan is to go home——"

"And go to bed; it is; an' the sooner we're there the better; sowl, Connor, you gev me a murdherin' crash."

"Think no more of it—think no more of it—I'm not often hasty, so you must overlook it."

It was, however, with an anxious and distressed heart that Connor O'Donovan reached his father's barn, where, in the same bed with Flanagan, he enjoyed, towards morning, a brief and broken slumber that brought back to his fancy images of blood and fire, all so confusedly mingled with Una, himself, and their parents, that the voice of his father calling upon them to rise, came to him as a welcome and manifest relief.

At the time laid in this story, neither burnings nor murders were so familiar nor *patriotic*, as the fancied necessity of working out political progress has recently made them. Such atrocities, in these bad and unreformed days, were certainly looked upon as criminal, rather than meritorious, however *un*patriotic it may have been to form so erroneous an estimate of human villainy. The consequence of all this was, that the destruction of Bodagh Buie's property created a sensation in the country, of which, familiarized as *we* are to such crimes, we can entertain but a very faint notion. In three days a reward of five hundred pounds, exclusive of two hundred from government, was offered for such information as might bring the incendiary, or incendiaries, to justice. The Bodagh and his family were stunned as much with amazement at the occurrence of a calamity so incomprehensible to them, as with the loss they had sustained, for that indeed was heavy. The man was extremely popular, and by many acts of kindness had won the attachment and goodwill of all who knew him, either personally or by character. How, then, account for an act so wanton and vindictive? They could not understand it; it was not only a crime, but a crime connected with some mysterious motive, beyond their power to detect.

But of all who became acquainted with the outrage, not one sympathized more sincerely and deeply with O'Brien's family than did Connor O'Donovan; although, of course, that sympathy was unknown to those for whom it was felt. The fact was, that his own happiness became, in some degree, involved in their calamity; and, as he came in to breakfast on the fourth morning of its occurrence, he could not help observing as much to his mother. His suspicions of Flanagan, as to possessing some clue to the melancholy business, were by no means removed. On the contrary, he felt that he ought to have him brought before the bench of magistrates who were conducting the investigation from day to day, and, with this determination, he himself resolved to state fully and candidly to the bench, all the hints which had transpired from Flanagan respecting the denunciations said to be held out against O'Brien and the causes assigned for them. Breakfast was now ready, and Fardorougha himself entered, uttering petulant charges of neglect and idleness against his servant.

"He desarves *no* breakfast," said he; "not a morsel; it's robbin' me by his idleness and schaming he is. What is he doin', Connor? or what has become of him? He's not in the field nor about the place."

Connor paused.

"Why, now that I think of it, I didn't see him to-day," he replied; "I thought that he was mendin' the slap at the Three-Acres. I'll thry if he's in the barn."

And he went accordingly to find him. "I'm afraid, father," said he, on his return, "that Bartle's a bad boy, an' a dangerous one; he's not in the barn, an' it appears, from the bed, that he didn't sleep there last night. The truth is, he's gone; at laste he has brought all his clothes, his box, an' everything with him; an' what's more, I suspect the reason of it; he thinks he has let out too much to me; an' it 'ill go hard but I'll make him let out more."

The servant-maid, Biddy, now entered and informed them that four men, evidently strangers, were approaching the house from the rear, and ere she could add anything further on the subject, two of them walked in, and, seizing Connor, informed him that he was their prisoner.

"Your prisoner!" exclaimed his mother, getting pale; "why, what could our poor boy do to make him your prisoner? He never did hurt or harm to the child unborn."

Fardorougha's keen gray eye rested sharply upon them for a moment; it then turned to Honor, afterwards to Connor, and again gleamed bitterly at the intruders—"What is this?" said he, startiug up; "what is this? you don't mane to rob us?"

"I think," said the son, "you must be

undher a mistake; you surely can have no business with *me*. It's very likely you want some one else."

"What is your name?" inquired he who appeared to be the principal of them.

"My name is Connor O'Donovan; an' I know no reason why I should deny it."

"Then you are the very man we come for," said the querist, "so you had better prepare to accompany us; in the mean time you must excuse us if we search your room. This is unpleasant, I grant, but we have no discretion, and must perform our duty."

"What do you want in this room?" said Fardorougha; "it's robbery you're on for—it's robbery you're on for—in open daylight, too; but you're late; I lodged the last penny yesterday; that's one comfort; you're late—you're late."

"What did my boy do?" exclaimed the affrighted mother; "what did he do that you come to drag him away from us?"

This question she put to the other constable, the first having entered her son's bedroom.

"I am afraid, ma'am, you'll know it too soon," replied the man; "it's a heavy charge if it proves to be true."

As he spoke his companion re-entered the apartment, with Connor's Sunday coat in his hand, from the pocket of which he drew a steel and tinder-box.

"I'm sorry for this," he observed; "it corroborates what has been sworn against you by your accomplice, and here, I fear, comes additional proof."

At the same moment the other two made their appearance, one of them holding in his hand the shoes which Connor had lent to Flanagan, and which he wore on the night of the conflagration.

On seeing this, and comparing the two circumstances together, a fearful light broke on the unfortunate young man, who had already felt conscious of the snare into which he had fallen. With an air of sorrow and manly resignation he thus addressed his parents:—

"Don't be alarmed; I see that there is an attempt made to swear away my life; but, whatever happens, you both know that I am innocent of doin' an injury to any one. If I die, I would rather die innocent than live as guilty as he will that must have my blood to answer for."

His mother, on hearing this, ran to him, and with her arms about his neck, exclaimed,

"Die! die! Connor darlin'—my brave boy—my only son—why do you talk about death? What is it for? what is it about? Oh, for the love of God, tell us what did our boy do?"

"He is charged by Bartle Flanagan," replied one of the constables, "with burning Bodagh Buie O'Brien's haggard, because he refused him his daughter. He must now come with us to jail."

"I see the whole plot," said Connor, "and a deep one it is; the villain will do his worst; still I can't but have dependence upon justice and my own innocence. I can't but have dependence upon God, who knows my heart."

PART IV.

Fardorougha stood amazed and confounded, looking from one to another like a man who felt incapable of comprehending all that had passed before him. His forehead, over which fell a few gray thin locks, assumed a deadly paleness, and his eye lost the piercing expression which usually characterized it. He threw his *Cothamore* several times over his shoulders, as he had been in the habit of doing when about to proceed after breakfast to his usual avocations, and as often laid it aside, without being at all conscious of what he did. His limbs appeared to get feeble, and his hands trembled as if he labored under palsy. In this mood he passed from one to another, sometimes seizing a constable by the arm with a hard, tremulous grip, and again suddenly letting go his hold of him without speaking. At length a singular transition from this state of mind became apparent; a gleam of wild exultation shot from his eye; his sallow and blasted features brightened; the *Cothamore* was buttoned under his chin with a rapid energy of manner evidently arising from the removal of some secret apprehension.

"Then," he exclaimed, "it's no robbery; it's not robbery afther all; but how could it? there's no money here; not a penny; an' I'm belied, at any rate; for there's not a poorer man in the barony—thank God, it's not *robbery!*"

"Oh, Fardorougha," said the wife, "don't you see they're goin' to take him away from us?"

"Take who away from us?"

"Connor, your own Connor—our boy—the light of my heart—the light of his poor mother's heart! Oh, Connor, Connor, what is it they're goin' to do to you?"

"No harm, mother, I trust; no harm—don't be frightened."

The old man put his open hands to his temples, which he pressed bitterly, and with all his force, for nearly half a minute. He had, in truth, been alarmed into the very worst mood of his habitual vice, apprehension concerning his money; and felt that

nothing, except a powerful effort, could succeed in drawing his attention to the scene which was passing before him.

"What," said he; "what is it that's wrong wid Connor?"

"He must come to jail," said one of the men, looking at him with surprise; "we have already stated the crime for which he stands committed."

"To jail! Connor O'Donovan to jail!"

"It's too true, father; Bartle Flanagan has sworn that I burned Mr. O'Brien's haggard."

"Connor, Connor," said the old man, approaching him as he spoke, and putting his arms composedly about his neck, "Connor, my brave boy, my brave boy, it wasn't you did it; 'twas I did it," he added, turning to the constables; "lave him, lave him wid her, an' take me in his place! Who would if I would not—who ought, I say—an' I'll do it—take me; I'll go in his place."

Connor looked down upon the old man, and as he saw his heart rent, and his reason absolutely tottering, a sense of the singular and devoted affection which he had ever borne him, overcame him, and with a full heart he dashed away a tear from his eye, and pressed his father to his breast.

"Mother," said he; "this will kill the old man; it will kill him!"

"Fardorougha, a hagur," said his wife, feeling it necessary to sustain him as much as possible, "don't take it so much to heart, it won't signify—Connor's innocent, an' no harm will happen to him!"

"But are you lavin' us, Connor? are they—must they bring you to jail?"

"For a while, father; but I won't be long there I hope."

"It's an unpleasant duty on our part," said the principal of them; "still it's one we must perform. Your father should lose no time in taking the proper steps for your defence."

"And what are we to do?" asked the mother; "God knows the boy's as innocent as I am."

"Yes," said Fardorougha, still dwelling upon the resolution he had made; "*I'll* stand for you, Connor; you won't go; let them bring *me* instead of *you*."

"That's out of the question," replied the constable; "the law suffers nothing of the kind to take place; but if you will be advised by me, lose no time in preparing to defend him. It would be unjust to disguise the matter from you, or to keep you ignorant of its being a case of life and death."

"Life and death! what do you mane?" asked Fardorougha, staring vacantly at the last speaker.

"It's painful to distress you; but if he's found guilty, it's death."

"Death! hanged!" shrieked the old man, awaking as it were for the first time to a full perception of his son's situation; "hanged! my boy hanged! Connor, Connor, don't go from me!"

"I'll die wid him," said the mother; "I'll die wid you, Connor. We couldn't live widout him," she added, addressing the strangers; "as God is in heaven we couldn't! Oh Connor, Connor, avourneen, what is it that has come over us, and brought us to this sorrow?"

The mother's grief then flowed on, accompanied by a burst of that unstudied, but pathetic eloquence, which in Ireland is frequently uttered in the tone of wail and lamentation peculiar to those who mourn over the dead.

"No," she added, with her arms tenderly about him, and her streaming eyes fixed with a wild and mournful look of despair upon his face; "no, he is in his loving mother's arms, the boy that never gave to his father or me a harsh word or a sore heart! Long were we lookin' for him, an' little did we think it was for this heavy fate that the goodness of God sent him to us! Oh, many a look of lovin' affection, many a happy heart did he give us! Many a time Connor, avillish, did I hang over your cradle, and draw out to myself the happiness and the good that I hoped was before you. You wor too good—too good, I doubt—to be long in such a world as this, an' no wondher that the heart of the fair young colleen, the heart of the colleen *dhas dhun* should rest upon you and love you; for who ever knew you that didn't? Isn't there enough, King of heaven! enough of the bad an' the wicked in this world for the law to punish, an' not to take the innocent—not to take away from us the only one—*the only one*—I can't—I can't—but if they do—Connor—if they do, your lovin' mother will die wid you!"

The stern officers of justice wiped their eyes, and were proceeding to afford such consolation as they could, when Fardorougha, who had sat down after having made way for Honor to recline on the bosom of their son, now rose, and seizing the breast of his coat, was about to speak, but ere he could utter a word he tottered, and would have instantly fallen, had not Connor caught him in his arms. This served for a moment to divert the mother's grief, and to draw her attention from the son to the husband, who was now insensible. He was carried to the door by Connor; but when they attempted to lay him in a recumbent posture, it was found almost impossible to unclasp the deathlike

grip which he held of the coat. His haggard face was shrunk and collapsed; the individual features sharp and thin, but earnest and stamped with traces of alarm; his brows, too, which were slightly knit, gave to his whole countenance a character of keen and painful determination. But that which struck those who were present, most, was the unyielding grasp with which he clung even in his insensibility to the person of Connor.

If not an affecting sight, it was one at least strongly indicative of the intractable and indurated attachment which put itself forth with such vague and illusive energy on behalf of his son. At length he recovered, and on opening his eyes he fixed them with a long look of pain and distraction upon the boy's countenance.

"Father," said Connor, "don't be cast down—you need not—and you ought not to be so much disheartened—do you feel better?"

When the father heard his voice he smiled; yes—his shrunk, pale, withered face was lit up by a wild, indescribable ecstasy, whose startling expression was borrowed, one would think, as much from the light of insanity as from that of returning consciousness. He sucked in his thin cheeks, smacked his parched, skinny lips, and with difficulty called for drink. Having swallowed a little water, he looked round him with more composure, and inquired—

"What has happened me? am I robbed? are you robbers? But I tell you there's no money in the house. I lodged the last penny yesterday—afore my God I did—but—oh, what am I sayin'? what is this, Connor?"

"Father dear, compose yourself—we'll get over this throuble."

"We will, darlin'," said Honor, wiping the pale brows of her husband; "an' we won't lose him."

"No, achora," said the old man; "no, we won't lose him! Connor?"

"Well, father dear!"

"There's a thing here—here"—and he placed his hand upon his heart—"something it is that makes me afeard—a sinkin'—a weight—and there's a strugglin', too, Connor. I know I can't stand it long—an' it's about you—it's *all* about *you*."

"You distress yourself too much, father; indeed you do. Why, I hoped that you would comfort my poor mother till I come back to her and you, as I will, plase God."

"Yes," he replied; "yes, I will, I will."

"You had better prepare," said one of the officers; "the sooner this is over the better—he's a feeble man and not very well able to bear it."

"You are right," said Connor; "I won't delay many minutes; I have only to change my clothes, an' I am ready."

In a short time he made his appearance dressed in his best suit; and, indeed, it would be extremely difficult to meet, in any rank of life, a finer specimen of vigor, activity, and manly beauty. His countenance, at all times sedate and open, was on this occasion shaded by an air of profound melancholy that gave a composed grace and dignity to his whole bearing.

"Now, father," said he, "before I go, I think it right to lave you and my poor mother all the consolation I can. In the presence of God, in yours, in my dear mother's, and in the presence of all who hear me, I am as innocent of the crime that's laid to my charge as the babe unborn. That's a comfort for you to know, and let it prevent you from frettin'; and now, good by; God be with you, and strengthen, and support you both!"

Fardorougha had already seized his hand; but the old man could neither speak nor weep; his whole frame appeared to have been suddenly pervaded by a dry agony that suspended the beatings of his very heart. The mother's grief, on the contrary, was loud, and piercing, and vehement. She threw herself once more upon his neck; she kissed his lips, she pressed him to her heart, and poured out as before the wail of a wild and hopeless misery. At length, by the aid of some slight but necessary force, her arms were untwined from about his neck; and Connor then, stooping, embraced his father, and, gently placing him on a settle-bed, bade him farewell! On reaching the door he paused, and, turning about, surveyed his mother struggling in the hands of one of the officers to get embracing him again, and his gray-haired father sitting in speechless misery on the settle. He stood a moment to look upon them, and a few bitter tears rolled, in the silence of manly sorrow, down his cheeks.

"Oh, Fardorougha!" exclaimed his mother, after they had gone, "sure it isn't merely for partin' wid him that we feel so heart-broken. He may never stand under this roof again, an' he all we have and had to love!"

"No," returned Fardorougha, quietly; "no, it's not, as you say, for mercly partin' wid him—hanged! God! God! *him*—here—Honor—here, the thought of it—I'll die—it'll break! Oh, God support me! my heart—here—my heart'll break! My brain, too, and my head—oh! if God 'ud take me before I'd see it! But it can't be—it's not possible that our innocent boy should meet sich a death!"

"No, dear, it is not; sure he's innocent—that's one comfort; but, Fardorougha, as the men said, you must go to a lawyer and see what can be done to defind him."

The old man rose up and proceeded to his son's bedroom.

"Honor," said he, "come here;" and while uttering these words he gazed upon her face with a look of unutterable and hopeless distress; "there's his bed, Honor—*his* bed—he may never sleep on it more—he may be cut down like a flower in his youth—an' then what will become of us?"

"Forever, from this day out," said the distracted mother, "no hands will ever make it but my own; on no other will I sleep—we will both sleep—where *his* head lay there will mine be too—avick machree—machree! Och, Fardorougha, we can't stand this; let us not take it to heart, as we do; let us trust in God, an' hope for the best."

Honor, in fact, found it necessary to assume the office of a comforter; but it was clear that nothing urged or suggested by her could for a moment win back the old man's heart from the contemplation of the loss of his son. He moped about for a considerable time; but, ever and anon, found himself in Connor's bedroom, looking upon his clothes and such other memorials of him as it contained.

During the occurrence of these melancholy incidents at Fardorougha's, others of a scarcely less distressing character were passing under the roof of Bodagh Buie O'Brien.

Our readers need not be informed that the charge brought by Bartle Flanagan against Connor, excited the utmost amazement in all who heard it. So much at variance were his untarnished reputation and amiable manners with a disposition so dark and malignant as that which must have prompted the perpetration of such a crime, that it was treated at first by the public as an idle rumor. The evidence, however, of Phil. Curtis, and his deposition to the conversation which occurred between him and Connor at the time and place already known to the reader, together with the corroborating circumstances arising from the correspondence of the footprints about the haggard with the shoes produced by the constable—all, when combined together, left little doubt of his guilt. No sooner had this impression become general, than the spirit of the father was immediately imputed to the son, and many sagacious observations made, all tending to show, that, as they expressed it, "the bad drop of the old rogue would sooner or later come out in the young one;" "he wouldn't be what he was, or the bitter heart of the miser would appear;" with many other apothegms of similar import. The family of the Bodagh, however, were painfully and peculiarly circumstanced. With the exception of Una herself, none of them entertained a doubt that Connor was the incendiary. Flanagan had maintained a good character, and his direct impeachment of Connor, supported by such exact circumstantial evidence, left nothing to be urged in the young man's defence. Aware as they were of the force of Una's attachment, and apprehensive that the shock, arising from the discovery of his atrocity, might be dangerous if injudiciously disclosed to her, they resolved, in accordance with the suggestion of their son, to break the matter to herself with the utmost delicacy and caution.

"It is better," said John, "that she should hear of the misfortune from ourselves; for, after breaking it to her as gently as possible, we can at least attempt to strengthen and console her under it."

"Heaven above sees," exclaimed his mother, "that it was a black and unlucky business to her and to all of us; but now that she knows what a revingeful villain he is, I'm sure she'll not find it hard to banish him out of her thoughts. *Deah Grasthias* for the escape she had from him at any rate!"

"John, bring her in," said the father; "bring the unfortunate young crature in. I can't but pity her, Bridget; I can't but pity *ma colleen voghth*."

When Una entered with her brother she perceived by a glance at the solemn bearing of her parents, that some unhappy announcement was about to be made to her. She sat down, therefore, with a beating heart and a cheek already pale with apprehension.

"Una," said her father, "we sent for you to mention a circumstance that we would rather you should hear from ourselves than from strangers. You were always a good girl, Una—an' obadient girl, and sensible beyant your years; and I trust that your good sinse and the grace of the Almighty will enable you to bear up undher any disappointment that may come upon you."

"Surely, father, there can be nothing worse than I know already," she replied.

"Why, what *do* you know, dear?"

"Only what you told me the day Fardorougha was here, that nothing agreeable to my wishes could take place."

"I would give a great deal that the business was now as it was even then," responded her father; "there's far worse to come, Una, an' you must be firm, an' prepare to hear what'll thry you sorely."

"I can't guess it, father; but for God's sake tell me at once."

"Who do you think burned our property?"

"And I suppose if she hadn't been undher the one roof wid us that it's ourselves he'd burn," observed her mother.

"Father, tell me the worst at once—whatever it may be;—how could I guess the villain or villains who destroyed our property?"

"Villain, indeed! you may well say so," returned the Bodagh. "That villain is no other than Connor O'Donovan!"

Una felt as if a weighty burden had been removed from her heart; she breathed freely; her depression and alarm vanished, and her dark eye kindled into proud confidence in the integrity of her lover.

"And, father," she asked, in a full and firm voice, "is there nothing worse than *that* to come?"

"Worse! is the girl's brain turned?"

"*Dhar a Lhora Heena*, she's as mad I believe as ould Fardorougha himself," said the mother; "*worse!* why, she has parted wid all the reas*ing* she ever had."

"Indeed, mother, I hope I have not, and that my reason's as clear as ever; but, as to Connor O'Donovan, he's innocent of that charge, and of every other that may be brought against him; I don't believe it, and I never will."

"It's proved against him; it's brought home to him."

"Who's his accuser?"

"His father's servant, Bartle Flanagan, has turned king's evidence."

"The deep-dyed villain!" she exclaimed, with indignation; "father, of that crime, so sure as God's in heaven, so sure is Connor O'Donovan innocent, and so sure is Bartle Flanagan guilty—I know it."

"*You* know it—explain yourself."

"I mean *I feel it*—ay, home to the core of my heart—my unhappy heart—I feel the truth of what I say."

"Una," observed her brother, "I'm afraid you have been vilely deceived by him—there's not the slightest doubt of his guilt."

"Don't you be deceived, John; I say he's innocent—as I hope for heaven he's innocent; and, father, I'm not a bit cast down or disheartened by anything I have yet heard against him."

"You're a very extraordinary girl, Una; but for my part I'm glad you look upon it as you do. If his innocence appears, no man alive will be better plazed at it than myself."

"His innocence *will* appear," exclaimed the faithful girl; "it must appear; and, father, mark this—I say the time will tell yet who is innocent and who is guilty. God knows," she added, her energy of manner increasing, while a shower of hot tears fell down her cheeks, "God knows I would marry him to-morrow with the disgrace of that and ten times as much upon him, so certain am I that his heart and hand are free from thought or deed that's either treacherous or dishonorable."

"Marry him!" said her brother, losing temper; "nobody doubts but you'd marry him on the gallows, wid the rope about his neck."

"I would do it, and unite myself to a true heart. Don't mistake me, and mother, dear, don't blame me," she added, her tears flowing still faster; "he's in disgrace—sunk in shame and sorrow—and I won't conceal the force of what I feel for him; I won't desert him now as the world will do; I know his heart, and on the scaffold to-morrow I would become his wife, if it would take away one atom of his misery."

"If he's innocent," said her father, "you have more pinetration than any girl in Europe; but if he's guilty of such an act against any one connected with you, Una, the guilt of all the divils in hell is no match for his. Well, you have heard all we wanted to say to you, and you needn't stay."

"As she herself says," observed John, "perhaps time will place everything in its true light. At present all those who are not in love with him have little doubt of his guilt. However, even as it is, in principle Una is right; putting love out of the question, we should prejudge no one."

"Time will," said his sister, "or rather God will in His own good time. On God I'm sure *he* depends; on his providence I also rely for seeing his name and character cleared of all that has been brought against him. John, I wish to speak to you in my own room; not that I intend to make any secret of it, but I want to consult with you first."

"*Cheerna dheelish*," exclaimed her mother; "what a wife that child would make to any man that desarved her!"

"It's more than I'm able to do, to be angry with her," returned the Bodagh. "Did you ever know her to tell a lie, Bridget?"

"A lie! no, nor the shadow of a lie never came out of her lips; the desate's not in her; an' may God look down on her wid compunction this day; for there's a dark road I doubt before her!"

"Amen," responded her father; "amen, I pray the Saviour. At all evints, O'Donovan's guilt or innocence will soon be known," he added; "the 'sizes begin this day week, so that the busniess will soon be settled either one way or other."

Una, on reaching her own room, thus addressed her affectionate brother:

"Now, John, you know that my grandfather left me two hundred guineas in his

will, and you know, too, the impossibility of getting any money from the clutches of Fardorougha. You must see Connor, and find out how he intends to defend himself. If his father won't allow him sufficient means to employ the best lawyers—as I doubt whether he will or not—just tell him the truth, that whilst I have a penny of these two hundred guineas, he mustn't want money; an' tell him, too, that all the world won't persuade me that he's guilty; say I know him to be innocent, and that his disgrace has made him dearer to me than he ever was before."

"Surely, you can't suppose for a moment, my dear Una, that I, your brother, who, by the way, have never opened my lips to him, could deliberately convey such a message."

"It must be conveyed in some manner; I'm resolved on that."

"The best plan," said the other, "is to find out whatsoever attorney they employ, and then to discover, if possible, whether his father has furnished sufficient funds for his defence. If he has, your offer is unnecessary; and if not, a private arrangement may be made with the attorney of which nobody else need know anything."

"God bless you, John! God bless you!" she replied; "that is far better; you have been a good brother to your poor Una—to your poor unhappy Una!"

She leaned her head on a table, and wept for some time at the trying fate, as she termed it, which hung over two beings so young and so guiltless of any crime. The brother soothed her by every argument in his power, and, after gently compelling her to dry her tears, expressed his intention of going early the next day to ascertain whether or not any professional man had been engaged to conduct the defence of her unfortunate lover.

In effecting this object there was little time lost on the part of young O'Brien. Knowing that two respectable attorneys lived in the next market town, he deemed it best to ascertain whether Fardorougha had applied to either of them for the purposes aforementioned, or, if not, to assure himself whether the old man had gone to any of those pettifoggers, who, rather than appear without practice, will undertake a cause almost on any terms, and afterwards institute a lawsuit for the recovery of a much larger bill of costs than a man of character and experience would demand.

In pursuance of the plan concerted between them, the next morning found him rapping, about eleven o'clock, at the door of an attorney named Kennedy, whom he asked to see on professional business. A clerk, on hearing his voice in the hall, came out and requested him to step into a back room, adding that his master, who was engaged, would see him the moment he had despatched the person then with him. Thus shown, he was separated from O'Halloran's office only by a pair of folding doors, through which every word uttered in the office could be distinctly heard; a circumstance that enabled O'Brien unintentionally to overhear the following dialogue between the parties:

"Well, my good friend," said Kennedy to the stranger, who, it appeared, had arrived before O'Brien only a few minutes, "I am now disengaged; pray, let me know your business."

The stranger paused a moment, as if seeking the most appropriate terms in which to express himself.

"It's a black business," he replied, "and the worst of it is I'm a poor man."

"You should not go to law, then," observed the attorney. "I tell you beforehand you will find it is devilish expensive."

"I know it," said the man; "it's open robbery; I know what it cost me to recover the little pences that wor sometimes due to me, when I broke myself lending weeny trifles to strugglin' people that I thought honest, and robbed me aftherwards."

"In what way can my services be of use to you at present? for that I suppose is the object of your calling upon me," said Kennedy.

"Oh thin, sir, if you have the grace of God, or kindness, or pity in your heart, you can save me, you can save my heart from breakin'!"

"How—how, man?—come to the point."

"My son, sir, Connor, my only son, was taken away from his mother an' me, an' put into jail yesterday mornin', an' he innocent; he was put in, sir, for burnin' Bodagh Buie O'Brien's haggard, an' as God is above me, he as much burnt it as you did."

"Then you are Fardorougha Donovan," said the attorney; "I have heard of that outrage; and, to be plain with you, a good deal about yourself. How, in the name of heaven, can you call yourself a poor man?"

"They belie me, sir, they're bitther inemies that say I'm otherwise."

"Be you rich or be you poor, let me tell you that I would not stand in your son's situation for the wealth of the king's exchequer. Sell your last cow; your last coat; your last acre; sell the bed from under you, without loss of time, if you wish to save his life: and I tell you that for this purpose you must employ the best counsel, and plenty of them. The Assizes commence on this day week, so that you have not a single moment to lose. Think now whether you love your son or your money best."

"Saver of earth, amn't I an unhappy man! every one sayin' I have money, an' me has not! Where would I get it? Where would a man like me get it? Instead o' that, I'm so poor that I see plainly I'll starve yet; I see it's before me! God pity me this day! But agin, there's my boy, my boy; oh, God, pity him! Say what's the laste, the lowest, the very lowest you could take, for defendin' him; an' for pity's sake, for charity's sake, for God's sake, don't grind a poor, helpless, ould man by extortion. If you knew the boy—if you knew him—oh, afore my God, if you knew him, you wouldn't be apt to charge a penny; you'd be proud to sarve sich a boy."

"You wish everything possible to be done for him, of course."

"Of coorse, of coorse; but widout extravagance; as asy an' light on a poor man as you can. You could shorten it, sure, an' lave out a grate dale that 'nd be of no use; an' half the paper 'ud do; for you might make the clerks write close—why, very little 'ud be wanted if you wor savin'."

"I can defend him with one counsel if you wish; but, if anxious to save the boy's life, you ought to enable your attorney to secure a strong bar of the most eminent lawyers he can engage."

"An' what 'nd it cost to hire three or four of them?"

"The whole expenses might amount to between thirty and forty guineas."

A deep groan of dismay, astonishment, and anguish, was the only reply made to this for some time.

"Oh, heavens above!" he screamed, "what will—what *will* become of me! I'd rather be dead, as I'll soon be, than hear this, or know it at all. How could I get it? I'm as poor as poverty itself! Oh, couldn't you feel for the boy, an' defend him on trust; couldn't you feel for him?"

"It's your business to do that," returned the man of law, coolly.

"Feel for him; me! oh, little you know how my heart's in him; but any way, I'm an unhappy man; everything in the world wide goes against me; but—oh, my darlin' boy—Connor, Connor, my son, to be tould that I don't feel for you—well you know, avourneen machree—well you know that I feel for you, and 'ud kiss the track of your feet upon the ground. Oh, it's cruel to tell it to me; to say sich a thing to a man that his heart's breakin' widin him for your sake; but, sir, you sed this minute that you could defend him wid *one* lawyer?"

"Certainly, and with a cheap one, too, if you wish; but, in that case, I would rather decline the thing altogether."

"Why? why? sure if you can defind him chapely, isn't it so much saved? isn't it the same as if you definded him at a higher rate? Sure, if one lawyer tells the truth for the poor boy, ten or fifteen can do no more; an' thin maybe they'd crass in an' puzzle one another if you hired too many of them."

"How would you feel, should your son be found guilty; you know the penalty is his life. He will be executed."

O'Brien could hear the old man clap his hands in agony, and in truth he walked about wringing them as if his heart would burst.

"What will I do?" he exclaimed; "what will I do? I can't lose him, an' I won't lose him! Lose him! oh God, oh God, it is to lose the best son and only child that ever man had! Wouldn't it be downright murdher in me to let him be lost if I could prevint it? Oh, if I was in his place, what wouldn't he do for me, for the father that he always loved!"

The tears ran copiously down his furrowed cheeks; and his whole appearance evinced such distraction and anguish as could rarely be witnessed.

"I'll tell you what I'll do," he added; "I'll give you fifty guineas *after my death* if you'll defind him properly."

"Much obliged," replied the other; "but in matters of this kind we make no such bargains."

"I'll make it sixty, in case you don't axe it *now*."

"Can you give me security that I'll survive you? Why, you are tough-looking enough to outlive me."

"Me tough!—no, God help me, my race is nearly run; I won't be alive this day twelve months—look at the differ atween us."

"This is idle talk," said the attorney; "determine on what you'll do; really my time is valuable, and I am now wasting it to no purpose."

"Take the offer—depind on't it'll soon come to you."

"No, no," said the other, coolly; "not at all; we might shut up shop if we made such *post obit* bargains as that."

"I'll tell you," said Fardorougha; "I'll tell you what;" his eyes gleamed with a reddish, bitter light; and he clasped his withered hands together, until the joints cracked, and the perspiration teemed from his pale, sallow features; "I'll tell you," he added—"I'll make it seventy!"

"No."

"Aighty!"

"No."

"Ninety!"—with a husky shriek.

"No, no."

"A hundhre'—a hundhre'—a hundhre'," he shouted; "a hundhre', when I'm gone—*when I'm gone!*"

One solemn and determined No, that precluded all hopes of any such arrangement, was the only reply.

The old man leaped up again, and looked impatiently and wildly and fiercely about him.

"What are you?" he shouted; "what are you? You're a divil—a born divil. Will nothing but my death satisfy you? Do you want to rob me—to starve me—to murdher me? Don't you see the state I'm in by you? Look at me—look at these thremblin' limbs—look at the sweat powerin' down from my poor ould face! What is it you want? There—there's my gray hairs to you. You have brought me to that—to more than that—I'm dyin' this minute—I'm dyin'—oh, my boy—my boy, if I had you here—ay, I'm—I'm——"

He staggered over on his seat, his eyes gleaming in a fixed and intense glare at the attorney; his hands were clenched, his lips parched, and his mummy-like cheeks sucked, as before, into his toothless jaws. In addition to all this, there was a bitter white smile of despair upon his features, and his thin gray locks, that were discomposed in the paroxysm by his own hands, stood out in disorder upon his head. We question, indeed, whether mere imagination could, without having actually witnessed it in real life, conceive any object so frightfully illustrative of the terrible dominion which the passion of avarice is capable of exercising over the human heart.

"I protest to Heaven," exclaimed the attorney, alarmed, "I believe the man is dying—if not dead, he is motionless."

"O'Donovan, what's the matter with you?"

The old man's lips gave a dry, hard smack, then became desperately compressed together, and his cheeks were drawn still further into his jaws. At length he sighed deeply, and changed his fixed and motionless attitude.

"He is alive, at all events," said one of his young men.

Fardorougha turned his eyes upon the speaker, then upon his master, and successively upon two other assistants who were in the office.

"What is this?" said he, "what is this?—I'm very weak—will you get me a dhrink o' wather? God help me—God direct me! I'm an unhappy man; get me a dhrink, for Heaven's sake! I can hardly spake, my mouth and lips are so dry."

The water having been procured, he drank it eagerly, and felt evidently relieved.

"This business," he continued, "about the money—I mane about my poor boy, Connor, how will it be managed, sir?"

"I have already told you that there is but one way of managing it, and that is, as the young man's life is at stake, to spare no cost."

"And I *must* do that?"

"You ought, at least, remember that he's an only son, and that if you lose him——"

"Lose him!—I can't—I couldn't—I'd die—die—dead——"

"And by so shameful a death," proceeded Cassidy, "you will not only be childless, but you will have the bitter fact to reflect on that he died in disgrace. You will blush to name him! What father would not make any sacrifice to prevent his child from meeting such a fate? It's a trying thing and a pitiable calamity to see a father ashamed to name the child that he loves."

The old man arose, and, approaching Cassidy, said, eagerly, "How much will do? Ashamed to name you, alanna, *Chierna—Chierna*—ashamed to name you, Connor! Oh! if the world knew you, asthore, as well as I an' your poor mother knows you, they'd say that we ought to be proud to hear your name soundin' in our ears. How much will do? for, may God stringthen me, I'll do it."

"I think about forty guineas; it may be more, and it may be less, but we will say forty."

"Then I'll give you an ordher for it on a man that's a good mark. Give me pin an' paper, fast."

"The paper was placed before him, and he held the pen in his hand for some time, and, ere he wrote, turned a look of deep distress on Cassidy.

"God Almighty pity me!" said he; "you see—you see that I'm a poor heart-broken creature—a ruined man I'll be—a ruined man!"

"Think of your son, and of his situation."

"It's before me—I know it is—to die like a dog behind a ditch wid hunger!"

"Think of your son, I say, and, if possible, save him from a shameful death."

"What! Ay—yis—yis—surely—surely—oh, my poor boy—my innocent boy—I will—I *will* do it."

He then sat down, and, with a tremulous hand, and lips tightly drawn together, wrote an order on P——, the county treasurer, for the money.

Cassidy, on seeing it, looked alternately at the paper and the man for a considerable time.

"Is P—— your banker?" he asked.

"Every penny that I'm worth he has."

"Then you're a ruined man," he replied, with cool emphasis. "P—— absconded the day before yesterday, and robbed half the county. Have you no loose cash at home?"

"Robbed! who robbed?"

"Why, P—— has robbed every man who was fool enough to trust him; he's off to the Isle of Man, with the county funds in addition to the other prog."

"You don't mane to say," replied Fardorougha, with a hideous calmness of voice and manner; "you *don't*, you *can't* mane to say he has run off wid *my* money?"

"I do; you'll never see a shilling of it, if you live to the age of a Hebrew patriarch. See what it is to fix the heart upon money. You are now, what you wish the world to believe you to be, a poor man."

"Ho! ho!" howled the miser, "he darn't, he darn't—wouldn't God consume him if he robbed the poor—wouldn't God stiffen him, and pin him to the airth, if he attempted to run off wid the hard earnings of strugglin' honest men? Where 'ud God be, an' him to dar to do it! But it's a falsity, an' you're thryin' me to see how I'd bear it—it is, it is, an' may Heaven forgive you!"

"It's as true as the Gospel," replied the other; "why, I'm surprised you didn't hear it before now—every one knows it—it's over the whole country."

"It's a lie—it's a lie!" he howled again; "no one dar to do such an act. You have some schame in this—you're not a safe man; you're a villain, an' nothin' else; but I'll soon know; which of these is my hat?"

"You are mad, I think," said Cassidy.

"Get me my hat, I say; I'll soon know it; but sure the world's all in a schame against me—all, all, young an' ould—where's my hat, I say?"

"You have put it upon your head this moment," said the other.

"An' my stick?"

"It's in your hand."

"The curse o' Heaven upon you," he shrieked, "whether it's thrue or false!" and, with a look that might scorch him to whom it was directed, he shuffled in a wild and frantic mood out of the house.

"The man is mad," observed Cassidy; "or, if not, he will soon be so; I never witnessed such a desperate case of avarice. If ever the demon of money lurked in any man's soul, it's in his. God bless me! God bless me! it's dreadful! Richard, tell the gentleman in the dining-room I'm at leisure to see him."

The scene we have attempted to describe spared O'Brien the trouble of much unpleasant inquiry, and enabled him to enter at once into the proposed arrangements on behalf of Connor. Of course he did not permit his sister's name to transpire, nor any trace whatsoever to appear, by which her delicacy might be compromised, or her character involved. His interference in the matter he judiciously put upon the footing of personal regard for the young man, and his reluctance to be even the indirect means of bringing him to a violent and shameful death. Having thus fulfilled Una's instructions, he returned home, and relieved her of a heavy burthen by a full communication of all that had been done.

The struggle hitherto endured by Fardorougha was in its own nature sufficiently severe to render his sufferings sharp and pungent; still they resembled the influence of local disease more than that of a malady which prostrates the strength and grapples with the powers of the whole constitution. The sensation he immediately felt, on hearing that his banker had absconded with the gains of his penurious life, was rather a stunning shock that occasioned for the moment a feeling of dull, and heavy, and overwhelming dismay. It filled, nay, it actually distended his narrow soul with an oppressive sense of exclusive misery that banished all consideration for every person and thing extraneous to his individual selfishness. In truth, the tumult of his mind was peculiarly wild and anomalous. The situation of his son, and the dreadful fate that hung over him, were as completely forgotten as if they did not exist. Yet there lay, underneath his own gloomy agony, a remote consciousness of collateral affliction, such as is frequently experienced by those who may be drawn, by some temporary and present pleasure, from the contemplation of their misery. We feel, in such cases, that the darkness is upon us, even while the image of the calamity is not before the mind; nay, it sometimes requires an effort to bring it back, when anxious to account for our depression; but when it comes, the heart sinks with a shudder, and we feel, that, although it ceased to engage our thoughts, we had been sitting all the time beneath its shadow. For this reason, although Fardorougha's own loss absorbed, in one sense, all his powers of suffering, still he knew that *something else* pressed with additional weight upon his heart. Of its distinct character, however, he was ignorant, and only felt that a dead and heavy load of multiplied affliction bent him in burning anguish to the earth.

There is something more or less eccentric in the gait and dress of every miser. Fardorougha's pace was naturally slow, and the habit for which, in the latter point, he had all his life been remarkable, was that of

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He rattled, and thumped, and screamed, as if P—— himself had actually been within hearing, but still to no purpose.—*Fardorougha the Miser*, *Page* 245.

wearing a great-coat thrown loosely about his shoulders. In summer it saved an inside one, and, as he said, kept him cool and comfortable. That he seldom or never put his arms into it arose from the fact that he knew it would last a much longer period of time than if he wore it in the usual manner.

On leaving the attorney's office, he might be seen creeping along towards the County Treasurer's, at a pace quite unusual to him; his hollow, gleaming eyes were bent on the earth; his *Cothamore* about his shoulders; his staff held with a tight desperate grip, and his whole appearance that of a man frightfully distracted by the intelligence of some sudden calamity.

He had not proceeded far on this hopeless errand, when many bitter confirmations of the melancholy truth, by persons whom he met on their return from P——'s residence, were afforded him. Even these, however, were insufficient to satisfy him; he heard them with a vehement impatience, that could not brook the bare possibility of the report being true. His soul clung with the tenacity of a death-grip to the hope, that however others might have suffered, some chance might, notwithstanding, still remain in *his* particular favor. In the meantime, he poured out curses of unexampled malignity against the guilty defaulter, on whose head he invoked the Almighty's vengeance with a venomous fervor which appalled all who heard him. Having reached the treasurer's house, a scene presented itself that was by no means calculated to afford him consolation. Persons of every condition, from the squireen and gentleman farmer, to the humble widow and inexperienced orphan, stood in melancholy groups about the deserted mansion, interchanging details of their losses, their blasted prospects, and their immediate ruin. The cries of the widow, who mourned for the desolation brought upon her and her now destitute orphans, rose in a piteous wail to heaven, and the industrious fathers of many struggling families, with pale faces and breaking hearts, looked in silent misery upon the closed shutters and smokeless chimneys of their oppressor's house, bitterly conscious that the laws of the boasted constitution under which they lived, permitted the destroyer of hundreds to enjoy, in luxury and security, the many thousands of which, at one fell and rapacious swoop, he had deprived them.

With white, quivering lips and panting breath, Fardorougha approached and joined them.

"What, what," said he, in a broken sentence, "is this true—can it, can it be true? Is the thievin' villain of hell gone? Has he robbed us, ruined us, destroyed us?"

"Ah, too thrue it is," replied a farmer; "the dam' rip is off to that nest of robbers, the Isle of Man; ay, he's gone! an' may all our bad luck past, present, and to come, go with him, an' all he tuck!"

Fardorougha looked at his informant as if he had been P—— himself; he then glared from one to another, whilst the white foam wrought up to his lips by the prodigious force of his excitement. He clasped his hands, then attempted to speak, but language had abandoned him.

"If one is to judge from your appearance, you have suffered heavily," observed the farmer.

The other stared at him with a kind of angry amazement for doubting it, or, it might be, for speaking so coolly of his loss.

"Suffered!" said he, "ay, ay, but did yees thry the house? we'll see—suffered!—suffered!—we'll see."

He immediately shuffled over to the hall door, which he assaulted with the eagerness of a despairing soul at the gate of heaven, throwing into each knock such a character of impatience and apprehension, as one might suppose the aforesaid soul to feel from a certain knowledge that the devil's clutches were spread immediately behind, to seize and carry him to perdition. His impetuosity, however, was all in vain; not even an echo reverberated through the cold and empty walls, but, on the contrary, every peal was followed by a most unromantic and ominous silence.

"That man appears beside himself," observed another of the sufferers; "surely, if he wasn't half-mad, he'd not expect to find any one in an empty house!"

"Devil a much it signifies whether he's mad or otherwise," responded a neighbor. "I know him well; his name's Fardorougha Donovan, the miser of Lisnamona, the biggest shkew that ever skinned a flint. If P—— did nothin' worse than fleece *him*, it would never stand between him an' the blessin' o' Heaven."

Fardorougha, in the mean time, finding that no response was given from the front, passed hurriedly by an archway into the back court, where he made similar efforts to get in by attempting to force the kitchen door. Every entrance, however, had been strongly secured; he rattled, and thumped, and screamed, as if P—— himself had actually been within hearing, but still to no purpose; he might as well have expected to extort a reply from the grave.

When he returned to the group that stood on the lawn, the deadly conviction that all was lost affected every joint of his

body with a nervous trepidation, that might have been mistaken for *delirium tremens*. His eyes were full of terror, mingled with the impotent fury of hatred and revenge; whilst over all now predominated for the first time such an expression of horror and despair, as made the spectators shudder to look upon him.

"Where was God," said he, addressing them, and his voice, naturally thin and wiry, now became husky and hollow, "where was God, to suffer this? to suffer the poor to be ruined, and the rich to be made poor? Was it right for the Almighty to look on an' let the villain do it? No—no—no; I say no!"

The group around him shuddered at the daring blasphemy to which his monstrous passion had driven him. Many females, who were in tears, lamenting audibly, started, and felt their grief suspended for a moment by this revolting charge against the justice of Providence.

"What do you all stand for here," he proceeded, "like stocks an' stones? Why don't yees kneel with me, an' let us join in one curse; one, no, but let us shower them down upon him in thousands—in millions; an' when we can no longer *spake* them, let us *think* them. To the last hour of my life my heart 'ill never be widout a curse for him; an' the last word afore I go into the presence of God, 'll be a black, heavy blessin' from hell against him an' his, sowl an' body, while a drop o' their bad blood's upon the earth."

"Don't be blasphamin', honest man," said a bystander; "if you've lost money, that's no rason why you should fly in the face o' God for P——'s roguery. Devil a one o' myself cares if I join you in a volley against the robbin' scoundril, but I'd not take all the money the rip of hell ran away wid, an' spake of God as you do."

"Oh, Saver!" exclaimed Fardorougha, who probably heard not a word he said; "I knew—I knew—I always felt it was before me—a dog's death behind a ditch—my tongue out wid starvation and hunger, and it was he brought me to it!"

He had already knelt, and was uncovered, his whitish hair tossed by the breeze in confusion about a face on which was painted the fearful workings of that giant spirit, under whose tremendous grasp he writhed and suffered like a serpent in the talons of a vulture. In this position, with uplifted and trembling arms, his face raised towards heaven, and his whole figure shrunk firmly together by the intense malignity with which he was about to hiss out his venomous imprecations against the defaulter, he presented at least one instance in which the low, sordid vice of avarice rose to something like wild grandeur, if not sublimity.

Having remained in this posture for some time, he clasped his withered hands together and wrung them until the bones cracked, then rising up and striking his stick bitterly upon the earth—

"I can't," he exclaimed, "I can't get out the curses against him; but my heart's full of them—they're in it—they're in it!—it's black an' hot wid them; I feel them here—here—*movin' as if they wor alive*, an' they'll be out."

Such was the strength and impetuosity of his hatred, and such his eagerness to discharge the whole quiver of his maledictions against the great public delinquent, that, as often happens in cases of overwhelming agitation, his faculties were paralyzed by the storm of passion which raged within him.

Having risen to his feet, he left the group, muttering his wordless malignity as he went along, and occasionally pausing to look back with the fiery glare of a hyena at the house in which the robbery of his soul's treasure had been planned and accomplished.

It is unnecessary to say that the arrangements entered into with Cassidy, by John O'Brien, were promptly and ably carried into effect. A rapid ride soon brought the man of briefs and depositions to the prison, where the unhappy Connor lay. The young man's story, though simple, was improbable, and his version of the burning such as induced Cassidy, who knew little of impressions and feelings in the absence of facts, to believe that no other head than his ever concocted the crime. Still, from the manly sincerity with which his young client spoke, he felt inclined to impute the act to a freak of boyish malice and disappointment, rather than to a spirit of vindictive rancor. He entertained no expectation whatsoever of Connor's acquittal, and hinted to him that it was his habit in such cases to recommend his clients to be prepared for the worst, without, at the same time, altogether abolishing hope. There was, indeed, nothing to break the chain of circumstantial evidence in which Flanagan had entangled him; he had been at the haggard shortly before the conflagration broke out; he had met Phil. Curtis, and begged that man to conceal the fact of his having seen him, and he had not slept in his own bed either on that or the preceding night. It was to no purpose he affirmed that Flanagan himself had borrowed from him, and worn, on the night in question, the shoes whose prints were so strongly against him, or that the steel and tinder-box, which were found in his pocket, actually belonged to his accuser, who must have put

them there without his knowledge. His case, in fact, was a bad one, and he felt that the interview with his attorney left him more seriously impressed with the danger of his situation, than he had been up till that period.

"I suppose," said he, when the instructions were completed, "you have seen my father?"

"Everything is fully and liberally arranged," replied the other, with reservation; "your father has been with me to-day; in fact, I parted with him only a few minutes before I left home. So far let your mind be easy. The government prosecutes, which is something in your favor; and now, good-by to you; for my part, I neither advise you to hope or despair. If the worst comes to the worst, you must bear it like a man; and if we get an acquittal, it will prove the more agreeable for its not being expected."

The unfortunate youth felt, after Cassidy's departure, the full force of that dark and fearful presentiment which arises from the approach of the mightiest calamity that can befall an innocent man—a public and ignominious death, while in the very pride of youth, strength, and those natural hopes of happiness which existence had otherwise promised. In him this awful apprehension proceeded neither from the terror of judgment nor of hell, but from that dread of being withdrawn from life, and of passing down from the light, the enjoyments and busy intercourse of a breathing and conscious world, into the silence and corruption of the unknown grave. When this ghastly picture was brought near him by the force of his imagination, he felt for a moment as if his heart had died away in him, and his blood became congealed into ice. Should this continue, he knew that human nature could not sustain it long, and he had already resolved to bear his fate with firmness, whatever that fate might be. He then reflected that he was innocent, and, remembering the practice of his simple and less political forefathers, he knelt down and fervently besought the protection of that Being in whose hands are the issues of life and death.

On rising from this act of heartfelt devotion, he experienced that support which he required so much. The fear of death ceased to alarm him, and his natural fortitude returned with more than its usual power to his support. In this state of mind he was pacing his narrow room, when the door opened, and his father, with a tottering step, entered and approached him. The son was startled, if not terrified, at the change which so short a time had wrought in the old man's appearance.

"Good God, father dear!" he exclaimed, as the latter threw his arms with a tight and clinging grasp about him; "good heavens! what has happened to change you so much for the worse? Why, if you fret this way about me, you'll soon break your heart. Why will you fret, father, when you know I am *innocent?* Surely, at the worst, it is better to die innocent than to live guilty."

"Connor," said the old man, still clinging tenaciously to him, and looking wildly into his face, "Connor, it's broke—my heart's broke at last. Oh, Connor, won't you pity me when you hear it—won't you, Connor—oh, when you hear it, Connor, won't you pity me? It's gone, it's gone, it's gone—he's off, off—to that nest of robbers, the Isle of Man, and has robbed me and half the county. P—— has; I'm a ruined man, a beggar, an' will die a dog's death."

Connor looked down keenly into his father's face, and began to entertain a surmise so terrible that the beatings of his heart were in a moment audible to his own ear.

"Father," he inquired, "in the name of God what is wrong with you? What is it you spake of? Has P—— gone off with your money? Sit down, and don't look so terrified."

"He has, Connor—robbed me an' half the county—he disappeared the evenin' of the very day I left my last lodgment wid him; he's in that nest of robbers, the Isle of Man, an' I'm ruined—ruined! Oh God! Connor, how can I stand it? all my earnin's an' my savin's an' the fruits of my industry in *his* pocket, an' upon *his* back, an' upon *his* bones! My brain is reelin'—I dunna what I'm doin', nor what I'll do. To what hand now can I turn myself? Who'll assist me! I dunna what I'm doin', nor scarcely what I'm sayin'. My head's all in confusion. Gone! gone! gone! Oh see the luck that has come down upon me! Above all men, why was I singled out to be made a world's wondher of—why was *I?* What did I do? I robbed no one; yet it's gone—an' see the death that's afore me! oh God! oh God!"

"Well, father, let it go—you have still your health; you have still my poor mother to console you; and I hope you'll soon have myself, too; between us we'll keep you comfortable, and, if you'll allow us to take our own way, more so than ever you did——"

Fardorougha started, as if struck by some faint but sudden recollection. All at once he looked with amazement around the room, and afterwards with a pause of inquiry, at his son. At length, a light of some forgotten memory appeared to flash at once across his brain; his countenance changed from the wild and unsettled expression which it bore,

to one more stamped with the earnest humanity of our better nature.

"Oh, Connor!" he at last exclaimed, putting his two hands into those of his son: "can you pity me, an' forgive me? You see, my poor boy, how I'm sufferin', an' you see that I can't—I won't—be able to bear up against this long."

The tears here ran down his worn and hollow cheeks.

"Oh," he proceeded, "how could I forget you, my darlin' boy? But I hardly think my head's right. If I had you with me, an' before my eyes, you'd keep my heart right, an' give me strength, which I stand sorely in need of. Saints in glory! how could I forget you, acushla, an' what now can I do for you? Not a penny have I to pay lawyer, or attorney, or any one, to defind you at your trial, and it so near!"

"Why, haven't you settled all that with Mr. Cassidy, the attorney?"

"Not a bit, achora machree, not a bit; I was wid him this day, an' had agreed, but whin I wint to give him an ordher on P——, he—oh saints above! he whistled at me an' it—an' tould me that P—— was gone to that nest o' robbers, the Isle of Man."

Connor turned his eyes, during a long pause, on the floor, and it was evident by his features that he labored under some powerful and profound emotion. He rose up and took a sudden turn or two across the room, then, resuming his seat, he wiped away a few bitter tears that no firmness on his part could repress.

"Noble girl—my darling, darling life! I see it all," he exclaimed. "Father, I never felt how bitter an' dark my fate is till *now*. Death, death would be little to me, only for her; but to leave her—to leave *her*." He suddenly buried his face in his hands; but, by an instant effort once more rose up and added—"Well, I'll die worthy of her, if I can't live so. Like a man I'll die, if it must be—she knows I'm innocent, father; an' when others—when the world—will be talking of me as a villain, there will be, out of my own family at all events, one heart and one tongue, that will defend my unhappy name. If I am to come to a shameful death, I'll care but little about what the world may think, but that *she* knows me to be innocent, will make me die proudly—proudly."

Whilst he thus spoke and thought, the father's eyes, with a fixed gaze, steadily followed his motions; the old man's countenance altered; it first became pale as the ghastly visage of a skeleton, anon darkened with horror, which eventually shifted its hue into the workings of some passion or feeling that was new to him.

"Connor," said he, feebly, "I am unwell—unwell—come and sit down by me."

"You are too much distressed every way, father," said his son, taking his place upon his iron bedstead beside him.

"I am," said Fardorougha, calmly; "I am too much distressed—sit nearer me, Connor. I wish your mother was here, but she wasn't able to come, she's unwell too; a good mother she was, Connor, and a good wife."

The son was struck, and somewhat alarmed, by this sudden and extraordinary calmness of the old man.

"Father dear," said he, "don't be too much disheartened—all will be well yet, I hope—my trust in God is strong."

"I hope all will be well," replied the old man, "sit nearer me, an' Connor, let me lay my head over upon your breast. I'm thinkin' a great dale. Don't the world say, Connor, that I am a bad man?"

"I don't care what the world says; no one in it ever durst say as much to *me*, father dear."

The old man looked up affectionately, but shook his head apparently in calm but rooted sorrow.

"Put your arms about me, Connor, and keep my head a little more up; I'm weak an' tired, an', someway, spakin's a trouble to me; let me think for a while."

"Do so, father," said the son, with deep compassion; "God knows but you're sufferin' enough to wear you out."

"It is," said Fardorougha, "it is."

A silence of some minutes ensued, during which, Connor perceived that the old man, overcome with care and misery, had actually fallen asleep with his head upon his bosom. This circumstance, though by no means extraordinary, affected him very much. On surveying the pallid face of his father, and the worn, thread-like veins that ran along his temples, and calling to mind the love of the old man for himself, which even avarice, in its deadliest power, failed to utterly overcome, he felt all the springs of his affection loosened, and his soul vibrated with a tenderness towards him, such as no situation in their past lives had ever before created.

"If my fate chances to be an untimely one, father dear," he slowly murmured, "we'll soon meet in another place; for I know that you will not long live after me."

He then thought with bitterness of his mother and Una, and wondered at the mystery of the trial to which he was exposed.

The old man's slumber, however, was not dreamless, nor so refreshing as the exhaustion of a frame shattered by the havoc of contending principles required. On the contrary, it was disturbed by heavy groans,

quick startings, and those twitchings of the limbs which betoken a restless mood of mind, and a nervous system highly excited. In the course of half an hour, the symptoms of his inward commotion became more apparent. From being, as at first, merely physical, they assumed a mental character, and passed from ejaculations and single words, to short sentences, and ultimately to those of considerable length.

"Gone!" he exclaimed, "gone! O God! my curse—starved—dog—wid my tongue out!"

This dread of starvation, which haunted him through life, appeared in his dream still to follow him like a demon.

"I'm dyin'," he said, "I'm dyin' wid hunger—will no one give me a morsel? I was robbed an' have no money—don't you see me starvin'? I'm cuttin' wid hunger—five days without mate—bring me mate, for God's sake—mate, mate, mate!—I'm gaspin—my tongue's out; look at me, like a dog, behind this ditch, an' my tongue out!"

The son at this period would have awoke him, but he became more composed, for a time, and enjoyed apparently a refreshing sleep. Still, it soon was evident that he dreamt, and as clear that a change had come o'er the spirit of his dream.

"Who'll prevent me!" he exclaimed. "Isn't he my son—our only child? Let me alone—I must, I must—what's my life?—take *it*, an' let *him* live."

The tears started in Connor's eyes, and he pressed his father to his heart.

"Don't hould me," he proceeded. "O God! here, I'll give all I'm worth, an' save him! O, let me, thin—let me but kiss him once before he dies; it was I, it was myself that murdhered him—all might 'a been well; ay, it was I that murdhered you, Connor, my brave boy, an' have I you in my arms? O, avick agus asthore machree, it was I that murdhered you. by my—but they're takin' him—they're bearin' him away to——"

He started, and awoke; but so terrific had been his dream, that on opening his eyes he clasped Connor in his arms, and exclaimed,—

"No no, I'll hould him till you cut my grip; Connor, avick machree, hould to me!"

"Father, father, for God's sake, think a minute, you wor only dreaming."

"Eh—what—where am I? Oh, Connor, darling, if you knew the dhrames I had—I thought you wor on the scaffle; but thanks be to the Saver, it *was* only a dhrame!"

"Nothing more, father, nothing more; but for God's sake, keep your mind aisy. Trust in God, father, everything's in *His* hands; if it's His will to make us suffer, we ought to submit; and if it's not His will, He surely can bring us out of all our throubles. That's the greatest comfort I have."

Fardorougha once more became calm, but still there was on his countenance, which was mournful and full of something else than simple sorrow, some deeply fixed determination, such as it was difficult to develop.

"Connor, achora," said he, "I must lave you, for there's little time to be lost. What attorney would you wish me to employ? I'll go home and sell oats and a cow or two. I've done you harm enough—more than you know—but now I'll spare no cost to get you out of this business. Connor, the tears that I saw awhile agone run down your cheeks cut me to the heart."

The son then informed him that a friend had taken proper measures for his defence, and that any further interference on his part would only create confusion and delay. He also entreated his father to make no allusion whatsoever to *this* circumstance, and added, "that he himself actually knew not the name of the friend in question, but that, as the matter stood, he considered even a surmise to be a breach of confidence that might be indelicate and offensive. After the trial, you can and ought to pay the expenses, and not be under an obligation to any one of so solemn a kind as that." He then sent his affectionate love and duty to his mother, at whose name his eyes were again filled with tears, and begged the old man to comfort and support her with the utmost care and tenderness. As she was unwell, he requested him to dissuade her against visiting him till after the trial, lest an interview might increase her illness, and render her less capable of bearing up under an unfavorable sentence, should such be the issue of the prosecution. Having then bade farewell to, and embraced the old man, the latter departed with more calmness and fortitude than he had up to that period displayed.

When Time approaches the miserable with calamity in his train, his opinion is swifter than that of the eagle; but, alas! when carrying them towards happiness, his pace is slower than is that of the tortoise. The only three persons on earth, whose happiness was involved in that of O'Donovan, found themselves, on the eve of the assizes, overshadowed by a dreariness of heart, that was strong in proportion to the love they bore him. The dead calm which had fallen on Fardorougha was absolutely more painful to his wife than would have been the paroxysms that resulted from his lust of wealth. Since his last interview with Connor, he never once alluded to the loss of his money, unless abruptly in his dreams, but there was stamped upon his whole manner a gloomy and mysterious com-

posure, which, of itself, wofully sank her spirits, independently of the fate which impended over their son. The change, visible on both, and the breaking down of their strength were indeed pitiable.

As for Una, it would be difficult to describe her struggle between confidence in his innocence, and apprehension of the law, which she knew had often punished the guiltless instead of the criminal. 'Tis true she attempted to assume, in the eyes of others, a fortitude which belied her fears, and even affected to smile at the possibility of her lover's honor and character suffering any tarnish from the ordeal to which they were about to be submitted. Her smile, however, on such occasions, was a melancholy one, and the secret tears she shed might prove, as they did to her brother, who was alone privy to her grief, the extent of those terrors which, notwithstanding her disavowal of them, wrung her soul so bitterly. Day after day her spirits became more and more depressed, till, as the crisis of Connor's fate arrived, the roses had altogether flown from her cheeks.

Indeed, now that the trial was at hand, public sympathy turned rapidly and strongly in his favor; his father had lost that wealth, the acquisition of which earned him so heavy a portion of infamy; and, as he had been sufficiently punished *in his own person*, they did not think it just to transfer any portion of the resentment borne against him to a son who had never participated in his system of oppression. They felt for Connor now on his own account, and remembered only his amiable and excellent character. In addition to this, the history of the mutual attachment between him and Una having become the topic of general conversation, the rash act for which he stood committed was good-humoredly resolved into a foolish freak of love; for which it would be a thousand murders to take away his life. In such mood were the public and the parties most interested in the event of our story, when the morning dawned of that awful day which was to restore Connor O'Donovan to the hearts that loved him so well, or to doom him, a convicted felon, to a shameful and ignominious death.

At length the trial came on, and our unhappy prisoner, at the hour of eleven o'clock, was placed at the bar of his country to stand the brunt of a government prosecution. Common report had already carried abroad the story of Una's love and his, many interesting accounts of which had got into the papers of the day. When he stood forward, therefore, all eyes were eagerly riveted upon him; the judge glanced at him with calm, dispassionate scrutiny, and the members of the bar, especially the juniors, turned round, surveyed him through their glasses with a gaze in which might be read something more than that hard indifference which familiarity with human crime and affliction ultimately produces even in dispositions most humane and amiable. No sooner had the curiosity of the multitude been gratified, than a murmur of pity, blended slightly with surprise and approbation, ran lowly through the court-house. One of the judges whispered a few words to his brother, and the latter again surveyed Connor with a countenance in which were depicted admiration and regret. The counsel also chatted to each other in a low tone, occasionally turning round and marking his deportment and appearance with increasing interest.

Seldom, probably never, had a more striking, perhaps a more noble figure, stood at the bar of that court. His locks were rich and brown; his forehead expansive, and his manly features remarkable for their symmetry; his teeth were regular and white, and his dark eye full of a youthful lustre which the dread of no calamity could repress. Neither was his figure, which was of the tallest, inferior in a single point to so fine a countenance. As he stood, at his full height of six feet, it was impossible not to feel deeply influenced in his favor, especially after having witnessed the mournful but dignified composure of his manner, equally remote from indifference or dejection. He appeared, indeed, to view in its proper light the danger of the position in which he stood, but he viewed it with the calm, unshrinking energy of a brave man who is always prepared for the worst. Indeed, there might be observed upon his broad, open brow a loftiness of bearing such as is not unfrequently produced by a consciousness of innocence, and the natural elevation of mind which results from a sense of danger; to which we may add that inward scorn which is ever felt for baseness, by those who are degraded to the necessity of defending themselves against the villany of the malignant and profligate.

When called upon to plead to the indictment, he uttered the words "not guilty" in a full, firm and mellow voice, that drew the eyes of the spectators once more upon him, and occasioned another slight hum of sympathy and admiration. No change of color was observable on his countenance, or any other expression, save the lofty composure to which we have just alluded.

The trial at length proceeded; and, after a long and able statement from the Attorney-General, Bartle Flanagan was called up on the table. The prisoner, whose motions were keenly observed, betrayed, on seeing him, neither embarrassment nor agitation;

all that could be perceived was a more earnest and intense light in his eyes, as they settled upon his accuser. Flanagan detailed, with singular minuteness and accuracy, the whole progress of the crime from its first conception to its perpetration. Indeed, had he himself been in the dock, and his evidence against Connor a confession of his own guilt, it would, with some exceptions, have been literally true. He was ably cross-examined, but no tact, or experience, or talent, on the part of the prisoner's counsel, could, in any important degree, shake his testimony. The ingenuity with which he laid and conducted the plot was astonishing, as was his foresight, and the precaution he adopted against detection. Cassidy, Connor's attorney, had ferreted out the very man from whom he purchased the tinder-box, with a hope of proving that it was not the prisoner's property but his own; yet this person, who remembered the transaction very well, assured him that Flanagan said he procured it by the desire of Fardorougha Donovan's son.

During his whole evidence, he never once raised his eye to look upon the prisoner's face, until he was desired to identify him. He then turned round, and, standing with the rod in his hand, looked for some moments upon his victim. His dark brows got black as night, whilst his cheeks were blanched to the hue of ashes—the white smile as before sat upon his lips, and his eyes, in which there blazed the unsteady fire of a treacherous and cowardly heart, sparkled with the red turbid glare of triumph and vengeance. He laid the rod upon Connor's head, and they gazed at each other face to face, exhibiting as striking a contrast as could be witnessed. The latter stood erect and unshaken—his eye calmly bent upon that of his foe, but with a spirit in it that seemed to *him* alone by whom it was best understood, to strike dismay into the very soul of falsehood within him. The villain's eyes could not withstand the glance of Connor's—they fell, and his whole countenance assumed such a blank and guilty stamp, that an old experienced barrister, who watched them both, could not avoid saying, that if he had his will they should exchange situations.

"I would not hang a dog," he whispered, "on that fellow's evidence—he has guilt in his face."

When asked why he ran away on meeting Phil. Curtis, near O'Brien's house, on their return that night, while Connor held his ground, he replied that it was very natural he should run away, and not wish to be seen after having assisted at such a crime. In reply to another question, he said it was as natural that Connor should have run away also, and that he could not account for it, except by the fact that God always occasions the guilty to commit some oversight, by which they may be brought to punishment. These replies, apparently so rational and satisfactory, convinced Connor's counsel that his case was hopeless, and that no skill or ingenuity on their part could succeed in breaking down Flanagan's evidence.

The next witness called was Phil. Curtis, whose testimony corroborated Bartle's in every particular, and gave to the whole trial a character of gloom and despair. The constables who applied his shoes to the foot-marks were then produced, and swore in the clearest manner as to their corresponding. They then deposed to finding the tinder-box in his pocket, according to the information received from Flanagan, every tittle of which they found to be remarkably correct.

There was only one other witness now necessary to complete the chain against him, and he was only produced because Biddy Nulty, the servant-maid, positively stated, and actually swore, when previously examined, that she was ignorant whether Connor slept in his father's house on the night in question or not. There was no alternative, therefore, but to produce the father; and Fardorougha Donovan was consequently forced to become an evidence against his own son.

The old man's appearance upon the table excited deep commiseration for both, and the more so when the spectators contemplated the rooted sorrow which lay upon the wild and wasted features of the woe-worn father. Still the old man was composed and calm; but his calmness was in an extraordinary degree mournful and touching. When he sat down, after having been sworn, and feebly wiped the dew from his thin temples, many eyes were already filled with tears. When the question was put to him if he remembered the night laid in the indictment, he replied that he did.

"Did the prisoner at the bar sleep at home on that night?"

The old man looked into the face of the counsel with such an eye of deprecating entreaty, as shook the voice in which the question was repeated. He then turned about, and, taking a long gaze at his son, rose up, and, extending his hands to the judges, exclaimed:

"My lords, my lords! he is my only son—my only child!"

These words were followed by a pause in the business of the court, and a dead silence of more than a minute.

"If justice," said the judge, "could on any

occasion waive her claim to a subordinate link in the testimony she requires, it would certainly be in a case so painful and affecting as this. Still, we cannot permit personal feeling, however amiable, or domestic attachment, however strong, to impede her progress when redressing public wrong. Although the duty be painful, and we admit that such a duty is one of unexampled agony, yet it must be complied with; and you consequently will answer the question which the counsel has put to you. The interests of society require such sacrifices, and they must be made."

The old man kept his eyes fixed on the judge while he spoke, but when he had ceased he again fixed them on his son.

"My lord," he exclaimed again, with clasped hands, "I can't, I can't!"

"There is nothing criminal, or improper, or sinful in it," replied the judge; "on the contrary, it is your duty, both as a Christian and a man. Remember, you have this moment sworn to tell the truth, and the *whole* truth; you consequently must keep your oath."

"What you say, sir, may be right, an' of coorse is; but oh, my lord, I'm not able; I can't get out the words to hang my only boy. If I said anything to hurt him, my heart 'ud break before your eyes. May be you don't know the love of a father for an only son?"

"Perhaps, my lords," observed the attorney-general, "it would be desirable to send for a clergyman of his own religion, who might succeed in prevailing on him to——"

"No," interrupted Fardorougha; "my mind's made up; a word against him will never come from my lips, not for priest or friar. "I'd die widout the saykerment sooner."

"This is trifling with the court," said the judge, assuming an air of severity, which, however, he did not feel. "We shall be forced to commit you to prison unless you give evidence."

"My lord," said Fardorougha, meekly, but firmly, "I am willin' to go to prison—I am willin' to die with him, if he is to die, but I neither can nor will open my lips against him. If I thought him guilty I might; but I know he is innocent—my heart knows it; an' am I to back the villain that's strivin' to swear his life away? No, Connor avourneen, whatever they do to you, your father will have no hand in it."

The court, in fact, were perplexed in the extreme. The old man was not only firm, from motives of strong attachment, but intractable from an habitual narrowness of thought, which prevented him from taking that comprehensive view of justice and judicial authority which might overcome the repugnance of men less obstinate from ignorance of legal usages.

"I ask you for the last time," said the judge, "will you give your evidence? because, if you refuse, the court will feel bound to send you to prison."

"God bless you, my lord! that's a relief to my heart. Anything, anything, but to say a word against a boy that, since the day he was born, never vexed either his mother or myself. If he gets over this, I have much to make up to him; for, indeed, I wasn't the father to him that I ought. Avick machree, now I feel it, may be whin it's too late."

These words affected all who heard them, many even to tears.

"I have no remedy," observed the judge. "Tipstaff, take away the witness to prison. It is painful to me," he added, in a broken voice, "to feel compelled thus to punish you for an act which, however I may respect the motives that dictate it, I cannot overlook. The ends of justice cannot be frustrated."

"My lord," exclaimed the prisoner, "don't punish the old man for refusing to speak against me. His love for me is so strong that I know he couldn't do it. I will state the truth myself, but spare him. I did *not* sleep in my own bed on the night Mr. O'Brien's haggard was burned, nor on the night before it. I slept in my father's barn, with Flanagan; both times at his own request; but I did not then suspect his design in asking me."

"This admission, though creditable to your affection and filial duty, was indiscreet," observed the judge. "Whatever you think might be serviceable, suggest to your attorney, who can communicate it to your counsel."

"My lord," said Connor, "I could not see my father punished for loving me as he does; an' besides I have no wish to conceal anything. If the whole truth could be known, I would stand but a short time where I am, nor would Flanagan be long out of it."

There is an earnest and impressive tone in truth, especially when spoken under circumstances of great difficulty, where it is rather disadvantageous to him who utters it, that in many instances produces conviction by an inherent candor which all feel, without any process of reasoning or argument. There was in those few words a warmth of affection towards his father, and a manly simplicity of heart, each of which was duly appreciated by the assembly about him, who felt, without knowing why, the indignant scorn of falsehood that so emphatically pervaded his ex-

pressions. It was indeed impossible to hear them, and look upon his noble countenance and figure, without forgetting the humbleness of his rank in life, and feeling for him a marked deference and respect.

The trial then proceeded; but, alas! the hopes of Connor's friends abandoned them at its conclusion; for although the judge's charge was as favorable as the nature of the evidence permitted, yet it was quite clear that the jury had only one course to pursue, and that was to bring in a conviction. After the lapse of about ten minutes, they returned to the jury-box, and, as the foreman handed down their verdict, a feather might have been heard falling in the court. The faces of the spectators got pale, and the hearts of strong men beat as if the verdict about to be announced were to fall upon themselves, and not upon the prisoner. It is at all times an awful and trying ceremony to witness, but on this occasion it was a much more affecting one than had occurred in that court for many years. As the foreman handed down the verdict, Connor's eye followed the paper with the same calm resolution which he displayed during the trial. On himself there was no change visible, unless the appearance of two round spots, one on each cheek, of a somewhat deeper red than the rest. At length, in the midst of the dead silence, pronounced in a voice that reached to the remotest extremity of the court, was heard the fatal sentence—"Guilty;" and afterwards, in a less distinct manner—"with our strongest and most earnest recommendation for mercy, in consequence of his youth and previous good character." The wail and loud sobbings of the female part of the crowd, and the stronger but more silent grief of the men, could not, for many minutes, be repressed by any efforts of the court or its officers. In the midst of this, a little to the left of the dock, was an old man, whom those around him were conveying in a state of insensibility out of the court; and it was obvious that, from motives of humane consideration for the prisoner, they endeavored to prevent him from ascertaining that it was his father. In this, however, they failed; the son's eye caught a glimpse of his grey locks, and it was observed that his cheek paled for the first time, indicating, by a momentary change, that the only evidence of agitation he betrayed was occasioned by sympathy in the old man's sorrows, rather than by the contemplation of his own fate.

The tragic spirit of the day, however, was still to deepen, and a more stunning blow, though less acute in its agony, was to fall upon the prisoner. The stir of the calm and solemn jurors, as they issued out of their room; the hushed breaths of the spectators, the deadly silence that prevails, and the appalling announcement of the word "Guilty," are circumstances that test human fortitude, more even than the passing of the fearful sentence itself. In the latter case, hope is banished, and the worst that can happen known; the mind is, therefore, thrown back upon its last energies, which give it strength in the same way in which the death-struggle frequently arouses the muscular action of the body—an unconscious power or resistance that forces the culprit's heart to take refuge in the first and strongest instincts of its nature, the undying principle of self-preservation. No sooner was the verdict returned and silence obtained, than the judge, now deeply affected, put on the black cap, at which a low wild murmur of stifled grief and pity rang through the court-house; but no sooner was his eye bent on the prisoner than their anxiety to hear the sentence hushed them once more into the stillness of the grave. The prisoner looked upon him with an open but melancholy gaze, which, from the candid and manly character of his countenance, was touching in the extreme.

"Connor O'Donovan," said the judge, "have you anything to say why sentence of death should not be passed upon you?"

"My lord," he replied, "I can say nothing to prevent it. I am prepared for it. I know I must bear it, and I hope I will bear it as a man ought, that feels his heart free from even a thought of the crime he is to die for. I have nothing more to say."

"You have this day been found guilty," proceeded the judge, "and, in the opinion of the court, upon clear and satisfactory evidence, of a crime marked by a character of revenge, which I am bound to say must have proceeded from a very malignant spirit. It was a wanton act, for the perpetration of which your motives were so inadequate, that one must feel at a loss to ascertain the exact principle on which you committed it. It was also not only a wicked act, but one so mean, that a young man bearing the character of spirit and generosity which you have hitherto borne, as appears from the testimony of those respectable persons who this day have spoken in your favor, ought to have scorned to contemplate it even for a moment. Had the passion you entertained for the daughter of the man you so basely injured, possessed one atom of the dignity, disinterestedness, or purity of true affection, you never could have stooped to any act offensive to the object of your love, or to those even in the remotest degree related to her. The example, consequently, which you have held out to society, is equally vile and

dangerous. A parent discharges the most solemn and important of all duties, when disposing of his children in marriage, because by that act he seals their happiness or misery in this life, and most probably in that which is to come. By what tie, by what duty, by what consideration, is not a parent bound to consult the best interests of those beloved beings whom he has brought into the world, and who, in a great measure, depend upon him as their dearest relative, their guardian by the voice of nature, for the fulfilment of those expectations upon which depend the principal comforts and enjoyments of life? Reason, religion, justice, instinct, the whole economy of nature, both in man and the inferior animals, all teach him to secure for them, as far as in him lies, the greatest sum of human happiness; but if there be one duty more sacred and tender than another, it is that which a parent is called upon to exercise on behalf of a daughter. The son, impressed by that original impulse which moves him to assume a loftier place in the conduct of life, and gifted also with a stronger mind, and clearer judgment, to guide him in its varied transactions, goes abroad into society, and claims for himself a bolder right of thought and a wider range of action, while determining an event which is to exercise, as marriage does, such an important influence upon his own future condition, and all the relations that may arise out of it. From this privilege the beautiful and delicate framework of woman's moral nature debars her, and she is consequently forced, by the graces of her own modesty—by the finer texture of her mind—by her greater purity and gentleness—in short, by all her virtues, into a tenderer and more affecting dependence upon the judgment and love of her natural guardians, whose pleasure is made, by a wise decree of God, commensurate with their duty in providing for her wants and enjoyments. There is no point of view in which the parental character shines forth with greater beauty than that in which it appears while working for and promoting the happiness of a daughter. But you, it would seem, did not think so. You punished the father by a dastardly and unmanly act, for guarding the future peace and welfare of a child so young, and so dear to him. What would become of society if this exercise of a parent's right on behalf of his daughter were to be visited upon him as a crime, by every vindictive and disappointed man, whose affection for them he might, upon proper grounds, decline to sanction? Yet it is singular, and, I confess, almost inexplicable to me at least, why you should have rushed into the commission of such an act. The brief period of your existence has been stained by no other crime. On the contrary, you have maintained a character far above your situation in life—a character equally remarkable for gentleness, spirit, truth, and affection—all of which your appearance and bearing have this day exhibited. Your countenance presents no feature expressive of ferocity, or of those headlong propensities which lead to outrage; and I must confess, that on no other occasion in my judicial life have I ever felt my judgment and my feelings so much at issue. I cannot doubt your guilt, but I shed those tears that it ever existed, and that a youth of so much promise should be cut down prematurely by the strong arm of necessary justice, leaving his bereaved parents bowed down with despair that can never be comforted. Had they another son—or another child, to whom their affections could turn——"

Here the judge felt it necessary to pause, in consequence of his emotions. Strong feelings had, indeed, spread through the whole court, in which, while he ceased, could be heard low moanings, and other symptoms of acute sorrow.

"It is now your duty to forget every earthly object on which your heart may have been fixed, and to seek that source of consolation and mercy which can best sustain and comfort you. Go with a penitent heart to the throne of your Redeemer, who, if your repentance be sincere, will in no wise cast you out. Unhappy youth, prepare yourself, let me implore you, for an infinitely greater and more awful tribunal than this. There, should the judgment be in your favor, you will learn that the fate, which has cut you off in the bloom of early life, will bring an accession of happiness to your being for which no earthly enjoyment here, however prolonged or exalted, could compensate you. The recommendation of the jury to the mercy of the crown, in consideration of your youth and previous good conduct, will not be overlooked; but in the mean time the court is bound to pronounce upon you the sentence of the law, which is, that you be taken from the prison from which you came, on the eighth of next month, at the hour of ten o'clock in the forenoon, to the front drop of the jail, and there hanged by the neck, until you be dead; and may God have mercy on your soul!"

"My lord," said the prisoner, unmoved in voice or in manner, unless it might be that both expressed more decision and energy than he had shown during any other part of the trial; "my lord, I am now a condemned man, but if I stood with the rope about my neck, ready to die, I would not

exchange situations with the man that has been my accuser. My lord, I can forgive him, and I ought, for I know he has yet to die, and must meet his God. As for myself, I am thankful that I have not such a conscience as his to bring before my Judge; *and for this reason I am not afraid to die.*"

He was then removed amidst a murmur of grief, as deep and sincere as was ever expressed for a human being under circumstances of a similar character. After having entered the prison, he was about to turn along a passage which led to the apartment hitherto allotted to him.

"This way," said the turnkey, "this way; God knows I would be glad to let you stop in the room you had, but I haven't the power. We must put you into one of the condemned cells; but by ——, it'll go hard if I don't stretch a little to make you as comfortable as possible."

"Take no trouble," said Connor, "take no trouble. I care now but little about my own comfort; but if you wish to oblige me, bring me my father. Oh, my mother, my mother!—you, I doubt, are struck down already!"

"She was too ill to attend the trial today." replied the turnkey.

"I know it," said Connor; "but as she's not here, bring me my father. Send out a messenger for him, and be quick, for I wont rest till I see him—he wants comfort—the old man's heart will break."

"I heard them say," replied the turnkey, after they had entered the cell allotted to him, "that he was in a faint at Mat Corrigan's public house, but that he had recovered. I'll go myself and bring him in to you."

"Do," said Connor, "an' leave us the moment you bring him."

It was more than an hour before the man returned, holding Fardorougha by the arm, and, after having left him in the cell, he instantly locked it outside, and withdrew as he had been desired. Connor ran to support his tottering steps; and wofully indeed did that unfortunate parent stand in need of his assistance. In the picture presented by Fardorougha the unhappy young man forgot in a moment his own miserable and gloomy fate. There blazed in his father's eyes an excitement at once dead and wild—a vague fire without character, yet stirred by an incomprehensible energy wholly beyond the usual manifestations of thought or suffering. The son on beholding him shuddered, and not for the first time, for he had on one or two occasions before become apprehensive that his father's mind might, if strongly pressed, be worn down, by the singular conflict of which it was the scene, to that most frightful of all maladies—insanity. As the old man, however, folded him in his feeble arms, and attempted to express what he felt, the unhappy boy groaned aloud, and felt even in the depth of his cell, a blush of momentary shame suffuse his cheek and brow. His father, notwithstanding the sentence that had been so shortly before passed upon his son—that father, he perceived to be absolutely intoxicated, or, to use a more appropriate expression, decidedly drunk. There was less blame, however, to be attached to Fardorougha on this occasion, than Connor imagined. When the old man swooned in the court-house, he was taken by his neighbors to a public-house, where he lay for some minutes in a state of insensibility. On his recovery he was plied with burnt whiskey, as well to restore his strength and prevent a relapse, as upon the principle that it would enable him to sustain with more firmness the dreadful and shocking destiny which awaited his son. Actuated by motives of mistaken kindness, they poured between two and three glasses of this fiery cordial down his throat, which, as he had not taken so much during the lapse of thirty years before, soon reduced the feeble old man to the condition in which we have described him when entering the gloomy cell of the prisoner.

"Father," said Connor, "in the name of Heaven above, who or what has put you into this dreadful state, especially when we consider the hard, hard fate that is over us, and upon us?"

"Connor," returned Fardorougha, not perceiving the drift of his question, "Connor, my son, I'll hang—hang him, that's one comfort."

"Who are you spaking about?"

"The villain sentence was passed on to—to-day. He'll swing—swing for the robbery; P——e will. We got him back out of that nest of robbers, the Isle o' Man—o' Man they call it—that he made off to, the villain!"

"Father dear, I'm sorry to see you in this state on sich a day—sich a black day to us. For *your* sake I am. What will the world say of it?"

"Connor, I'm in great spirits all out, exceptin' for something that I forget, that—that—li—lies heavy upon me. That I mayn't sin, but I am—I am, indeed—for now that we've *coteh* him, we'll hang the villain up. Ha, ha, ha, it's a pleasant sight to see sich a fellow danglin' from a rope!"

"Father, sit down here, sit down here upon this bad and comfortless bed, and keep yourself quiet for a little. Maybe you'll be better soon. Oh, why did you drink, and us in such trouble?"

"I'll not sit down; I'm very well able to

stand," said he, tottering across the room. "The villain thought to starve me, Connor, but you heard the sentence that was passed on him to-day. Where's Honor, from me? she'll be glad whin—whin she hears it, and my son, Connor, will too—but he's, he's—where is Connor?—bring me, bring me to Connor. Ah, avourneen, Honor's heart's breaking for him—'t any rate, the mother's heart—the mother's heart—she's laid low wid an achin', sorrowful head for her boy."

"Father, for God's sake, will you try and rest a little? If you could sleep, father dear, if you could sleep."

"I'll hang P——e—I'll hang him—but if he gives me back my money, I'll not touch him. Who are you?"

"Father dear, I'm Connor, your own son, Connor."

"I'll marry you and Una, then. I'll settle all the villain robbed me of on you, and you'll have every penny of it *after my death*. Don't be keepin' me up, I can walk very well; ay, an' I'm in right good spirits. Sure, the money's got, Connor—got back every skilleen of it. Ha, ha, ha, God be praised! God be praised! We've a right to be thankful—the world isn't so bad afther all."

"Father, will you try and rest?"

"It's not bad, afther all—I won't starve, as I thought I would, now that the *arrighad* is got back from the villain. Ha, ha, ha, it's great, Connor, ahagur!"

"What is it, father dear."

"Connor, sing me a song—my heart's up—it's light—arn't you glad?—sing me a song."

"If you'll sleep first, father dear,"

"The *Uligone*, Connor, or *Shuilagra*, or the *Trougha*—for, avourneen, avourneen, there must be sorrow in it, for my heart's low, and your mother's heart's in sorrow, an' she's lyin' far from us, an' her boy's not near her, an' her heart's sore, sore, and her head achin', bekase her boy's far from her, and she can't come to him!"

The boy, whose noble fortitude was unshaken during the formidable trial it had encountered in the course of that day, now felt overcome by this simple allusion to his mother's love. He threw his arms about his father's neck, and, placing his head upon his bosom, wept aloud for many, many minutes.

"Husth, Connor, husth, asthore—what makes *you* cry? Sure, all 'ill be right now that we've got back the money. Eh? Ha, ha, ha, it's great luck, Connor, isn't it great? An' you'll have it, you an' Una, *afther my death*—for I won't starve for e'er a one o' yees."

"Father, father, I wish you would rest."

"Well, I will, avick, I will – bring me to bed—you'll sleep in your own bed to-night. Your poor mother's head hasn't been off o' the place where your own lay, Connor. No, indeed; her heart's low—it's breakin'—it's breakin'—but she won't let anybody make *your* bed but herself. Oh, the mother's love, Connor—that mother's love, *that* mother's love—but, Connor—"

"Well, father, dear."

"Isn't there something wrong, avick? isn't there something not right, somehow?"

This question occasioned the son to feel as if his heart would literally burst to pieces, especially when he considered the circumstances under which the old man put it. Indeed, there was something so transcendently appalling in his intoxication, and in the wild but affecting tone of his conversation, that, when joined to his pallid and spectral appearance, it gave a character, for the time being, of a mood that struck the heart with an image more frightful than that of madness itself.

"Wrong, father!" he replied, "all's wrong, and I can't understand it. It's well for you that you don't know the doom that's upon us now, for I feel how it would bring you down, and how it will, too. It will kill you, my father—it will kill you."

"Connor, come home, avick, come home—I'm tired at any rate—come home to your mother—come, for her sake—I know I'm not at home, an' she'll not rest till I bring you safe back to her. Come now, I'll have no put offs—you must come, I say—I ordher you—I can't and won't meet her widout you. Come, avick, an' you can sing me the song goin' home—come wid your own poor ould father, that can't live widout you—come, a *sullish machree*, I don't feel right here—we won't be properly happy till we go to your lovin' mother."

"Father, father, you don't know what you're making me suffer! What heart, blessed Heaven, can bear—"

The door of his cell here opened, and the turnkey stated that some five or six of his friends were anxious to see him, and, above all things, to take charge of his father to his own home. This was a manifest relief to the young man, who then felt more deeply on his unhappy father's account than on his own.

"Some foolish friends," said he, "have given my father liquor, an' it has got into his head—indeed, it overcame him the more, as I never remember him to taste a drop of spirits during his life before. I can see nobody now an' him in this state; but if they wish me well, let them take care of him, and leave him safe at his own house, and tell them I'll be glad if I can see them to-morrow, or any other time."

With considerable difficulty Fardorougha was removed from Connor, whom he clung to with all his strength, attempting also to drag him away. He then wept bitterly, because he declined to accompany him home, that he might comfort his mother, and enjoy the imagined recovery of his money from P——e, and the conviction which he believed they had just succeeded in getting against that notorious defaulter.

After they had departed, Connor sat down upon his hard pallet, and, supporting his head with his hand, saw, for the first time, in all its magnitude and horror, the death to which he found himself now doomed. The excitement occasioned by his trial, and his increasing firmness, as it darkened on through all its stages to the final sentence, now had in a considerable degree abandoned him, and left his heart, at present, more accessible to natural weakness than it it had been to the power of his own affections. The image of his early-loved Una had seldom since his arrest been out of his imagination. Her youth, her beauty, her wild but natural grace, and the flashing glances of her dark enthusiastic eye, when joined to her tenderness and boundless affection for himself—all caused his heart to quiver with deadly anguish through every fibre. This produced a transition to Flanagan —the contemplation of whose perfidious vengeance made him spring from his seat in a paroxysm of indignant but intense hatred, so utterly furious that the swelling tempest which it sent through his veins caused him to reel with absolute giddiness.

"Great God!" he exclaimed, "you are just, and will this be suffered?"

He then thought of his parents, and the fiery mood of his mind changed to one of melancholy and sorrow. He looked back upon his aged father's enduring struggle—upon the battle of the old man's heart against the accursed vice which had swayed its impulses so long—on the protracted conflict between the two energies, which, like contending armies in the field, had now left little but ruin and desolation behind them. His heart, when he brought all these things near him, expanded, and like a bird, folded its wings about the gray-haired martyr to the love he bore him. But his mother—the caressing, the proud, the affectionate, whose heart, in the vivid tenderness of hope for her beloved boy, had shaped out his path in life, as that on which she could brood with the fondness of a loving and delighted spirit—that mother's image, and the idea of her sorrows prostrated his whole strength, like that of a stricken infant, to the earth.

"Mother, mother," he exclaimed, "when I think of what you reared me for, and what I am this night, how can my heart do otherwise than break, as well on your account as on my own, and for all that love us! Oh! what will become of you, my blessed mother? Hard does it go with you that you're not about your pride, as you used to call me, now that I'm in this trouble, in this fate that is soon to cut me down from your loving arms! The thought of you is dear to my heart, dear, dearer, dearer than that of any—than my own Una. What will become of *her*, too, and the old man? Oh, why, why is it that the death I am to suffer is to fall so heavily on them that love me best?"

He then returned to his bed, but the cold and dreary images of death and ruin haunted his imagination, until the night was far spent, when at length he fell into a deep and dreamless sleep.

By the sympathy expressed at his trial, our readers may easily conceive the profound sorrow which was felt for him, in the district where he was known, from the moment the knowledge of his sentence had gone abroad among the people. This was much strengthened by that which, whether in man or woman, never fails to create an amiable prejudice in its favor—I mean youth and personal beauty. His whole previous character was now canvassed with a mournful lenity that brought out his virtues into beautiful relief; and the fate of the affectionate son was deplored no less than that of the youthful, but rash and inconsiderate lover. Neither was the father without his share of compassion, for they could not forget that, despite of all his penury and extortion, the old man's heart had been fixed, with a strong but uncouth affection, upon his amiable and only boy. It was, however, when they thought of his mother, in whose heart of hearts he had been enshrined as the idol of her whole affection, that their spirits became truly touched. Many a mother assumed in her own person, by the force of imagination, the sinking woman's misery, and poured forth, in unavailing tears, the undeniable proofs of the sincerity with which she participated in Honor's bereavement. As for Flanagan, a deadly weight of odium, such as is peculiar to the *Informer* in Ireland, fell upon both him and his. Nor was this all. Aided by that sagacity which is so conspicuous in Irishmen, when a vindictive or hostile feeling is excited among them, they depicted Flanagan's character with an accuracy and truth astonishingly correct and intuitive. Numerous were the instances of cowardice, treachery, and revenge remembered against him, by those who had been his close and early companions, not one of which would

have ever occurred to them, were it not that their minds had been thrown back upon the scrutiny by the melancholy fate in which he had involved the unhappy Connor O'Donovan. Had he been a mere ordinary witness in the matter, he would have experienced little of this boiling indignation at their hands; but first to participate in the guilt, and afterwards, for the sake of the reward, or from a worse and more flagitious motive, to turn upon him, and become his accuser, even to the taking away of the young man's *life—to stag* against his companion and accomplice—this was looked upon as a crime ten thousand times more black and damnable than that for which the unhappy culprit had been consigned to so shameful a death.

But, alas, of what avail was all this sympathy and indignation to the unfortunate youth himself or to those most deeply interrested in his fate? Would not the very love and sorrow felt towards her son fall upon his mother's heart with a heavier weight of bitterness and agony? Would not his Una's soul be wounded on that account with a sharper and more deadly pang of despair and misery? It would, indeed, be difficult to say whether the house of Bodagh Buie or that of Fardorougha was then in the deeper sorrow. On the morning of Connor's trial, Una arose at an earlier hour than usual, and it was observed when she sat at breakfast, that her cheek was at one moment pale as death, and again flushed and feverish. These symptoms were first perceived by her affectionate brother, who, on witnessing the mistakes she made in pouring out the tea, exchanged a glance with his parents, and afterwards asked her to allow him to take her place. She laid down the tea-pot, and, looking him mournfully in the face, attempted to smile at a request so unusual.

"Una, dear," said he, "you must allow me. There is no necessity for attempting to conceal what you feel—we all know it—and if we did not, the fact of your having filled the sugar-bowl instead of the tea-cup would soon discover it."

She said nothing, but looked at him again, as if she scarcely comprehended what he said. A glance, however, at the sugar-bowl convinced her that she was incapable of performing the usual duties of the breakfast table. Hitherto she had not raised her eyes to her father or mother's face, nor spoken to them as had been her wont, when meeting at that strictly domestic meal. The unrestrained sobbings of the mother now aroused her for the first time, and on looking up, she saw her father wiping away the big tears from his eyes.

"Una, avourneen," said the worthy man, "let John make tay for us—for, God help you, you can't do it. Don't fret, achora machree, don't, don't, Una; as God is over me, I'd give all I'm worth to save him, for your sake."

She looked at her father and smiled again; but that smile cut him to the heart.

"I will make the tea myself, father," she replied, "and I *won't* commit any more mistakes;" and as she spoke she unconsciously poured the tea into the slop-bowl.

"Avourneen," said her mother, "let John do it; acushla machree, let him do it,"

She then rose, and without uttering a word, passively and silently placed herself on her brother's chair—he having, at the same time, taken that on which she sat.

"Una," said her father, taking her hand, "you must be a good girl, and you must have courage; and whatever happens, my darling, you'll pluck up strength, I hope, and bear it."

"I hope so, father," said she, "I hope so."

"But, avourneen machree," said her mother, "I would rather see you cryin' fifty times over, than smilin' the way you do."

"Mother," said she, "my heart is sore—my heart is sore."

"It is, ahagur machree; and your hand is tremblin' so much that you can't bring the tay-cup to your mouth; but, then, don't smile so sorrowfully, *anein machree*."

"Why should I cry, mother?" she replied; "I know that Connor is innocent. If I knew him to be guilty, I would weep, and I ought to weep."

"At all events, Una," said her father, "you know it's the government, and not us, that's prosecuting him."

To this Una made no reply, but, thrusting away her cup, she looked with the same mournful smile from one to the other of the little circle about her. At length she spoke.

"Father, I have a request to ask of you."

"If it's within my power, Una darling, I'll grant it; and if it's not, it'll go hard with me but I'll bring it within my power. What is it, asthore machree?"

"In case *he's* found guilty, to let John put off his journey to Maynooth, and stay with *me* for some time—it won't be long I'll keep him."

"If it pleases you, darling, he'll never put his foot into Maynooth again."

"No," said the mother, "*dhamnho* to the step, if you don't wish him."

"Oh, no, no," said Una, "it's only for a while."

"Unless she desires it, I will *never* go," replied the loving brother; "nor will I ever

leave you in your sorrow, my beloved and only sister—never—never—so long as a word from my lips can give you consolation."

The warm tears coursed each other down his cheeks as he spoke, and both his parents, on looking at the almost blighted flower before them, wept as if the hand of death had already been upon her.

"Your father, and John are going to his trial," she observed; "for me I like to be alone;—alone; but when you return to-night, let John break it to me. I'll go now to the garden. I'll walk about to-day—only before you go, John, I want to speak to you."

Calmly and without a tear, she then left the parlor, and proceeded to the garden, where she began to dress and ornament the hive which contained the swarm that Connor had brought to her on the day their mutual attachment was first disclosed to each other.

"Father," said John, when she had gone, "I'm afraid that Una's heart is broken, or if not broken, that she won't survive his conviction long—it's breaking fast—for my part, in her present state, I neither will nor can leave her."

The affectionate father made no reply, but, putting his handkerchief to his eyes, wept, as did her mother, in silent but bitter grief.

"I cannot spake about it, nor think of it, John," said he, after some time, "but we must do what we can for her."

"If anything happens her," said the mother, "I'd never get over it. Oh marciful Savior! how could we live widout her?"

"I would rather see her in tears," said John—"I would rather see her in outrageous grief a thousand times than in the calm but ghastly resolution with which she is bearing herself up against the trial of this day. If he's condemned to death, I'm afraid that either her health or reason will sink under it, and, in that case, God pity her and us, for how, as you say, mother, could we afford to lose her? Still let us hope for the best. Father, it's time to prepare; get the car ready. I am going to the garden, to hear what the poor thing has to say to me, but I will be with you soon."

Her brother found her, as we have said, engaged calmly, and with a melancholy pleasure, in adorning the hive which, on Connor's account, had become her favorite. He was not at all sorry that she had proposed this short interview, for, as his hopes of Connor's acquittal were but feeble, if, indeed, he could truly be said to entertain any, he resolved, by delicately communicating his apprehensions, to gradually prepare her mind for the worst that might happen.

PART V.

On hearing his step she raised her head, and advancing towards the middle of the garden, took his arm, and led him towards the summer-house in which Connor and she had first acknowledged their love. She gazed wistfully upon it after they entered, and wrung her hands, but still shed no tears.

"Una," said her brother, "you had something to say to me; what is it, darling?"

She glanced timidly at him, and blushed.

"You won't be angry with me, John," she replied; "would it be proper for me to—to go"——

"What! to be present at the trial? Dear Una, you cannot think of it. It would neither be proper nor prudent, and you surely would not be considered indelicate? Besides, even were it not so, your strength is unequal to it. No, no, Una dear; dismiss it from your thoughts."

"I fear I could not stand it, indeed, John, even if it were proper; but I know not what to do; there is a weight like death upon my heart. If I could shed a tear it would relieve me; but I cannot."

"It is probably better you should feel so, Una, than to entertain hopes upon the matter that may be disappointed. It is always wisest to prepare for the worst, in order to avoid the shock that may come upon us, and which always falls heaviest when it comes contrary to our expectations."

"I do not at all feel well," she replied, "and I have been thinking of the best way to break this day's tidings to me, when you come home. If he's cleared, say, good-humoredly, 'Una, all's lost;' and if—if not, oh, desire me—say to me, 'Una, you had better go to bed, and let your mother go with you;' *that* will be enough; I will go to bed, and if ever I rise from it again, it will not be from a love of life."

The brother, seeing that conversation on the subject of her grief only caused her to feel more deeply, deemed it better to terminate than to continue a dialogue which only aggravated her sufferings.

"I trust and hope, dear Una," he said, "that you will observe my father's advice, and make at least a worthy effort to support yourself, under what certainly is a heavy affliction to you, in a manner becoming your own character. For his sake—for my mother's, and for mine, too, endeavor to have courage; be firm—and, Una, if you take my advice, you'll pray to God to strengthen you; for, after all, there is no support in the moment of distress and sorrow, like His."

"I will take your advice," she replied;

"but is it not strange, John, that such heavy misfortunes should fall upon two persons so young, and who deserve it so little?"

"It may be a trial sent for your advantage and his; who can say but it may yet end for the good of you both? At present, indeed, there is no probability of its ending favorably, and, even should it not, we are bound to bear with patience such dispensations as the Great Being, to whom we owe our existence, and of whose ways we know so little, may think right to lay upon us. Now, God bless you, and support you, dear, till I see you again. I must go; don't you hear the jaunting-car driving up to the gate; be firm—dear Una—be firm, and good-by!"

Never was a day spent under the influence of a more terrible suspense than that which drank up the strength of this sinking girl during the trial of her lover. Actuated by a burning and restless sense of distraction, she passed from place to place with that mechanical step which marks those who seek for comfort in vain. She retired to her apartment and strove to pray; but the effort was fruitless; the confusion of her mind rendered connection and continuity of thought and language impossible. At one moment she repaired to the scenes where they had met, and again with a hot and aching brain, left them with a shudder that arose from a withering conception of the loss of him whose image, by their association, was at once rendered more distinct and more beloved. Her poor mother frequently endeavored to console her, but became too much affected herself to proceed. Nor were the servants less anxious to remove the heavy load of sorrow which weighed down her young spirit to the earth. Her brief, but affecting reply was the same to each.

"Nothing can comfort me; my heart is breaking; oh, leave me—leave me to the sorrow that's upon me."

Deep, indeed, was the distress felt on her account, even by the females of her father's house, who, that day, shed many bitter tears on witnessing the mute but feverish agony of her sufferings. As evening approached she became evidently more distracted and depressed; her head, she said, felt hot, and her temples occasionally throbbed with considerable violence. The alternations of color on her cheek were more frequent than before, and their pallid and carmine hues were more alarmingly contrasted. Her weeping mother took the stricken one to her bosom, and, after kissing her burning and passive lips, pressed her temples with a hope that this might give her relief.

"Why don't you cry, *anien machree?* (daughter of my heart). Thry and shed tears; it'ill take away this burning pain that's in your poor head; oh, thry and let down the tears, and you'll see how it'ill relieve you."

"Mother, I can't," she replied; "I can shed no tears; I wish they were home, for the worst couldn't be worse than this."

"No, asthore, it couldn't—it can't; husth!—do you hear it? There they are; that's the car; ay, indeed, it's at the gate."

They both listened for a moment, and the voices of her father and brother were distinctly heard giving some necessary orders to the servant.

"Mother, mother," exclaimed Una, pressing her hands upon her heart, "my heart is bursting, and my temples—my temples ——"

"Chierna yeelish," said the mother, feeling its strong and rapid palpitations, "you can't stand this. Oh, darling of my heart, for the sake of your own life, and of the living God, be firm!"

At this moment their knock at the hall-door occasioned her to leap with a sudden start, almost out of her mother's arms. But, all at once, the tumult of that heart ceased, and the vermillion of her cheek changed to the hue of death. With a composure probably more the result of weakness than fortitude, she clasped her hands, and giving a fixed gaze towards the parlor-door, that spoke the resignation of despair, she awaited the tidings of her lover's doom. They both entered, and, after a cautious glance about the room, immediately perceived the situation in which, reclining on her mother's bosom, she lay, ghastly as a corpse, before them.

"Una, dear," said John, approaching her, "I am afraid you are ill."

She riveted her eyes upon him, as if she would read his soul, but she could not utter a syllable.

The young man's countenance became overshadowed by a deep and mournful sense of the task he found himself compelled to perform; his voice faltered, and his lips trembled, as, in a low tone of heartfelt and profound sympathy, he exclaimed:

"Una, dear, you had better go to bed, and let my mother stay with you."

Calmly she heard him, and, rising, she slowly but deliberately left the room, and proceeded up stairs with a degree of steadiness which surprised her mother. The only words she uttered on hearing this blighting communication, were, "Come with me, mother."

"Una, darling," said the latter when they had reached the bed-room, "why don't you spake to me? Let me hear your voice, jewel; only let me hear your voice."

Una stooped and affectionately kissed her,

but made no reply for some minutes. She then began to undress, which she did in fits and starts; sometimes pausing, in evident abstraction, for a considerable time, and again resuming the task of preparing for bed.

"Mother," she at length sai' my heart is as cold as ice; but my brain is burning; feel my temples; how hot they are, and how they beat!"

"I do, alanna dheelish; your body, as well as your mind, is sick; but we'll sind for the doctor, darlin', and you'll soon be betther, I hope."

"I hope so; and then Connor and I can be married in spite of them. Don't they say, mother, that marriages are made in heaven?"

"They do, darlin'."

"Well, then, I will meet him there. Oh, my head—my head! I cannot bear—bear this racking pain."

Her mother, who, though an uneducated woman, was by no means deficient in sagacity, immediately perceived that her mind was beginning to exhibit symptoms of being unsettled. Having, therefore, immediately called one of the maid-servants, she gave her orders to stay with Una, who had now gone to bed, until she herself could again return to her. She instantly proceeded to the parlor, where her husband and son were, and with a face pale from alarm, told them that she feared Una's mind was going.

"May the Almighty forbid!" exclaimed her father, laying down his knife and fork, for they had just sat down to dinner; "oh, what makes you say such a thing, Bridget? What on earth makes you think it?"

"For Heaven's sake, mother, tell us at once," inquired the son, rising from the table, and walking distractedly across the room.

"Why, she's beginning to rave about him," replied her mother; "she's afther saying that she'll be married to him in spite o' them."

"In spite o' who, Bridget?" asked the Bodagh, wiping his eyes—"in spite o' who does she mane?"

"Why, I suppose in spite of Flanagan and thim that found him guilty," replied his wife.

"Well, but what else did she say, mother?"

"She axed me if marriages warn't made in heaven; and I tould her that the people said so; upon that she said she'd meet him there, and then she complained of her head. The trewth is, she has a heavy load of sickness on her back, and the sorra hour should be lost till we get a docthor."

"Yes, that *is* the truth, mother; I'll go this moment for Dr. H——. There's nothing like taking these things in time. Poor Una! God knows this trial is a sore one upon a heart so faithful and affectionate as hers."

"John, had you not betther ait something before you go?" said his father; "you want it afther the troublesome day you had."

"No, no," replied the son; "I cannot—I cannot; I will neither eat nor drink till I hear what the doctor will say about her. O, my God!" he exclaimed, whilst his eyes filled with tears, "and is it come to this with you, our darling Una?—I won't lose a moment till I return," he added, as he went out; "nor will I, under any circumstances, come without medical aid of some kind."

"Let these things be taken away, Bridget," said the Bodagh; "my appetite is gone, too; that last news is the worst of all. May the Lord of heaven keep our child's mind right! for, oh, Bridget, wouldn't death itself be far afore *that?*"

"I'm going up to her," replied his wife; "and may God guard her, and spare her safe and sound to us; for what—what kind of a house would it be if she——but I can't think of it. Oh, wurrah, wurrah, this night!"

Until the return of their son, with the doctor, both O'Brien and his wife hung in a state of alarm bordering on agony over the bed of their beloved daughter. Indeed, the rapidity and vehemence with which incoherence, accompanied by severe illness, set in, were sufficient to excite the greatest alarm, and to justify their darkest apprehensions. Her skin was hot almost to burning; her temples throbbed terribly, and such were her fits of starting and raving, that they felt as if every minute were an hour, until the physician actually made his appearance. Long before this gentleman reached the house, the son had made him fully acquainted with what he looked upon as the immediate cause of her illness; not that the doctor himself had been altogether ignorant of it, for, indeed, there were few persons of any class or condition in the neighborhood to whom that circumstance was unknown.

On examining the diagnostics that presented themselves, he pronounced her complaint to be brain fever of the most formidable class, to wit., that which arises from extraordinary pressure upon the mind, and unusual excitement of the feelings. It was a relief to her family, however, to know that beyond the temporary mental aberrations, inseparable from the nature of her complaint, there was no evidence whatsoever of insanity. They felt grateful to God for this, and were

consequently enabled to watch her sick-bed with more composure, and to look forward to her ultimate recovery with a hope less morbid and gloomy. In this state we are now compelled to leave them and her, and to beg the reader will accompany us to another house of sorrow, where the mourning was still more deep, and the spirits that were wounded driven into all the wild and dreary darkness of affliction.

Our readers cannot forget the helpless state of intoxication, in which Fardorougha left his unhappy son on the evening of the calamitous day that saw him doomed to an ignominious death. His neighbors, as we then said, having procured a car, assisted him home, and would, for his wife's and son's sake, have afforded him all the sympathy in their power; he was, however, so completely overcome with the spirits he had drank, and an unconscious latent feeling of the dreadful sentence that had been pronounced upon his son, that he required little else at their hands than to keep him steady on the car. During the greater part of the journey home, his language was only a continuation of the incoherencies which Connor had, with such a humiliating sense of shame and sorrow, witnessed in his prison cell. A little before they arrived within sight of his house, his companions perceived that he had fallen asleep; but to a stranger, ignorant of the occurrences of the day, the car presented the appearance of a party returning from a wedding or from some other occasion equally festive and social. Most of them were the worse for liquor, and one of them in particular had reached a condition which may be too often witnessed in this country. I mean that in which the language becomes thick; the eye knowing but vacant; the face impudent but relaxed; the limbs tottering, and the voice inveterately disposed to melody. The general conversation, therefore, of those who accompanied the old man was, as is usual with persons so circumstanced, high and windy; but as far as could be supposed by those who heard them cheerful and amiable. Over the loudness of their dialogue might be heard, from time to time, at a great distance, the song of the drunken melodist just alluded to, rising into those desperate tones which borrow their drowsy energy from intoxication alone. Such was the character of those who accompanied the miser home; and such were the indications conveyed to the ears or eyes of those who either saw or heard them, as they approached Fardorougha's dwelling, where the unsleeping heart of the mother watched —and oh! with what a dry and burning anguish of expectation, let our readers judge— for the life or death of the only child that God had ever vouchsafed to that loving heart on which to rest all its tenderest hopes and affections.

The manner in which Honor O'Donovan spent that day was marked by an earnest and simple piety that would have excited high praise and admiration if witnessed in a person of rank or consideration in society. She was, as the reader may remember, too ill to be able to attend the trial of her son, or as she herself expressed it in Irish, to draw strength to her heart by one look at his manly face; by one glance from her boy's eye. She resolved, however, to draw consolation from a higher source, and to rest the burden of her sorrows, as far as in her lay, upon that being in whose hands are the issues of life and death. From the moment her husband left the threshold of his childless house on that morning until his return, her prayers to God and the saints were truly incessant. And who is so well acquainted with the inscrutable ways of the Almighty, as to dare assert that the humble supplications of this pious and sorrowful mother were not heard and answered? Whether it was owing to the fervor of an imagination wrought upon by the influence of a creed which nourishes religious enthusiasm in an extraordinary degree, or whether it was by direct support from that God who compassionated her affliction, let others determine; but certain it is, that in the course of that day she gained a calmness and resignation, joined to an increasing serenity of heart, such as she had not hoped to feel under a calamity so black and terrible.

On hearing the approach of the car which bore her husband home, and on listening to the noisy mirth of those, who, had they been sober, would have sincerely respected her grief, she put up an inward prayer of thanksgiving to God for what she supposed to be the happy event of Connor's acquittal. Stunning was the blow, however, and dreadful the revulsion of feelings, occasioned by the discovery of this sad mistake. When they reached the door she felt still further persuaded that all had ended as she wished, for to nothing else, except the wildness of unexpected joy, could she think of ascribing her husband's intoxication.

"We must carry Fardorougha in," said one of them to the rest; "for the liquor has fairly overcome him—he's sound asleep."

"He is cleared!" exclaimed the mother; "he is cleared! My heart tells me he has come out without a stain. What else could make his father, that never tasted liquor for the last thirty years, be as he is?"

"Honor O'Donovan," said one of them, wringing her hand as he spoke, "this has

been a black day to you all; you must prepare yourself for bad news."

"Thin Christ and his blessed mother support me, and support us all! but what is the worst? oh, what is the worst?"

"The *barradh dhu*," replied the man, alluding to the black cap which the judge puts on when passing sentence of death.

"Well," said she, "may the name of the Lord that sent this upon us be praised forever! That's no rason why we shouldn't still put our trust and reliance in him. I will show them, by the help of God's grace, an' by the assistance of His blessed mother, who suffered herself—an' oh, what is my sufferin's to her's?—I will show them I say, that I can bear, as a Christian ought, whatever hard fate it may plase the Saviour of the earth to lay upon us. I know my son is innocent, an' surely, although it's hard, hard to part with such a boy, yet it's a consolation to know that he'll be better wid God, who is takin' him, than ever he'd be wid us. So the Lord's will be done this night and forever! amin!"

This noble display of glowing piety and fortitude was not lost upon those who witnessed it. After uttering these simple but exalted sentiments, she crossed herself devoutly, as is the custom, and bowed her head with such a vivid sense of God's presence, that it seemed as if she actually stood, as no doubt she did, under the shadow of His power. These men, knowing the force of her love to that son, and the consequent depth of her misery at losing him by a death so shameful and violent, reverently took off their hats as she bent her head to express this obedience to the decrees of God, and in a subdued tone and manner exclaimed, almost with one voice—

"May God pity you, Honor! for who but yourself would or could act as you do this bitther, bitther night?"

"I'm only doin' what I ought to do," she replied, "what is religion good for if it doesn't keep the heart right an' support us undher thrials like this; what 'ud it be then but a name? But how, oh how, came *his* father to be in sich a state on this bitther, bitther night, as you say it is—an' oh! Heaven above sees it's that—how came *his* father, I say, into sich a state?"

They then related the circumstance as it actually happened; and she appeared much relieved to hear that his inebriety was only accidental.

"I am glad," she said, "that he got it as he did; for, indeed, if he had made himself dhrunk this day, as too many like him do on such occasions, he never again would appear the same man in my eyes, nor would my heart ever more warm to him as it did. But thanks to God that he didn't take it himself!"

She then heard, with a composure that could result only from fortitude and resignation united, a more detailed account of her son's trial, after which she added—

"As God is above me this night I find it asier to lose Connor than to forgive the man that destroyed him; but this is a bad state of heart, that I trust my Saviour will give me grace to overcome; an' I know He will if I ax it as I ought; at all events, I won't lay my side on a bed this night antil I pray to God to forgive Bartle Flanagan an' to turn his heart."

She then pressed them, with a heart as hospitable as it was pious, to partake of food, which they declined, from a natural reluctance to give trouble where the heart is known to be pressed down by the violence of domestic calamity. These are distinctions which our humble countrymen draw with a delicacy that may well shame those who move in a higher rank of life. Respect for unmerited affliction, and sympathy for the sorrows of the just and virtuous, are never withheld by the Irish peasant when allowed by those who can guide him either for good or for evil to follow the impulses of his own heart. The dignity, for instance, of Honor O'Donovan's bearing under a trial so overwhelming in its nature, and the piety with which she supported it, struck them, half tipsy as they were, so forcibly, that they became sobered down—some of them into a full perception of her firmness and high religious feelings; and those who were more affected by drink into a maudlin gravity of deportment still more honorable to the admirable principles of the woman who occasioned it.

One of the latter, for instance, named Bat Hanratty, exclaimed, after they had bade her good night, and expressed their unaffected sorrow for the severe loss she was about to sustain:

"Well, well, you may all talk; but be the powdhers o' delf, nothin' barrin' the downright grace o' God could sup—sup-port that dacent mother of ould Fardorougha—I mane of his son, poor Connor. But the truth is, you see, that there's nothin'—nothin' no, the divil saize the hap'o'rth at all, good, bad, or indifferent aquil to puttin' your trust in God; bekase, you see—Con Roach, I say—bekase you see, when a man does that as he ought to do it; for it's all faisthelagh if you go the wrong way about it; but Con—Condy, I say, you're a dacent man, an' it stands to raison—it does, boys—upon my soul it does. It wasn't for nothin' that money was lost upon myself, when I was takin' in the edjig-

gation ; and maybe, if Connor O'Donovan, that is now goin' to suffer, poor fellow—

For the villain swore away my life, an' all by perjuree ;
And for that same I die wid shame upon the gallows tree.

So, as I was sayin', why didn't Connor come in an' join the boys like another, an' then we could settle Bartle for staggin' against him. For, you see, in regard o' that, Condy, it doesn't signify a traneen whether he put a match to the haggard or not ; the thing is, you know, that even if he did, Bartle daren't swear against him widout breakin' his first oath to the boys ; an' if he did it afther that, an' brought any of them into throuble conthrary to the articles, be gorra he'd be entitled to get a gusset opened undher one o' his ears, any how. But you see, Con, be the book—God pardon me for swearin'—but be the book, the mother has the thrue ralligion in her heart, or she'd never stand it the way she does, an' that proves what I was axpoundin' ; that afther all, the sorra hap'orth aquil to the grace o' God."

He then sang a comic song, and, having passed an additional eulogium on the conduct of Honor O'Donovan, concluded by exhibiting some rather unequivocal symptoms of becoming pathetic from sheer sympathy ; after which the soporific effect of his libations soon hushed him into a snore that acted as a base to the shrill tones in which his companions addressed one another from each side of the car.

Fardorougha, ever since the passion of avarice had established its accursed dominion in his heart, narrowed by degrees his domestic establishment, until, towards the latter years of his life, it consisted of only a laboring boy, as the term is, and a servant girl.

Indeed, no miser was ever known to maintain a large household ; and that for reasons too obvious to be detailed. Since Connor's incarceration, however, his father's heart had so far expanded, that he hired two men as inside servants, one of them, now the father of a large family, being the identical Nogher M'Cormick, who, as the reader remembers, was in his service at the time of Connor's birth. The other was a young man named Thaddy Star, or Reillaghan, as it is called in Irish, who was engaged upon the recommendation of Biddy Nulty, then an established favorite with her master and mistress, in consequence of her faithful devotion to them and Connor, and her simple-hearted participation in their heavy trouble. The manner in which they received the result of her son's trial was not indeed calculated to sustain his mother. In the midst of the clamor, however, she was calm and composed ; but it would have been evident, to a close observer, that a deep impression of religious duty alone sustained her, and that the yearnings of the mother's heart, though stilled by resignation to the Divine Will, were yet more intensely agonized by the suppression of what she secretly felt. Such, however, is the motive of those heroic acts of self-denial, which religion only can enable us to perform. It does not harden the heart, or prevent it from feeling the full force of the calamity or sorrow which comes upon us ; no, but whilst we experience it in all the rigor of distress, it teaches us to reflect that suffering is our lot, and that it is our duty to receive these severe dispensations in such a manner as to prevent others from being corrupted by our impatience, or by our open want of submission to the decrees of Providence. When the agony of the Man of Sorrow was at its highest, He retired to a solitary place, and whilst every pore exuded water and blood, he still exclaimed—"Not My will, but Thine be done." Here was resignation, indeed, but at the same time a heart exquisitely sensible of all it had to bear. And much, indeed, as yet lay before that of the pious mother of our unhappy hero, and severe was the trial which, on this very night, she was doomed to encounter.

When Fardorougha awoke, which he did not do until about three o'clock in the morning, he looked wildly about him, and, starting up in the bed, put his two hands on his temples, like a man distracted by acute pain ; yet anxious to develop in his memory the proceedings of the foregoing day. The inmates, however, were startled from their sleep by a shriek, or rather a yell, so loud and unearthly that in a few minutes they stood collected about his bed. It would be impossible, indeed, to conceive, much less to describe, such a picture of utter horror as then presented itself to their observation. A look that resembled the turbid glare of insanity was riveted upon them whilst he uttered shriek after shriek, without the power of articulating a syllable. The room, too, was dim and gloomy ; for the light of the candle that was left burning beside him had become ghastly for want of snuffing. There he sat—his fleshless hands pressed against his temples ; his thin, gray hair standing out wildly from his head ; his lips asunder ; and his cheeks sucked in so far that the chasms occasioned in his jawbones, by the want of his back teeth, were plainly visible.

"Chiernah dheelish," exclaimed Honor, "what is this ? as Heaven's above me, I believe he's dyin' ; see how he gasps ! Here,

Fardorougha," she exclaimed, seizing a jug of water which had been left on a chair beside him, but which he evidently did not see, "here, here, darlin', wet your lips; the cool water will refresh you."

He immediately clutched the jug with eager and trembling hands, and at one rapid draught emptied it to the bottom.

"Now," he shouted, "I can spake, now I can spake. Where's my son? where's my son? an' what has happened *me?* how did I come here? was I mad? am I mad? but tell me, tell me first, where's Connor? Is it thrue? is it all thrue? or is it me that's mad?"

"Fardorougha, dear," said his wife, "be a man, or, rather, be a Christian. It was God gave Connor to us, and who has a better right to take him back from us? Don't be flyin' in His face, bekase He won't ordher everything as you wish. You haven't taken off of you to-night, so rise, dear, and calm yourself; then go to your knees, lift your heart to God, and beg of Him to grant you strinth and patience. Thry that coorse, avourneen, an' you'll find it the best."

"How did I come home, I say? Oh, tell me, Honor, tell me, was I out o' my wits?"

"You fainted," she replied; "and thin they gave you whiskey to support you; an' not bein' accustomed to it, it got into your head."

"Oh, Honor, our son, our son!" he replied; then, starting out of the bed in a fit of the wildest despair, he clasped his hands together, and shrieked out, "Oh, our son, our son, our son Connor! Merciful Saviour, how will I name it? to be hanged by the neck! Oh, Honor, Honor, don't you pity me? don't you pity me? Mother of Heaven, this night? That *barradh dhu*, that *barradh dhu*, put on for our boy, our innocent boy; who can undherstand it, Honor? It's not justice; there's no justice in Heaven, or my son wouldn't be murdhered, slaughtered down in the prime of his life, for no rason! But no matther; let him be taken; only hear this: if he goes, I'll never bend my knee to a single prayer while I've life; for it's terrible, it's cruel, 'tisn't justice; nor do care what becomes of me, either in this world or the other. All I want, Honor, is to folly *him* as soon as I can; my hopes, my happiness, my life, my everything, is gone wid him; an' what need I care, thin, what becomes of me? I don't, I don't."

The faces of the domestics grew pale as they heard, with silent horror, the incoherent blasphemies of the frantic miser; but his wife, whose eyes were riveted on him while he spoke, and paced, with a hurried step, up and down the room, felt at a loss whether to attribute his impiety to an attack of insanity, or to a temporary fever, brought on by his late sufferings and the intoxication of the preceding night.

"In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, Fardorougha," she said calmly, placing her hand upon his shoulder, "are you sinsible that you're this minute afther blasphemin' your Creator?"

He gave her a quick, disturbed, and peevish look, but made no reply. She then proceeded:

"Fardorougha, I thought the loss of Connor the greatest punishmeut that could be put upon me; but I find I was mistaken. I would rather see him dead to-morrow, wid, wid the rope about his neck, than to hear his father blasphemin' the livin' God! Fardorougha, it's clear that you're not now fit to pray for yourself, but, in the name of our Saviour, I'll go an' pray for you. In the mean time, go to bed; sleep will settle your head, and you will be better, I trust, in the mornin'."

The calm solemnity of her manner awed him, notwithstanding the vehemence of his grief. He stood and looked at her, with his hands tightly clasped, as she went to her son's bedroom, in order to pray for him. For a moment, he seemed abashed and stunned. While she addressed him, he involuntarily ceased to utter those sounds of anguish which were neither shrieks nor groans, but something between both. He then resumed his pace, but with a more settled step, and for some minutes maintained perfect silence.

"Get me," said he, at length, "get me a drink of wather; I'm in a flame wid drouth."

When Biddy Nulty went out to fetch him this, he inquired of the rest what Honor meant by charging him with blasphemy.

"Surely to God, I didn't blaspliame," he said, peevishly; "no, no, I'm not that bad; but any how, let her pray for me; *her* prayer will be heard, if ever woman's was."

When Biddy returned, he emptied the jug of water with the same trembling eagerness as before; then clasped his hands again, and commenced pacing the room, evidently in a mood of mind about to darken into all the wildness of his former grief.

"Fardorougha," said Nogher M'Cormick; "I was undher this roof the night your manly son was born. I remimber it well; an' I remimber more betoken, I had to check you for flying in the face o' God that sent him to you. Instead o' feelin' happy and delighted, as you ought to ha' done, an' as any other man but yourself would, you grew dark an' sulky, and grumbled bekase you

thought there was a family comin'. I tould you that night to take care an' not be committing sin ; an' you may remimber, too, that I gev you chapter an' verse for it out o' Scripture : ' Woe be to the man that's born wid a millstone about his neck, especially if he's to be cast into the say.' The truth is, Fardorougha, you warn't thankful to God for him ; and you see that afther all, it doesn't do to go to loggerheads wid the Almighty. Maybe, had you been thankful for him, he wouldn't be where he is this night. Millstone ! Faith, it was a home thrust, that same verse ; for if you didn't carry the millstone about your neck, you had it in your heart ; an' you now see and feel the upshot. I'm now goin' fast into age myself ; my hair is grayer than your own, and I could take it to my death," said the honest fellow, while a tear or two ran slowly down his cheek ; "that, exceptin' one o' my own childre', an' may God spare them to me ! I couldn't feel more sorrow at the fate of any one livin', than at Connor's. Many a time I held him in these arms, an' many a little play I made for him ; an' many a time he axed me why his father didn't nurse him as I did ; 'bekase,' he used to say, 'I would rather he would nurse me than anybody else, barring my mother ; and, afther him, you, Nogher.'"

These last obervations of his servant probed the heart of the old man to the quick ; but the feeling which they excited was a healthy one ; or, rather, the associations they occasioned threw Fardorougha's mind upon the memory of those affections, which avarice had suppressed, without destroying.

"I loved him, Nogher," said he, deeply agitated ; "Oh none but God knows how I loved him, although I didn't an' couldn't bring myself to show it at the time. There was something upon me ; a curse, I think, that prevented me ; an' now that I love him as a father ought to do, I will not have him. Oh, my son, my son, what will become of me, after you? Heavenly Father, pity me and support me ! Oh, Connor, my son, my son, what will become of me?"

He then sat down on the bed, and, placing his hands upon his face, wept long and bitterly. His grief now, however, was natural, for, during the most violent of his paroxysms in the preceding hour, he shed not a tear ; yet now they ran down his cheeks, and through his fingers, in torrents.

"Cry on, cry on," said Nogher, wiping his own eyes ; "it will lighten your heart ; an' who knows but it's his mother's prayers that brought you to yourself, and got this relief for you. Go, Biddy," said he, in a whisper, to the servant-maid, "and tell the mistress to come here ; she'll know best how to manage him, now that he's a little calm."

"God be praised !" ejaculated Honor, on seeing him weep ; "these tears will cool your head, avourneen ; an' now, Fardorougha, when you're tired cryin', if you take my advice, you'll go to your knees an' offer up five pathers, five Aves, an' a creed, for the grace of the Almighty to direct and strengthen you ; and thin, afther that, go to bed, as I sed, an' you'll find how well you'll be afther a sound sleep."

"Honor," replied her husband, "avourneen machree, I think you'll save your husband's sowl yet, undher my merciful Saviour."

"Your son, undher the same merciful God, will do it. Your heart was hard and godless, Fardorougha, and, surely, if Connor's death 'll be the manes of savin' his father's sowl, wouldn't it be a blessin' instead of a misfortune? Think of it in that light, Fardorougha, and turn your heart to God. As for Connor, isn't it a comfort to know that the breath won't be out of his body till he's a bright angel in heaven?"

The old man wiped his eyes and knelt down, first having desired them to leave him. When the prayers were recited he called in Honor.

"I'm afeard," said he, "that my heart wasn't properly *in* them, for I couldn't prevent my mind from wanderin' to our boy."

This touching observation took the mother's affections by surprise. A tear started to her eye, but, after what was evidently a severe struggle, she suppressed it.

"It's not at once you can do it, Fardorougha ; so don't be cast down. Now, go to bed, in the name of God, and sleep ; and may the Lord in heaven support you—and support us both ! for oh ! it's we that want it this night of sorrow !"

She then stooped down and affectionately kissed him, and, having wished him good night, she retired to Connor's bed, where, ever since the day of his incarceration, this well-tried mother and enduring Christian slept.

At this stage of our story we will pause, for a moment, to consider the state of mind and comparative happiness of the few persons who are actors in our humble drama.

To a person capable of observing only human action, independently of the motives by which it is regulated, it may appear that the day which saw Connor O'Donovan consigned to a premature and shameful death, was one of unmingled happiness to Bartle Flanagan. They know little of man's heart, however, who could suppose this to be the case, or who could even imagine that he was happier than those on whom his revenge and perfidy

had entailed such a crushing load of misery. It is, indeed, impossible to guess what the nature of that feeling must be which arises from the full gratification of mean and diabolic malignity. Every action of the heart at variance with virtue and truth is forced to keep up so many minute and fearful precautions, all of which are felt to be of vast moment at the time, that we question if ever the greatest glut of vengeance produced, no matter what the occasion may have been, any satisfaction capable of counterbalancing all the contigencies and apprehensions by which the mind is distracted both before and after its preparation. The plan and accomplishment must both be perfect in all their parts—for if either fail only in a single point, all is lost, and the pleasure arising from them resembles the fruit which is said to grow by the banks of the Dead Sea—it is beautiful and tempting to the eye, but bitterness and ashes to the taste.

The failing of the county treasurer, for instance, deprived Bartle Flanagan of more than one half his revenge. He was certainly far more anxious to punish the father than the son, and were it not that he saw no other mode of effecting his vengeance on Fardorougha, than by destroying the only object on earth that he loved next to his wealth, he would have never made the innocent pay the penalty of the guilty. As he had gone so far, however, self-preservation now made him anxious that Connor should die ; as he knew his death would remove out of his way the only person in existence absolutely acquainted with his villany. One would think, indeed, that the sentence pronounced upon his victim ought to have satisfied him on that head. This, however, it failed to do. That sentence contained one clause, which utterly destroyed the completeness of his design, and filled his soul with a secret apprehension either of just retribution, or some future ill which he could not shake off, and for which the reward received for Connor's apprehension was but an ineffectual antidote. The clause alluded to in the judge's charge, viz.—"the recommendation of the jury to the mercy of the Crown, in consideration of your youth, and previous good conduct, shall not be overlooked"—sounded in his ears like some mysterious sentence that involved his own fate, and literally filled his heart with terror and dismay. Independently of all this his villanous projects had involved him in a systematic course of guilt, which was yet far from being brought to a close. In fact, he now found by experience how difficult it is to work out a bad action with success, and how the means, and plans, and instruments necessary to it must multiply and become so deep and complicated in guilt, that scarcely any single intellect, in the case of a person who can be reached by the laws, is equal to the task of executing a great crime against society, in a perfect manner. If this were so, discovery would be impossible, and revenge certain.

With respect to Connor himself it is only necessary to say that a short but well-spent life, and a heart naturally firm, deprived death of its greatest terrors. Still he felt it, in some depressed moods, a terrible thing indeed to reflect, that he, in the very fullness of strength and youth, should be cut down from among his fellows—a victim without a crime, and laid with shame in the grave of a felon. But he had witnessed neither his mother's piety nor her example in vain, and it was in the gloom of his dungeon that he felt the light of both upon his spirit.

"Surely," said he, "as I am to die, is it not better that I should die innocent than guilty? Instead of fretting that I suffer, a guiltless man, surely I ought to thank God that I am so ; an' that my soul hasn't to meet the sin of such a revengeful act as I'm now condemned for. I'll die, then, like a Christian man, putting my hope and trust in the mercy of my Redeemer—ever an' always hoping that by His assistance I will be enabled to do it."

Different, indeed, were the moral state and position of these two young men ; the one, though lying in his prison cell, was sustained by the force of conscious innocence, and that reliance upon the mercy of God, which constitutes the highest order of piety, and the noblest basis of fortitude ; the other, on the contrary, disturbed by the tumultuous and gloomy associations of guilt, and writhing under the conviction, that, although he had revenge, he had not satisfaction. The terror of crime was upon him, and he felt himself deprived of that best and only security, which sets all vain apprehensions at defiance, the consciousness of inward integrity. Who, after all, would barter an honest heart for the danger arising from secret villany, when such an apparently triumphant villain as Bartle Flanagan felt a deadly fear of Connor O'Donovan in his very dungeon? Such, however, is guilt, and such are the terrors that accompany it.

The circumstances which, in Ireland, usually follow the conviction of a criminal, are so similar to each other, that we feel it, even in this case, unnecessary to do more than give a mere sketch of Connor's brief life as a culprit. We have just observed that the only clause in the judge's charge which smote the heart of the traitor, Flanagan, with a presentiment of evil, was that containing the words in which something like a hope of hav-

ing his sentence mitigated was held out to him, in consequence of the recommendation to mercy by which the jury accompanied their verdict. It is very strange, on the other hand, that, at the present stage of our story, neither his father nor mother knew anything whatsoever of the judge having given expression to such a hope. The old man, distracted as he was at the time, heard nothing, or at least remembered nothing, but the awful appearance of the black cap, or, as they term it in the country, the *barradh dhu*, and the paralyzing words in which the sentence of death was pronounced upon his son. It consequently happened that the same clause in the charge actually, although in a different sense, occasioned the misery of Bartle Flanagan on the one hand, and of Connor's parents on the other.

The morning after the trial, Fardorougha was up as early as usual, but his grief was nearly as vehement and frantic as on the preceding night. It was observed, however —such is the power of sorrow to humanize and create sympathy in the heart—that, when he arose, instead of peevishly and weakly obtruding his grief and care upon those about him, as he was wont to do, he now kept aloof from the room in which Honor slept, from an apprehension of disturbing her repose—a fact which none who knew his previous selfishness would have believed, had he not himself expressed in strong terms a fear of awakening her. Nor did this new trait of his character escape the observation of his own servants, especially of his honest monitor, Nogher M'Cormick.

"Well, well," exclaimed this rustic philosopher; "see what God's affliction does. Faith, it has brought Fardorougha to feel a trifle for others, as well as for himself. Who knows, begad, but it may take the millstone out of his heart yet; and if it does, my word to you, he may thank his wife, undher God, for it."

Before leaving home that morning to see his son, he found with deep regret that Honor's illness had been so much increased by the events of the preceding day, that she could not leave her bed. And now, for the first time, a thought, loaded with double anguish, struck upon his heart.

"Saver of earth!" he exclaimed, "what would become of me if both should go and lave me alone? God of heaven, alone! Ay, ay," he continued, "I see it. I see how asily God might make my situation still worse than I thought it *could* be. Oh God, forgive me my sins; and may God soften my heart! Amin!"

He then went to see his wife ere he set out for his unhappy son; and it was with much satisfaction that Honor observed a changed and chastened tone in his manner, which she had never, except for a moment at the birth of his child, noticed before. Not that his grief was much lessened, but it was more rational, and altogether free from the violence and impiety which had characterized it when he awoke from his intoxication.

"Honor," said he, "how do you find yourself this mornin', alanna? They tell me you're worse than you wor yesterday."

"Indeed, I'm wake enough," she replied, "and very much bate down, Fardorougha; but you know it's not our own stringth at any time that we're to depend upon, but God's. I'm not willing to attempt anything beyant my power at présent. My seeing him now would do neither of us any good, and might do me a great dale o' harm. I must see him, to be sure, and I'll strive, plase God, to gather up a little strength for *that*."

"My heart's breakin', Honor, and I'm beginnin' to see that I've acted a bad part to both of you all along. I feel it, indeed; and if it was the will of God, I didn't care if——"

"Whisht, accushla, whisht—sich talk as that's not right. Think, Fardorougha, whether you acted a bad part towards God or not, and never heed us; an' think, too, dear, whether you acted a bad or a good part towards the poor, an' them that was in distress and hardship, an' that came to you for relief: they were your fellow-crathers, Fardorougha, at all evints. Think of these things I'm sayin, and never heed us. You know that Connor and I forgive you, but you arn't so sure whether God and them will."

These observations of this estimable woman had the desired effect, which was, as she afterwards said, to divert her husband's mind as much as possible from the contemplation of Connor's fate, and to fix it upon the consideration of those duties in which she knew his conscience, now touched by calamity, would tell him he had been deficient.

Fardorougha was silent for some time after her last observations—but at length he observed:

"Would it be possible, Honor, that all this was brought upon us in ordher to punish me for—for——"

"To punish *you*, Fardorougha? *Fareer gaih avourneen*, arn't we all punished? look at my worn face, and think of what ten days sorrow can do in a mother's heart—think, too, of the boy. Oh no, no—do you think *we* have nothin' to be punished for? But we have all one comfort, Fardorougha, and that

is, that God's ever and always willin' to resave us, when we turn to Him wid a true heart? Nobody, avillish, can forget and forgive as He does."

"Honor, why didn't you oftener spake to me this a-way than you did?"

"I often did, dear, an' you may remember it; but you were then strong; you had your wealth; everything flowed wid you, an' the same wealth—the world's temptation—was strong in your heart; but God has taken it from you I hope as a blessing—for, indeed, Fardorougha, I'm afeard if you had it now, that neither he nor——but I won't say it, dear, for God sees I don't wish to say one word that 'ud distress you now, avourneen. Any how, Fardorougha, never despair in God's goodness—never do it; who can tell what may happen?"

Her husband's grief was thus checked, and a train of serious reflection laid, which, like some of those self-evident convictions that fastened on the awakened conscience, the old man could not shake off.

Honor, in her further conversation with him, touching the coming interview with the unhappy culprit, desired him, above all things, to set "their noble boy" an example of firmness, and by no means to hold out to him any expectation of life.

"It would be worse than murdher," she exclaimed, "to do so. No—prepare him by your advice, Fardorougha, ay, and by your example, to be firm—and tell him that his mother expects he will die like an innocent man—noble and brave—and not like a guilty coward, afeard to look up and meet his God."

Infidels and hypocrites, so long as their career in vice is unchecked by calamity, will no doubt sneer when we assure them, that Fardorougha, after leaving his wife that morning once more to visit his son, felt a sense of relief, or, perhaps we should say, a breaking of faint light upon his mind, which, slight as it was, afforded him more comfort and support than he ever hoped to experience. Indeed, it was almost impossible for any heart to exist within the influence of that piety which animated his admirable wife, and not catch the holy fire which there burned with such purity and brightness.

Ireland, however, abounds with such instances of female piety and fortitude, not, indeed, as they would be made to appear in the unfeminine violence of political turmoil, in which a truly pious female would not embroil herself; but in the quiet recesses of domestic life—in the hard struggles against poverty, and in those cruel visitations, where the godly mother is forced to see her innocent son corrupted by the dark influence of political crime, drawn within the vortex of secret confederacy, and subsequently yielding up his life to the outraged laws of that country which he assisted to distract. It is in scenes like these that the unostentatious magnanimity of the pious Irish wife or mother may be discovered; and it is here where, as the night and storms of life darken her path, the holy fortitude of her heart shines with a lustre proportioned to the depth of the gloom around her.

When Fardorougha reached the town in which his ill-fated son occupied the cell of a felon, he found to his surprise that, early as were his habits, there were others whose movements were still more early than his own. John O'Brien had come to town—been with his attorney—had got a memorial in behalf of Connor to the Irish government, engrossed, and actually signed by more than one-half of the jury who tried him—all before the hour of ten o'clock. A copy of this document, which was written by O'Brien himself, now lies before us, with the names of all the jurors attached to it; and a more beautiful or affecting piece of composition we have never read. The energy and activity of O'Brien were certainly uncommon, and so, indeed, were his motives. As he himself told Fardorougha, whom he met as the latter entered the town—

"I would do what I have done for Connor, although I have never yet exchanged a syllable with him. Yet, I do assure you, Fardorougha, that I have other motives—which you shall never know—far stronger than any connected with the fate of your son. Now, don't misunderstand me."

"No," replied the helpless old man, who was ignorant of the condition of his sister, "I will not, indeed—I'd be long sarry."

O'Brien saw that any rational explanation he might give would be only thrown away upon a man who seemed to be so utterly absorbed and stupefied by the force of his own sufferings.

"Poor old man," he exclaimed, as Fardorougha left him, to visit Connor; "see what affliction does? There are thousands now who pity you—even *you*, whom almost every one who knew you, cursed and detested."

Such, indeed, was the fact. The old man's hardness of heart was forgotten in the pity that was produced by the dreadful fate which awaited his unhappy son. We must now pass briefly over occurrences which are better understood when left to the reader's imagination. John O'Brien was not the only one who interested himself in the fate of Connor. Fardorougha, as a matter of course, got the priest of the parish, a good and pious man,

to draw up a memorial in the name, as he said, of himself and his wife. The gentry of the neighborhood, also, including the members of the grand jury, addressed government on his behalf—for somehow there was created among those who knew the parties, or even who heard the history of their loves, a sympathy which resulted more from those generous impulses that intuitively perceive truth, than from the cooler calculations of reason. The heart never reasons—it is, therefore, the seat of feeling, and the fountain of mercy; the head does—and it is probably on that account the seat of justice, often of severity, and not unfrequently of cruelty and persecution, Connor himself was much relieved by that day's interview with his father. Even he could perceive a change for the better in the old man's deportment. Fardorougha's praises of Honor, and his strong allusions to the support and affection he experienced at her hands, under circumstances so trying, were indeed well calculated to prepare "her noble boy," as she truly called him, for the reception of the still more noble message which she sent him.

"Father," said he, as they separated that day, "tell my mother that I will die as she wishes me; and tell her, too, that if I wasn't an innocent man, I could not do it. And oh, father," he added, and he seized his hands, and fell upon his neck, "oh, father dear, if you love me, your own Connor—and I know you do—oh, then, father dear, I say again, be guided in this heavy affliction by my dear mother's advice."

"Connor," returned the old man, deeply affected, "I will. I had made my mind up to that afore I saw you at all to-day. Connor, do you know what I'm beginning to think?"

"No, father dear, I do not."

"Why, then, it's this, that she'll be the manes of savin' your father's soul. Connor, I can look back now upon my money—all I lost—it was no doubt terrible—terrible all out. Connor, my rint is due, and I haven't the manes of meetin' it."

Alas! thought the boy, how hard it is to root altogether out of the heart that principle which inclines it to the love of wealth!

"At any rate, I will take your advice, Connor, and be guided by your mother. She's very poorly, or she'd be wid you afore now; but, indeed, Connor, her health is the occasion of it—it is—it is!"

Fardorougha's apology for his wife contained much more truth than he himself was aware of at the time he made it. On returning home that night he found her considerably worse, but, as she had been generally healthy, he very naturally ascribed her illness to the affliction she felt for the fate of their son. In this, however, he was mistaken, as the original cause of it was unconnected with the heavy domestic dispensation which had fallen upon them. So far as she was concerned, the fate of her boy would have called up from her heart fresh energy and if possible a higher order of meek but pious courage. She would not have left him unsustained and uncherished, had the physical powers of the mother been able to second the sacred principles with which she met and triumphed over the trial that was laid upon her.

It was one evening about ten days after O'Donovan's conviction that Bodagh Bane O'Brien's wife sat by the bedside of her enfeebled and languishing daughter. The crisis of her complaint had passed the day before; and a very slight improvement, visible only to the eye of her physician, had taken place. Her delirium remained much as before; sometimes returning with considerable violence, and again leaving reason, though feeble and easily disturbed, yet when unexcited by external causes, capable of applying its powers to the circumstances around her. On this occasion the mother, who watched every motion and anticipated every wish of the beloved one, saw that she turned her eye several times upon her as if some peculiar anxiety distressed her.

"Una, jewel," she at length inquired, "is there anything you want, *colleen machree;* or anything I can do for you?"

"Come near me, mother," she replied, "come near me."

Her mother approached her still more nearly.

"I'm afraid," she said, in a very low voice, "I'm afraid to ask it."

"Only wait for a minute or two," said her mother, "an' John will—but here's the doctor's foot; they wor spakin' a word or two below; an' whisper, darlin' o' my heart, sure John has something to tell you—something that will"——

She looked with a searching anxiety into her mother's face; and it might have been perceived that the morning twilight of hope beamed faintly but beautifully upon her pale features. The expression that passed over them was indeed so light and transient that one could scarcely say she smiled; yet that a more perceptible serenity diffused its gentle irradiation over her languid countenance was observed even by her mother.

The doctor's report was favorable.

"She is slowly improving," he said, on reaching the parlor, "since yesterday; I'm afraid, however, she's too weak at present to sustain this intelligence. I would recom-

mend you to wait for a day or two, and in the meantime to assume a cheerful deportment, and to break it to her rather by your looks and manner than by a direct or abrupt communication."

They promised to observe his directions; but when her mother informed them of the hint she herself threw out to her, they resolved to delay the matter no longer; and John, in consequence of what his mother had led her to expect, went to break the intelligence to her as well as he could. An expectation had been raised in her mind, and he judged properly enough that there was less danger in satisfying it than in leaving her just then in a state of such painful uncertainty.

"Dear Una," said he, "I am glad to hear the doctor say that you are better."

"I think I am a little," said she.

"What was my mother saying to you, just now, before the doctor was with you? But why do you look at me so keenly, Una?" said he, cheerfully; "it's some time since you saw me in such a good humor—isn't it?"

She paused for a moment herself; and her brother could observe that the hope which his manner was calculated to awaken, lit itself into a faint smile rather visible in her eyes than on her features.

"Why, I believe you are smiling yourself, Una."

"John," said she, earnestly, "is it good?"

"It is, darling—*he won't die.*"

"Kiss me, kiss me," she said; "may eternal blessings rest upon you!"

She then kissed him affectionately, laid her head back upon the pillow, and John saw with delight that the large tears of happiness rolled in torrents down her pale cheeks.

It was indeed true that Connor O'Donovan was not to die. The memorials which had reached government from so many quarters, backed as they were by very powerful influence, and detailing as they did a case of such very romantic interest, could scarcely fail in arresting the execution of so stern and deadly a sentence. It was ascertained, too, by the intercourse of his friends with government, that the judge who tried his case, notwithstanding the apparent severity of his charge, had been moved by an irresistible impulse to save him, and he actually determined from the beginning to have his sentence commuted to transportation for life.

The happy effect of this communication on Una O'Brien diffused a cheerful spirit among her family and relatives, who, in truth, had feared that her fate would ultimately depend upon that of her lover. After having been much relieved by the copious flood of tears she shed, and heard with composure all the details connected with the mitigation of his sentence, she asked her brother if Connor's parents had been yet made acquainted with it.

"I think not," he replied; "the time is too short."

"John," said the affectionate girl, "oh, consider his mother; and think of the misery that one single hour's knowledge of this may take away from her heart! Go to her, my dear John, and may all the blessings of heaven rest upon you!"

"Good-by, then, Una dear; I will go."

He took her worn hand in his, as he spoke, and, looking on her with affectionate admiration, added—

"Yes! good-by, my darling sister; believe me, Una, that I think if there's justice in Heaven, you'll have a light heart yet."

"It is very light now," she returned, "compared with what it was; but go, John, don't lose a moment; *for I know what they suffer.*"

Her mother, after John's departure for Fardorougha's, went up to sit with her; but she found that the previous scene, although it relieved, had exhausted her. In the course of a few minutes their limited dialogue ceased, and she sank into a sound and refreshing sleep, from which she did not awaken until her brother had some time returned from the execution of his pious message. And piously was that message received by her for whose misery the considerate heart of Una O'Brien felt so deeply. Fardorougha had been out about the premises, mechanically looking to the manner in which the business of his farm had been of late managed by his two servants, when he descried O'Brien approaching the house at a quick if not a hurried pace. He immediately went in and communicated the circumstance to his wife.

"Honor," said he, "here is Bodagh Buie's son comin' up to the house—what on earth can bring the boy here?"

This was the first day on which his wife had been able to rise from her sick bed. She was consequently feeble, and, physically speaking, capable of no domestic exertion. Her mind, however, was firm as ever, and prompt as before her calamity to direct and overlook, in her own sweet and affectionate manner, whatever required her superintendence.

"I'm sure I don't know, Fardorougha," she replied. "It can't, I hope, be wid bad news—they thravel fast enough—an' I'm sure the Bodagh's son wouldn't take pleasure in bein' the first to tell them to us."

"But what can bring him, Honor? What on earth can bring the boy here now, that never stood undher our roof afore?"

"Three or four minutes, Fardorougha, will tell us. Let us hope in God it isn't bad. Eh, Saver above, it wouldn't be the death of his sister—of Connor's Oona! No," she added, "they wouldn't send, much less come, to tell us *that;* but sure we'll hear it—we'll hear it; and may God give us stringth to hear it right, whether it's good or bad! Amin, Jasus, this day!"

She had hardly uttered the last words, when O'Brien entered.

"Young man," said this superior woman, "it's a poor welcome we can give you to a house of sorrow."

"Ay," said Fardorougha, "his mother an' I's here, but where is he? Nine days from this; but it 'ill kill me—it will—it will. Whin he's taken from me, I don't care how soon I folly him; God forgive me if it's a sin to say so!"

"Fardorougha," said his wife, in a tone of affectionate reproof, "remimber what you promised me, an', at all evints, you forget that Mr. O'Brien here may have his own troubles; I heard your sister was unwell. Oh, how is she, poor thing?"

"I thank you, a great deal better; I will not deny but she heard a piece of intelligence this day, that has relieved her mind and taken a dead weight off her heart."

Honor, with uncommon firmness and solemnity of manner, placed her hand upon his shoulder, and, looking him earnestly in the face, said,

"That news is about our son?"

"It is," replied O'Brien, "and it's good; his sentence is changed, and he is not to die."

"Not to die!" shrieked the old man, starting up, and clapping his hands frantically—"not to die! our son—Connor, Connor—not to be hanged—not to be hanged! Did you say that, son of O'Brien Buie, did you—did you?"

"I did," replied the other; "he will not suffer."

"Now that's God," ejaculated Fardorougha, wildly; "that's God an' his mother's prayers. Boys," he shrieked, "come here; come here, Biddy Nulty, come here; Connor's not to die; he won't suffer—he won't suffer!"

He was rushing wildly to the door, but Honor placed herself before him, and said, in that voice of calmness which is uniformly that of authority and power:

"Fardorougha, dear, calm yourself. If this is God's work, as you say, why not resave it as comin' from God? It's upon your two knees you ought to drop, an'—— Saver above, what's the matther wid him? He's off; keep him up. Oh, God bless you! that's it, avourneen; jist place him on the chair there forninst the door, where he can have air. Here, dear," said she to Biddy Nulty, who, on hearing herself called by her master, had come in from another room; "get some feathers, Biddy, till we burn them undher his nose; but first fetch a jug of cold water."

On looking at the face of the miser, O'Brien started, as indeed well he might, at such a pallid, worn, and death-like countenance; why, thought he to himself, surely this must be death, and the old man's cares, and sorrows, and hopes, are all passed forever.

Honor now bathed his face, and wet his lips with water, and as she sprinkled and rubbed back the gray hair from his emaciated temples, there might be read there an expression of singular wildness that resembles the wreck produced by insanity.

"He looks ill," observed O'Brien, who actually thought him dead; "but I hope it won't signify."

"I trust in God's mercy it won't," replied Honor; "for till his heart, poor man, is brought more to God—"

She paused with untaught delicacy, for she reflected that he was her husband.

"For that matther, who is there," she continued, "that is fit to go to their last account at a moment's warnin'? That's a good girl, Biddy; give me the feathers; there's nothing like them. *Dheah Grasthias! Dheah Grasthias!*" she exclaimed, "he's not—he's not—an' I was afeard he was—no, he's recoverin'. Shake him; rouse him a little; Fardorougha, dear!"

"Where—where am I?" exclaimed her husband; "what is this? what ails me?"

He then looked inquiringly at his wife and O'Brien; but it appeared that the presence of the latter revived in his mind the cause of his excitement.

"Is it—is it thrue, young man? tell me—tell me!"

"How, dear, can any one have spirits to tell you good news, when you can't bear it aither like a man or a Christian?"

"Good news! You say, then, it's thrue, an' he's not to be hanged by the neck, as the judge said; an' my curse—my heavy curse upon him for a judge!"

"I hate to hear the words of his sentence, Fardorougha," said the wife; "but if you have patience you'll find that his life's granted to him; an', for Heaven's sake, curse nobody. The judge only did his duty."

"Well," he exclaimed, sinking upon his

knees, "now, from this day out, let what will happen, I'll stick to my duty to God—I'll repent—I'll repent and lead a new life. I will, an' while I'm alive I'll never say a word against the will of my heavenly Saviour; never, never."

"Fardorougha," replied his wife, "it's good, no doubt, to have a grateful heart to God; but I'm afeard there's sin in what you're sayin', for you know, dear, that, whether it plased the Almighty to take our boy, or not, what you've promised to do is your duty. It's like sayin', 'I'll now turn my heart bekase God has deserved it at my hands.' Still, dear, *I'm* not goin' to condimn you, only I think it's bettther an' safer to love an' obey God for His own sake, blessed be His holy name!"

Young O'Brien was forcibly struck by the uncommon character of Honor O'Donovan. Her patience, good sense, and sincere acquiescence in the will of God, under so severe a trial, were such as he had never seen equalled. Nor could he help admitting to himself, while contemplating her conduct, that the example of such a woman was not only the most beautiful comment on religious truth, but the noblest testimony of its power.

"Yes, Honor," said the husband, in reply, "you're right, for I know that what you say is always thrue. It is, indeed," he added, addressing O'Brien, "she's aquil to a prayer-book."

"Yes, and far superior to any," replied the latter; "for she not only gives you the advice, but sets you the example."

"Ay, the sorra lie in it; an', oh, Honor, he's not to die—he's not to be h——, not to suffer. Our son's to live! Oh, Saver of earth, make me thankful this day!"

The tears ran fast from his eyes as he looked up to heaven, and uttered the last words. Indeed, it was impossible not to feel deep compassion for this aged man, whose heart had been smitten so heavily, and on the only two points where it was capable of feeling the blow.

After having indulged his grief for some time, he became considerably more composed, if not cheerful. Honor made many kind inquiries after Una's health, to which her brother answered with strict candor, for he had heard from Una that she was acquainted with the whole history of their courtship.

"Who knows," said she, speaking with reference to their melancholy fate, "but the God who has saved his life, an' most likely hers, may yet do more for them both? While there's life there's hope."

"Young man," said Fardorougha, "you carry a blessin' wid you wherever you go, an' may God bless you for the news you have brought to us this day! I'll go to see him tomorrow, an' wid a light heart I'll go too, for my son is not to die."

O'Brien then took his leave and returned home, pondering, as he went, upon the singular contrast which existed between the character of the miser and that of his admirable wife. He was no sooner gone than Honor addressed her husband as follows:

"Fardorougha, what do you think we ought both to do now afther the happy news we've heard?"

"I'll be guided by you, Honor; I'll be guided by you."

"Then," said she, "go an' thank God that has taken the edge, the bitther, keen edge off of our sufferin'; an' the best way, in my opinion, for you to do it, is to go to the barn by yourself, an' strive to put your whole heart into your prayers. You'll pray betther by yourself than wid me. An' in the name of God I'll do the same as well as I can in the house here. To-morrow, too, is Friday, an', plaise our Saviour, we'll both fast in honor of His goodness to us an' to our son."

"We will, Honor," said he, "we will, indeed; for now I have spirits to fast, and spirits to pray, too. What will I say, now? Will I say the five Decades or the whole Rosary?"

"If you can keep your mind in the prayers, I think you ought to say the whole of it; but if you wandher don't say more than the five."

Fardorougha then went to the barn, rather because his wife desired him, than from a higher motive, whilst she withdrew to her own apartment, there humbly to worship God in thanksgiving.

The next day had made the commutation of Connor's punishment a matter of notoriety through the whole parish, and very sincere indeed was the gratification it conveyed to all who heard it. Public fame, it is true, took her usual liberties with the facts. Some said he had got a free pardon, others that he was to be liberated after six months' imprisonment; and a third report asserted that the lord lieutenant sent him down a hundred pounds to fit him out for marriage with Una; and it further added that his excellency wrote a letter with his own hand, to Bodagh Buie, desiring him to give his daughter to Connor on receipt of it, or if not, that the Knight of the Black Rod would come down, strip him of his property, and bestow it upon Connor and his daughter.

The young man himself was almost one of the first who heard of this favorable change in his dreadful sentence.

He was seated on his bedside reading, when the sheriff and jailer entered his cell, anxious to lay before him the reply which had that morning arrived from government.

"I'm inclined to think, O'Donovan, that your case is likely to turn out more favorably than we expected," said the humane sheriff.

"I hope, with all my heart, it may," replied the other; "there is no denying, sir, that I'd wish it. Life is sweet, especially to a young man of my years."

"But if we should fail," observed the jailer, "I trust you will act the part of a man."

"I hope, at all events, that I will act the part of a Christian," returned O'Donovan. "I certainly would rather live; but I'm not afeard of death, and if it comes, I trust I will meet it humbly but firmly."

"I believe," said the sheriff, "you need entertain little apprehension of death; I'm inclined to think that that part of your sentence is not likely to be put in execution. I have heard as much."

"I think, sir, by your manner, that you have," returned Connor; "but I beg you to tell me without goin' about. Don't be afeared, sir, that I'm too wake to hear either good news or bad."

The sheriff made no reply; but placed in his hands the official document which remitted to him the awful penalty of his life. Connor read it over slowly, and the other kept his eye fixed keenly upon his countenance, in order to observe his bearing under circumstances that are often known to test human fortitude as severely as death itself. He could, however, perceive no change: not even the unsteadiness of a nerve or muscle was visible, nor the slightest fluctuation in the hue of his complexion.

"I feel grateful to the lord lieutenant for his mercy to me," said he, handing him back the letter, "as I do to the friends who interceded for me; I never will or can forget their goodness. Oh, never, never!"

"I believe it," said the sheriff; "but there's one thing that I'm anxious to press upon your attention; and it's this, that no further mitigation of your punishment is to be expected from government; so that you must make up your mind to leave your friends and your country for life, as you know now."

"I expect nothing more," returned Connor, "except this, that the hand of God may yet bring the guilt of burning home to the man that committed it, and prove my innocence. I'm *now* not without some hope that such a thing may be brought about some how. I thank you, Misther Sheriff, for your kindness in coming to me with this good news so soon; all that I can say is, that I thank you from my heart. I am bound to say, too, that any civility and comfort that could be shown was afforded me ever since I came here, an' I feel it, an' I'm grateful for it."

Both were deeply impressed by the firm tone of manly sincerity and earnestness with which he spoke, blended as it was by a melancholy which gave, at the same time, a character of elevation and pathos to all he said. They then shook hands with him, after chatting for some time on indifferent subjects, the jailer promising to make his situation while he should remain in prison as easy as the regulations would allow him; or, "who knows," he added, smiling, "but we might make them a little easier?"

"That's a fine young fellow," said he to the sheriff, after they had left him.

"He is a gentleman," replied the sheriff, "by nature a gentleman; and a very uncommon one, too. I defy a man to doubt a word that comes out of his lips; all he says is impressed with the stamp of truth itself, and by h——n's he never committed the felony he's in for! Keep him as comfortable as you can."

They then separated.

The love of life is the first and strongest principle in our nature, and what man is there except some unhappy wretch pressed down by long and galling misery to the uttermost depths of despair, who, knowing that life was forfeited, whether justly or not matters little, to the laws of his country, will not feel the mercy which bids him live with a corresponding sense of gratitude? The son of the pious mother acted as if she was still his guide and monitress.

He knelt down and poured out *his* gratitude to that great Being who had the first claim upon it, and whose blessing he fervently invoked upon the heads of those true friends by whose exertions and influence he now felt that life was restored to him.

Of his life while he remained in this country there is little more to be said than what is usually known to occur in the case of other convicts similarly circumstanced, if we except his separation from the few persons who were dear to him. He saw his father the next day, and the old man felt almost disappointed on discovering that he was deprived of the pleasure which he proposed to himself of being the bearer of such glad tidings to him. Those who visited him, however, noticed, with a good deal of surprise, that he appeared as laboring under some secret anxiety, which, however, no tact or address on their part could induce him to disclose. Many of

them, actuated by the best motives, asked him in distinct terms why he appeared to be troubled; but the only reply they received was a good-humored remark that it was not to be expected that he could leave forever all that was dear to him on earth with a *very* cheerful spirit.

It was at this period that his old friend Nogher M'Cormick came to pay him a visit; it being the last time, as he said, that he would ever have an opportunity of seeing his face. Nogher, whose moral impressions were by no means so correct as Connor's, asked him, with a face of dry, peculiar mystery, if he had any particular wish unfulfilled; or if there remained behind him any individual against whom he entertained a spirit of enmity. If there were he begged him to make no scruple in entrusting to him a full statement of his wishes on the subject, adding that he might rest assured of having them accomplished.

"One thing you may be certain of, Nogher," said he, to the affectionate fellow, "that I have no secrets to tell; so don't let that go abroad upon me. I have heard to-day," he added, "that the vessel we are to go in will sail on this day week. My father was here this mornin'; but I hadn't heard it then. Will you, Nogher, tell my mother privately that she must'n't come to see me on the day I appointed with my father? From the state of health she's in, I'm tould she couldn't bear it. Tell her, then, not to come till the day before I sail; an' that I will expect to see her early on that day. And, Nogher, as you know more about this unhappy business than any one else, except the O'Briens and ourselves, will you give this little packet to my mother? There's three or four locks of my hair in it; one of them is for Una; and desire my mother to see Una, and to get a link of her hair to wear next my heart. My poor father—now that he finds he must part with me—is so distracted and distressed, that I couldn't trust him with this message. I want it to be kept a secret to every one but you, my mother, and Una; but my poor father would be apt to mention it in some fit of grief."

"But is there nothing else on your mind, Connor?"

"There's no heavy guilt on my mind, Nogher, I thank my God and my dear mother for it."

"Well, I can tell you one thing before you go, Connor—Bartle Flanagan's well watched. If he has been guilty—if—derry downs, who doubts it?—well, never mind; I'll hould a trifle we get him to show the cloven foot, and condemn himself yet."

"The villain," said Connor, "will be too deep—too polished for you."

"Ten to one he's not. Do you know what we've found out since this business?"

"No."

"Why, the divil resave the squig of punch, whiskey, or liquor of any sort or size he'll allow to pass the lips of him. Now, Connor, aren't you up to the cunnin' villainy of the thraitor in that maynewvre?"

"I am, Nogher; I see his design in it. He is afeard if he got drunk that he wouldn't be able to keep his own secret."

"Ah, then, by the holy Nelly, we'll *sleep* him yet, or he'll look sharp. Never you mind *him*, Connor."

"Nogher! stop," said Connor, almost angrily, "stop; what do you mane by them last words?"

"Divil a much; it's about the blaggard I'm spakin'; he'll be ped, I can tell you. There's a few friends of yours that intinds, some o' these nights, to open a gusset under one of his ears only; the divil a thing more."

"What! to take the unhappy man's life—to murdher him?"

"Hut, Connor; who's spakin' about murdher? No, only to make him miss his breath some night afore long. Does he desarve mercy that 'ud swear away the life of an innocent man?"

"Nogher," replied the other, rising up and speaking with the utmost solemnity—

"If one drop of his blood is spilt on my account, it will bring the vengeance of Heaven upon the head of every man havin' a hand in it. Will you, because he's a villain, make yourself murdherers—make yourselves blacker than he is?"

"Why, thin, death alive! Connor, have you your seven sinsis about you? Faith, that's good; as if it was a sin to knock such a white-livered Judas upon the head! Sin! —oh hell resave the morsel o' sin in that but the contrairy. Sure its only sarvin' honest people right, to knock such a desaiver on the head. If he had parjured himself for sake of the truth, or to assist a brother in trouble—or to help on the good cause—it would be something; but to go to—but—arra, be me sowl, he'll sup sarra for it, sure enough! I thought it would make your mind aisy, or I wouldn't mintion it till we'd let the breath out of him."

"Nogher," said Connor, "before you leave this unfortunate room, you must take the Almighty to witness that you'll have no hand in this bloody business, an' that you'll put a stop to it altogether. If you don't, and that his life is taken, in the first place, I'll be miserable for life; and in the next, take my word for it, that the judgment of God will fall heavily upon every one consarned in it."

"What for? Is it for slittin' the juggler

of sich a rip? Isn't he as bad as a heretic, an' worse, for he turned against his own. He has got himself made the head of a lodge, too, and holds Articles; but it's not bein' an Article-bearer that'll save him, an' he'll find that to his cost. But, indeed, Connor, the villain's a double thraitor, as you'd own, if you *knew* what I heard a hint of?"

"Well, but you must lave him to God."

"What do you think but I got a whisper that he has bad designs on her."

"On who?" said O'Donovan, starting.

"Why, on your own girl, Oona, the Bodagh's daughter. He intends, it's whispered, to take her off; an' it seems, as her father doesn't stand well with the boys, that Bartle's to get a great body of them to assist him in bringing her away."

Connor paced his cell in deep and vehement agitation. His resentment against this double-dyed villain rose to a fearful pitch; his color deepened—his eye shot fire, and, as he clenched his hand convulsively, Nogher saw the fury which this intelligence had excited in him.

"No," he proceeded, "it would be an open sin an' shame to let such an etarnal limb of the devil escape."

It may, indeed, be said that O'Donovan never properly felt the sense of his restraint until this moment. When he reflected on the danger to which his beloved Una was exposed from the dark plans of this detestable villain, and recollected that there existed in the members of the illegal confederacy such a strong spirit of enmity against Bodagh Buie, as would induce them to support Bartle in his designs upon his daughter, he pressed his hand against his forehead, and walked about in a tumult of distress and resentment, such as he had never yet felt in his bosom.

"It's a charity it will be," said Nogher, shrewdly availing himself of the commotion he had created, "to stop the vagabone short in the coorse of his villany. He'll surely bring the darlin' young girl off, an' destroy her."

For a few moments he felt as if his heart were disposed to rebel against the common ordinances of Providence, as they appeared to be manifested in his own punishment, and the successful villainy of Bartle Flanagan. The reflection, however, of a strong and naturally pious mind soon enabled him to perceive the errors into which his passions would lead him, if not restrained and subjected. He made an effort to be calm, and in a considerable degree succeeded.

"Nogher," said he, "let us not forget that this Bartle—this—but I will not say it—let us not forget that God can asily turn his plans against himself. To God, then, let us lave him. Now, hear me—you must swear in His presence that you will have neither act nor part in doing him an injury—that you will not shed his blood, nor allow it to be shed by others, as far as you can prevent it.

Nogher rubbed his chin gravely, and almost smiled at what he considered to be a piece of silly nonsense on the part of Connor. He determined, therefore, to satisfy his scruples as well as he could; but, let the consequence be what it might, to evade such an oath.

"Why, Connor," said he, "surely, if you go to that, we can have no ill-will against the d—n villain; an' as *you* don't wish it, we'll dhrop the thing; so now make your mind aisy, for another word you or any one else won't ever hear about it."

"And you won't injure the man?"

"Hut! no," replied Nogher, with a gravity whose irony was barely perceptible, "what would *we* murdher him for, now that *you* don't wish it? I never had any particular wish to see my own funeral."

"And, Nogher, you will do all you can to prevent him from being murdhered?"

"To be sure, Connor—to be sure. By He that made me, we won't give pain *to a single hair of his head.* Are you satisfied now?"

"I am," replied the ingenuous young man, who was himself too candid to see through the sophistry of Nogher's oath.

"And now, Nogher," he replied, "many a day have we spent together—you are one of my oldest friends. I suppose this is the last time you will ever see Connor O'Donovan; however, don't, man—don't be cast down; you will hear from me, I hope, and hear that I am well too."

He uttered this with a smile which cost him an effort; for, on looking into the face of his faithful old friend, he saw his muscles working under the influence of strong feeling—or, I should rather say, deep sorrow—which he felt anxious, by a show of cheerfulness, to remove. The fountains, however, of the old servant's heart were opened, and, after some ineffectual attempts to repress his grief, he fell upon Connor's neck, and wept aloud.

"Tut, Nogher," said Connor, "surely it's glad you ought to be, instead of sorry. What would you have done if my first sentence had been acted upon?"

"I'm glad for your sake," replied the other, "but I'm now sorry for my own. You will live, Connor, and you may yet be happy; but he that often held you in his arms—that often played with you, and that, next to your father and mother, you loved

betther than any other livin'—he, poor Nogher, will never see his boy more."

On uttering these words, he threw himself again upon Connor's neck, and we are not ashamed to say that their tears flowed together.

"I'll miss you, Connor, dear; I'll not see your face at fair or market, nor on the chapel-green of a Sunday. Your poor father will break his heart, and the mother's eye will never more have an opportunity of being proud out of her son. It's hard upon me to part wid you, Connor, but it can't be helped; I only ax you to remember Nogher, that, you know, loved you as if you wor his own; remimber me, Connor, of an odd time. I never thought—oh, God, I never thought to see this day! No wondher—oh, no wondher that the fair young crature should be pale and worn, an' sick at heart! I love her now, an' ever will, as well as I did yourself. I'll never see her, Connor, widout thinkin' heavily of him that her heart was set upon, an' that will then be far away from her an' from all that ever loved him."

"Nogher," replied Connor, "I'm not without hope that—but this—this is folly. You know I have a right to be thankful to God and the goodness of government for sparin' my life. Now, farewell—it *is* forever, Nogher, an' it *is* a tryin' word to-day; but you know that every one goin' to America must say it; so, think that I'm goin' there, an' it won't signify."

"Ah, Connor, I wish I could," replied Nogher; "but, to tell the truth, what breaks my heart is, to think of the way you are goin' from us. Farewell, then, Connor darlin'; an' may the blessin' of God, an' His holy mother, an' of all the saints be upon you now an' foriver. Amin!"

His tears flowed fast, and he sobbed aloud, whilst uttering the last words; he then threw his arms about Connor's neck, and, having kissed him, he again wrung his hand, and passed out of the cell in an agony of grief.

Such is the anomalous nature of that peculiar temperament, which, in Ireland, combines within it the extremes of generosity and crime. Here was a man who had been literally affectionate and harmless during his whole past life, yet, who was now actually plotting the murder of a person who had never,—except remotely, by his treachery to Connor, whom he loved—rendered him an injury, or given him any cause of offence. And what can show us the degraded state of moral feeling among a people whose natural impulses are as quick to virtue as to vice, and the reckless estimate which the peasantry form of human life, more clearly than the fact, that Connor, the noble-minded, heroic, and pious peasant, could admire the honest attachment of his old friend, without dwelling upon the dark point in his character, and mingle his tears with a man who was deliberately about to join in, or encompass, the assassination of a fellow-creature!

Even against persons of his own creed the Irishman thinks that revenge is a duty which he owes to himself;—but against those of a different faith it is not only a duty but a virtue—and any man who acts out of this feeling, either as a juror, a witness, or an elector—for the principle is the same—must expect to meet such retribution as was suggested by a heart like Nogher M'Cormick's, which was otherwise affectionate and honest. In the secret code of perverted honor by which Irishmen are guided, he is undoubtedly the most heroic and manly, and the most worthy also of imitation, who indulges in, and executes his vengeance for injuries whether real or supposed, with the most determined and unshrinking spirit; but the man who is capable of braving death, by quoting his own innocence as an argument against the justice of law, even when notoriously guilty, is looked upon by the people, not as an innocent man—for his accomplices and friends know he is not—but as one who is a hero in his rank of life; and it is unfortunately a kind of ambition among too many of our ill-thinking but generous countrymen, to propose such men as the best models for imitation, not only in their lives, but in that hardened hypocrisy which defies and triumphs over the ordeal of death itself.

Connor O'Donovan was a happy representation of all that is noble and pious in the Irish character, without one tinge of the crimes which darken or discolor it. But the heart that is full of generosity and fortitude, is generally most susceptible of the kinder and more amiable affections. The noble boy, who could hear the sentence of death without the commotion of a nerve, was forced to weep on the neck of an old and faithful follower who loved him, when he remembered that, after that melancholy visit, he should see his familiar face no more. When Nogher left him, a train of painful reflections passed through his mind. He thought of Una, of his father, of his mother, and for some time was more depressed than usual. But the gift of life to the young is ever a counterbalance to every evil that is less than death. In a short time he reflected that the same Providence which had interposed between him and his recorded sentence, had his future fate in its hands; and

that he had health, and youth, and strength —and, above all, a good conscience—to bear him through the future vicissitudes of his appointed fate.

PART VI.

To those whose minds and bodies are of active habits, there can be scarcely anything more trying than a position in which the latter is deprived of its usual occupation, and the former forced to engage itself only on the contemplation of that which is painful. In such a situation, the mental and physical powers are rendered incapable of mutually sustaining each other; for we all know that mere corporal employment lessens affliction, or enables us in a shorter time to forget it, whilst the acuteness of bodily suffering, on the other hand, is blunted by those pursuits which fill the mind with agreeable impressions. During the few days, therefore, that intervened between the last interview which Connor held with Nogher M'Cormick, and the day of his final departure he felt himself rather relieved than depressed by the number of friends who came to visit him for the last time. He was left less to solitude and himself than he otherwise would have been, and, of course, the days of his imprisonment were neither so dreary nor oppressive as the uninterrupted contemplation of his gloomy destiny would have rendered them. Full of the irrepressible ardor of youth, he longed for that change which he knew must bring him onward in the path of life; and in this how little did he resemble the generality of other convicts, who feel as if time were bringing about the day of their departure with painful and more than ordinary celerity! At length the interviews between him and all those whom he wished to see were concluded, with the exception of three, viz. — John O'Brien and his own parents, whilst only two clear days intervened until the period of his departure.

It was on the third morning previous to that unhappy event, that the brother of his Una—the most active and indefatigable of all those who had interested themselves for him—was announced as requiring an interview. Connor, although prepared for this, experienced on the occasion, as every high-minded person would do, a strong feeling of degradation and shame as the predominant sensation. That, indeed, was but natural, for it is undoubtedly true that we feel disgrace lie more heavily upon us in the eyes of those we esteem, than we do under any other circumstances. This impression, however, though as we have said the strongest, was far from being the only one he felt. A heart like his could not be insensible to the obligations under which the generous and indefatigable exertions of young O'Brien had placed him. But, independently of this, he was Una's brother, and the appearance of one so dear to *her* gave to all his love for her a character of melancholy tenderness, more deep and full than he had probably ever experienced before. Her brother would have been received with extraordinary warmth on his own account, but, in addition to that, Connor knew that he now came on behalf of Una herself. It was, therefore, under a tumult of mingled sensations, that he received him in his gloomy apartment—gloomy in despite of all that a humane jailer could do to lessen the rigors of his confinement.

"I cannot welcome you to sich a place as this is," said Connor, grasping and wringing his hand, as the other entered, "although I may well say that I would be glad to see you anywhere, as I am, indeed, to see you even here. I know what I owe you, an' what you have done for me."

"Thank God," replied the other, returning his grasp with equal pressure, "thank God, that, at all events, the worst of what we expected will not——" He paused, for, on looking at O'Donovan, he observed upon his open brow a singular depth of melancholy, mingled less with an expression of shame, than with the calm but indignant sorrow of one who could feel no resentment against him with whom he spoke.

O'Brien saw, at a glance, that Connor, in consequence of something in his manner, joined to his inconsiderate congratulations, imagined that he believed him guilty. He lost not a moment, therefore, in correcting this mistake.

"It would have been dreadful," he proceeded, "to see innocent blood shed, through the perjury of a villain—for, of course, you cannot suppose for a moment that one of our family suppose you to be guilty."

"I was near doin' you injustice, then," replied the other; "but I ought to know that if you did think me so, you wouldn't now be here, nor act as you did. Not but that I thought it possible, on another account you—— No," he added, after a pause, "that would be doin' the brother of Una injustice."

"You are right," returned O'Brien. "*No* circumstance of *any* kind"—and he laid a peculiar emphasis on the words—"*no* circumstance of *any* kind could bring me to visit a man capable of such a mean and cowardly

act; for, as to the loss we sustained, I wouldn't think of it. You, Connor O'Donovan, are not the man to commit any act, either the one or the other. If I did not *feel* this, you would *not* see me before you." He extended his hand to him while he spoke, and the brow of Connor brightened as he met his grasp.

"I believe you," he replied; "and now I hope we may spake out like men that undherstand one another. In case you hadn't come, I intended to have a message for you with my mother. I believe you know all Una's secrets?"

"I do," replied O'Brien, "just as well as her confessor."

"Yes, I believe that," said Connor. "The sun in heaven is not purer than she is. The only fault she ever could be charged with was her love for me; and heavily, oh! far too heavily, has she suffered for it!"

"I, for one, never blamed her on that account," said her brother. "I knew that her good sense would have at any time prevented her from forming an attachment to an unworthy object; and upon the strength of her own judgment, I approved of that which she avowed for you. Indeed, I perceived it myself before she told me; but upon attempting to gain her secret, the candid creature at once made me her confidant."

"It is like her," said Connor; "she is all truth. Well would it be for her, if she had never seen me. Not even the parting from my father and mother sinks my heart with so much sorrow, as the thought that her love for me had made her so unhappy. It's a strange case, John O'Brien, an' a trying one; but since it is the will of God, we must submit to it. How did you leave her? I heard she was getting better."

"She is better," said John—"past danger, but still very delicate and feeble. Indeed, she is so much worn down, that you would scarcely know her. The brightness of her dark eye is dead—her complexion gone. Sorrow, as she says herself, is in her and upon her. Never, indeed, was a young creature's love so pure and true."

O'Donovan made no reply for some time; but the other observed that he turned away his face from him, as if to conceal his emotion. At length his bosom heaved vehemently, three or four times, and his breath came and went with a quick and quivering motion, that betrayed the powerful struggle which he felt.

"I know it is but natural for you to feel deeply," continued her brother; "but as you have borne everything heretofore with so much firmness, you must not break down now."

"But you know it is a deadly thrial to be forever separated from sich a girl. Sufferin' so much as you say—so worn! Her dark eye dim with —— oh, it is, it is a deadly thrial—a heart-breaking thrial! John O'Brien," he proceeded, with uncommon earnestness, "you are her only brother, an' she is your only sister. Oh, will you, for the sake of God, and for my sake, if I may take the liberty of sayin' so—but, above all things, will you, for her own sake, when I am gone, comfort and support her, and raise her heart, if possible, out of this heavy throuble?"

Her brother gazed on him with a melancholy smile, in which might be read both admiration and sympathy.

"Do you think it possible that I would, or could omit to cherish and sustain poor Una, under such thrying circumstances? Everything considered, however, your words are only natural—only natural."

"Don't let her think too much about it," continued O'Donovan. "Bring her out as much as you can—let her not be much by herself. But this is folly in me," he added; "you know yourself better than I can instruct you how to act."

"God knows," replied the brother, struck and softened by the mournful anxiety for her welfare which Connor expressed, "God knows that all you say, and all I can think of besides, shall be done for our dear girl—so make your mind easy."

"I thank you," replied the other; "from my soul an' from the bottom of my heart, I thank you. Endeavor to make her forget me, if you can; an' when this passes away out of her mind, she may yet be happy—a happy wife and a happy mother—an' she can then think of her love for Connor O'Donovan, only as a trouble dream that she had in her early life."

"Connor," said the other, "this is not right—you must be firmer;" but as he uttered the words of reproof, the tears almost came to his eyes.

"As for my part," continued Connor, "what is the world to me now, that I've lost her? It is—it is a hard and a dark fate, but why it should fall upon us I do not know. It's as much as I can do to bear it as I ought."

"Well, well," replied John, "don't dwell too much on it. I have something else to speak to you about."

"Dwell on it!" returned the other; "as God is above me, she's not one minute out of my thoughts; an' I tell you, I'd rather be dead this minute, than forget her. Her memory now is the only happiness that is left to me—my only wealth in this world."

"No," said John, "it is not. Connor, I

have now a few words to say to you, and I know they will prove whether you are as generous as you are said to be; and whether your love for my sister is truly tender and disinterested. You have it now in your power to ease her heart very much of a heavy load of concern which she feels on your account. Your father, you know, is now a ruined man, or I should say a poor man. You are going out under circumstances the most painful. In the country to which you are unhappily destined, you will have no friends—and no one living feels this more acutely than Una; for, observe me, I am now speaking on her behalf, and acting in her name. I am her agent. Now Una is richer than you might imagine, being the possessor of a legacy left her by our grandfather by my father's side. Of this legacy, she herself stands in no need—but you may and will, when you reach a distant country. Now, Connor, you see how that admirable creature loves you—you see how that love would follow you to the uttermost ends of the earth. Will you, or rather are you capable of being as generous as she is?—and can you show her that you are as much above the absurd prejudice of the world, and its cold forms, as he ought to be who is loved by a creature so truly generous and delicate as Una? You know how very poorly she is at present in health; and I tell you candidly, that your declining to accept this as a gift and memorial by which to remember her, may be attended with very serious consequences to her health."

Connor kept his eyes fixed upon the speaker, with a look of deep and earnest attention; and as O'Brien detailed with singular address and delicacy these striking proofs of Una's affection, her lover's countenance became an index of the truth with which his heart corresponded to the noble girl's tenderness and generosity. He seized O'Brien's hand.

"John," said he, "you are worthy of bein' Una's brother, and I could say nothing higher in your favor; but, in the mane time, you and she both know that I want nothing to enable me to remember her by. This is a proof, I grant you, that she loves me truly; but I knew *that* as well before, as I do now. In this business I cannot comply with her wish an' yours, an' you musn't press me. *You*, I say, musn't press me. Through my whole life I have never lost my own good opinion; but if I did what you want me now to do, I couldn't respect myself—I would feel lowered in my own mind. In short, I'd feel unhappy, an' that I was too mane to be worthy of your sister. Once for all, then, I cannot comply in this business with your wish an' hers."

"But the anxiety produced by your refusal may have very dangerous effects on her health."

"Then you must contrive somehow to consale my refusal from her till she gets recovered. I couldn't do what you want me; an' if you press me further upon it, I'll think you don't respect me as much as I'd wish her brother to do. Oh, God of Heaven!" he exclaimed, clasping his hands, "must I lave you, my darling Una, forever? I must, I must! an' the drame of all we hoped is past—but never, never, will she lave my heart! Her eye dim, an' her cheek pale! an' all for me—for a man covered with shame and disgrace! Oh, John, John, what a heart!—to love me in spite of all this, an' in spite of the world's opinion along with it!"

At this moment one of the turnkeys entered, and told him that his mother and a young lady were coming up to see him.

"My mother!" he exclaimed, "I am glad she is come; but I didn't expect her till the day after to-morrow. A young lady! Heavens above, what young lady would come with my mother?"

He involuntarily exchanged looks with O'Brien, and a thought flashed on the instant across the minds of both. They immediately understood each other.

"Undoubtedly," said John, "it can be no other—it is she—it is Una. Good God, how is this? The interview and separation will be more than she can bear—she will sink under it."

Connor made no reply, but sat down and pressed his right hand upon his forehead, as if to collect energy sufficient to meet the double trial which was now before him.

"I have only one course, John," said he, "now, and that is, to appear to be—what I am not—a firm-hearted man. I must try to put on a smiling face before them."

"If it be Una," returned the other, "I shall withdraw for a while. I know her extreme bashfulness in many cases; and I know, too, that anything like restraint upon her heart at present—in a word, I shall retire for a little."

"It may be as well," said Connor; "but so far as I am concerned, it makes no difference—just as you think proper."

"Your mother will be a sufficient witness," said the delicate-minded brother; "but I will see you again after they have left you."

"You must," replied O'Donovan. "Oh see me—see me again. I have something to say to you of more value even than Una's life."

The door then opened, and assisted, or rather supported, by the governor of the gaol, and one of the turnkeys, Honor O'Don-

ovan and Una O'Brien entered the gloomy cell of the guiltless convict.

The situation in which O'Donovan was now placed will be admitted, we think, by the reader, to have been one equally unprecedented and distressing. It has been often said, and on many occasions with perfect truth, that opposite states of feeling existing in the same breast generally neutralize each other. In Connor's heart, however, there was in this instance nothing of a conflicting nature. The noble boy's love for such a mother bore in its melancholy beauty a touching resemblance to the purity of his affection for Una O'Brien—each exhibiting in its highest character those virtues which made the heart of the mother proud and loving, and that of his beautiful girl generous and devoted. So far, therefore, from their appearance together tending to concentrate his moral fortitude, it actually divided his strength, and forced him to meet each with a heart subdued and softened by his love for the other.

As they entered, therefore, he approached them, smiling as well as he could; and, first taking a hand of each, would have led them over to a deal form beside the fire, but it was soon evident, that, owing to their weakness and agitation united, they required greater support. He and O'Brien accordingly helped them to a seat, on which they sat with every symptom of that exhaustion which results at once from illness and mental sufferiug.

Let us not forget to inform our readers that the day of this mournful visit was that on which, according to his original sentence, he should have yielded up his life as a penalty to the law.

"My dear mother," said he, "you an' Una know that this day ought not to be a day of sorrow among us. Only for the goodness of my friends, an' of Goverument, it's not my voice you'd be now listening to—but that is now changed—so no more about it. I'm glad to see you both able to come out."

His mother, on first sitting down, clasped her hands together, and in a silent ejaculation, with closed eyes, raised her heart to the Almighty, to supplicate aid and strength to enable her to part finally with that boy who was, and ever had been, dearer to her than her own heart. Una trembled, and on meeting her brother so unexpectedly, blushed faintly, and, indeed, appeared to breathe with difficulty. She held a bottle of smelling salts in her hand.

"John," she said, "I will explain this visit."

"My dear Una," he replied, affectionately, "you need not—it requires none—and I beg you will not think of it one moment more. I must now leave you together for about half an hour, as I have some business to do in town that will detain me about that time." He then left them.

"Connor," said his mother, "sit down between this darlin' girl an' me, till I spake to you."

He sat down and took a hand of each.

"A darlin' girl she is, mother. It's now I see how very ill you have been, my own Una."

"Yes," she replied, "I was ill—but when I heard that your life was spared, I got better."

This she said with an artless but melancholy *naiveté*, that was very trying to the fortitude of her lover. As she spoke she looked fondly but mournfully into his face.

"Connor," proceeded his mother, "I hope you are fully sensible of the mercy God has shown you, under this great trial?"

"I hope I am, indeed, my dear mother. It is to God I surely owe it."

"It is, an' I trust that, go where you will, and live where you may, the day will never come when you'll forget the debt you owe the Almighty, for preventin' you from bein' cut down like a flower in the very bloom of your life. I hope, avillish machree, that that day will never come."

"God forbid it ever should, mother dear!"

"Thin you may learn from what has happened, avick agus asthore, never, oh never, to despair of God's mercy—no matter into what thrial or difficulty you may be brought. You see, whin you naither hoped for it here, nor expected it, how it came for all that."

"It did, blessed be God!"

"You're goin' now, ahagur, to a strange land, where you'll meet—ay, where my darlin' boy will meet the worst of company; but remember, alanna avillish, that your mother, well as she loves you, an' well, I own, as you deserve to be loved—that mother that hung over the cradle of her only one—that dressed him, an' reared him, an' felt many a proud heart out of him—that mother would sooner at any time see him in his grave, his sowl bein' free from stain, than to know that his heart was corrupted by the world, an' the people you'll meet in it."

Something in the last sentence must have touched a chord in Una's heart, for the tears, without showing any other external signs of emotion, streamed down her cheeks.

"My advice, then, to you—an' oh, avick machree, machree, it is my last, the last you will ever hear from my lips—"

"Oh, mother, mother!" exclaimed Connor, but he could not proceed—voice was denied him. Una here sobbed aloud.

"You bore your thrial nobly, my darlin' son—you must thin bear this as well; an' you, a colleen dhas, remember your promise to me afore I consinted to come with you this day."

The weeping girl here dried her eyes, and, by a strong effort, hushed her grief.

"My advice, thin, to you, is never to neglect your duty to God; for, if you do it wanst or twist, you'll begin by degrees to get careless—thin, bit by bit, asthore, your heart will harden, your conscience will leave you, an' wickedness, an' sin, an' guilt will come upon you. It's no matter, asthore, how much wicked comrades may laugh an' jeer at you, keep you thrue to the will of your good God, an' to your religious duties, an' let *them* take their own coorse. Will you promise me to do this, *asuillish machree?*"

"Mother, I have always sthrove to do it, an' with God's assistance, always will."

"An', my son, too, will you bear up undher this like a man? Remember, Connor darlin', that although you're lavin' us forever, yet your poor father an' I have the blessed satisfaction of knowin' that we're not childless—that you're alive, an' that you may yet do well an' be happy. I mintion these things, acushla machree, to show you that there's nothin' over you so bad, but you may show yourself firm and manly undher it—act as you have done. It's you, asthore, ought to comfort your father an me; an' I hope, whin you're parted from him, that you 'ill—Oh God, support him! I wish, Connor, darlin', that that partin' was over, but I depend upon you to make it as light upon him as you can do."

She paused, apparently from exhaustion. Indeed, it was evident, either that she had little else to add, or that she felt too weak to speak much more, with such a load of sorrow and affliction on her heart.

"There is one thing, Connor jewel, that I needn't mintion. Of coorse you'll write to us as often as you convaniently can. Oh, do not forget that! for you know that that bit of paper from your own hand, is all belongin' to you we will ever see more. Avick machree, machree, many a long look-out we will have for it. It may keep the ould man's heart from breakin'."

She was silent, but, as she uttered the last words, there was a shaking of the voice, which gave clear proof of the difficulty with which she went through the solemn task of being calm, which, for the sake of her son, she had heroically imposed upon herself.

She was now silent, but, as is usual with Irish women under the influence of sorrow, she rocked herself involuntary to and fro, whilst, with closed eyes, and hands clasped as before, she held communion with God, the only true source of comfort.

"Connor," she added, after a pause, during which he and Una, though silent from respect to her, were both deeply affected: "sit fornint me, avick machree, that, for the short time you're to be with me, I may have you before my eyes. Husth now, a colleen machree, an' remimber your promise. Where's the stringth you said you'd show?"

She then gazed with a long look of love and sorrow upon the fine countenance of her manly son, and nature would be no longer restrained—

"Let me lay my head upon your breast," said she; I'm attemptin' too much—the mother's heart will give out the mother's voice—will speak the mother's sorrow! Oh, my son, my son, my darlin', manly son—are you lavin' your lovin' mother for evermore, for evermore?"

She was overcome; placing her head upon his bosom, her grief fell into that beautiful but mournful wail with which, in Ireland, those of her sex weep over the dead.

Indeed, the scene assumed a tenderness, from this incident, which was inexpressibly affecting, inasmuch as the cry of death was but little out of place when bewailing that beloved boy, whom, by the stern decree of law, she was never to see again.

Connor kissed her pale cheek and lips, and rained down a flood of bitter tears upon her face; and Una, borne away by the enthusiasm of her sorrow, threw her arms also around her, and wept aloud.

At length, after having, in some degree, eased her heart, she sat up, and with that consideration and good sense for which she had ever been remarkable, said—

"Nature must have its way; an' surely, within reason, it's not sinful, seein' that God himself has given us the feelin's of sorrow, whin thim that we love is lavin' us—lavin' us never, never to see them agin. It's only nature, afther all; and now ma colleen dhas"—

Her allusion to the final separation of those who love—or, in her own words, "to the feelin's of sorrow, whin thim that we love is lavin' us"—was too much for the heart and affections of the fair girl at her side, whose grief now passed all the bounds which her previous attempts at being firm had prescribed to it.

O'Donovan took the beloved one in his arms, and, in the long embrace which ensued, seldom were love and sorrow so singularly and mournfully blended.

"I don't want to prevent you from cryin', a colleen machree; for I know it will lighten an' aise your heart," said Honor; "but re-

mimber your wakeness an' your poor health; an', Connor avourneen, don't you—if you love her—don't forget the state her health's in either."

"Mother, mother, you know it's the last time I'll ever look upon my Una's face again," he exclaimed. "Oh, well may I be loath an' unwillin' to part with her. You'll think of me, my darlin' life, when I'm gone—not as a guilty man, Una dear, but as one that if he ever eommitted a erime, it was lovin' you an' bringin' you to this unhappy state."

"God sees my heart this day," she replied—and she spoke with difficulty—"that I could and would have travelled over the world; borne joy and sorrow, hardship and distress—good fortune and bad—all happily, if you had been by my side—if you had not been taken from me. Oh, Connor, Connor, you may well pity your Una—for yours I am and was—another's I never will be. You are entering into scenes that will relieve you by their novelty—that will force you to think of other things and of other persons than those you've left behind you; but oh, what can I look upon that will not fill my heart with despair and sorrow, by reminding me of you and your affection?"

"*Fareer gair,*" exclaimed the mother, speaking involuntarily aloud, and interrupting her own words with sobs of bitter anguish—"*Fareer gair, ma colleen dhas,* but that's the heavy truth with us all. Oh, the ould man—the ould man's heart will break all out, when he looks upon the plaee, an' everything else that our boy left behind him."

"Dear Una," said Connor, "you know that we're partin' now forever."

"My breaking heart tells me that," she replied. "I would give the wealth of the world that it was not so—I would—I would."

"Listen to me, my own life. You must not let love for me lie so heavy upon your heart. Go out and keep your mind employed upon other thoughts—by degrees you'll forget—no, I don't think you eould altogether forget me—me—the first, Una, you ever loved."

"And the last, Connor—the last I ever will love."

"No, no. In the presence of my lovin' mother I say that you must not think that way. Time will pass, my own Una, an' you will yet be happy with some other. You're very young; an', as I said, time will wear me by degrees out of your mimory."

Una broke hastily from his embrace, for she lay upon his breast all this time—

"Do you think so, Connor O'Donovan?" she exclaimed; but on looking into his face, and reading the history of deep-seated sorrow which appeared there so legible, she again "fled to him and wept."

"Oh, no," she continued, "I eannot quarrel with you now; but you do the heart of your *own* Una injustice, if you think it eould ever feel happiness with another. Already I have my mother's consent to enter a convent—and to enter a convent is my fixed determination."

"Oh, mother," said Connor, "How will I lave this blessed girl? how will I part with her?"

Honor rose up, and, by two or three simple words, disclosed more forcibly, more touchingly, than any direct exhibition of grief eould have done, the inexpressible power of the misery she felt at this eternal separation from her only boy. She seized Una's two hands, and, kissing her lips, said, in tones of the most heart-rending pathos—

"Oh, Una, Una, pity me—I am his *mother!*"

Una threw herself into her arms, and sobbed out—

"Yes, and mine."

"Thin you'll obey me as a daughter should," said Honor. "This is too much for you, Oona; part we both must from him, an' neither of us is able to bear much more."

She here gave Connor a private signal to be firm, pointing unobservedly to Una's pale cheek, which at that moment lay upon her bosom.

"Connor," she proceeded, "Oona has what you sent her. Nogher—an' he is breakin' his heart too—gave it to me; an' my daughter, for I will always call her so, has it this minute next her lovin' heart. Here is hers, an' let it lie next yours."

Connor seized the glossy ringlet from his mother's hand, and placed it at the moment next to the seat of his undying affection for the fair girl from whose ebon locks it had been taken.

His mother then kissed Una again, and, rising, said—

"Now, my daughther, remimber I am your mother, an' obey me."

"I will," said Una, attempting to repress her grief—"I will; but—"

"Yes, darlin', you will. Now, Connor, my son, my son—Connor?"

"What is it, mother, darlin'?"

"We're goin', Connor,—we're lavin' you—be firm—be a man. Aren't you my son, Connor? my only son—an' the ould man—an' never, never more—kneel down—kneel down, till I bless you. Oh, many, many a blessin' has risen from your mother's lips an' your mother's heart, to Heaven for you, my son, my son!"

Connor knelt, his heart bursting, but he

knelt not alone. By his side was his own Una, with meek and bended head, awaiting for *his mother's* blessing.

She then poured forth that blessing; first upon him who was nearest to her heart, and afterwards upon the worn but still beautiful girl, whose love for that adored son had made her so inexpressibly dear to her. Whilst she uttered this fervent but sorrowful benediction, a hand was placed upon the head of each, after which she stooped and kissed them both, but without shedding a single tear.

"Now," said she, "comes the mother's wakeness; but my son will help me by his manliness—so will my daughter. I am very weak. Oh, what heart can know the sufferin's of this hour, but mine? My son, my son—Connor O'Donovan, my son!"

At this moment John O'Brien entered the room; but the solemnity and pathos of her manner and voice hushed him so completely into silent attention, that it is probable she did not perceive him.

"Let me put my arms about him and kiss his lips once more, an' then I'll say farewell."

She again approached the boy, who opened his arms to receive her, and, after having kissed him and looked into his face, said, "I will now go—I will now go;" but instead of withdrawing, as she had intended, it was observed that she pressed him more closely to her heart than before; plied her hands about his neck and bosom, as if she were not actually conscious of what she did; and at length sunk into a forgetfulness of all her misery upon the aching breast of her unhappy son.

"Now," said Una, rising into a spirit of unexpected fortitude, "now, Connor, I will be her daughter, and you must be her son. The moment she recovers we must separate, and in such a manner as to show that our affection for each other shall not be injurious to her."

"It is nature only," said her brother; "or, in other words, the love that is natural to such a mother for such a son, that has overcome her. Connor, this must be ended."

"I am willing it should," replied the other. "You must assist them home, and let me see you again to-morrow. I have something of the deepest importance to say to you."

Una's bottle of smelling salts soon relieved the woe-worn mother; and, ere the lapse of many minutes, she was able to summon her own natural firmness of character. The lovers, too, strove to be firm; and, after one long and last embrace, they separated from Connor with more composure than, from the preceding scene, might have been expected.

The next day, according to promise, John O'Brien paid him an early visit, in order to hear what Connor had assured him was of more importance even than Una's life itself. Their conference was long and serious, for each felt equally interested in its subject-matter. When it was concluded, and they had separated, O'Brien's friends observed that he appeared like a man whose mind was occupied by something that occasioned him to feel deep anxiety. What the cause of this secret care was, he did not disclose to any one except his father, to whom, in a few days afterwards, he mentioned it. His college vacation had now nearly expired; but it was mutually agreed upon, in the course of the communication he then made, that for the present he should remain with them at home, and postpone his return to Maynooth, if not abandon the notion of the priesthood altogether. When the Bodagh left his son, after this dialogue, his open, good-humored countenance seemed clouded, his brow thoughtful, and his whole manner that of a man who has heard something more than usually unpleasant; but, whatever this intelligence was, he, too, appeared equally studious to conceal it. The day now arrived on which Connor O'Donovan was to see his other parent for the last time, and this interview he dreaded, on the old man's account, more than he had done even the separation from his mother. Our readers may judge, therefore, of his surprise on finding that his father exhibited a want of sorrow or of common feeling that absolutely amounted almost to indifference.

Connor felt it difficult to account for a change so singular and extraordinary in one with whose affection for himself he was so well acquainted. A little time, however, and an odd hint or two thrown out in the early part of their conversation, soon enabled him to perceive, either that the old man labored under some strange hallucination, or had discovered a secret source of comfort known only to himself. At length, it appeared to the son that he had discovered the cause of this unaccountable change in the conduct of his father; and, we need scarcely assure our readers, that his heart sank into new and deeper distress at the words from which he drew the inference.

"Connor," said the miser, "I had great luck yestherday. You remember Antony Cusack, that ran away from me wid seventy-three pounds fifteen shillin's an' nine pence, now betther than nine years ago. Many a curse he had from me for his roguery; but somehow, it seems he only *thruv* under them. His son Andy called on me yestherday mornin', an' *ped* me to the last farden, ith'rest an' all. Wasn't I in luck?"

"It was very fortunate, father, an' I'm glad of it."

"It was, indeed, the hoighth o' luck. Now, Connor, you think one thing, an' that is, that we're partin' forever, an' that we'll never see one another till we meet in the next world. Isn't that what you think?—eh, Connor?"

"It's hard to tell what may happen, father. We may see one another even in this; stranger things have been brought about."

"I tell you, Connor, we'll meet agin; I have made out a plan in my own head for that; but the luckiest of all was the money yestherday."

"What is the plan, father?"

"Don't ax me, avick, bekase it's betther for you not to know it. I may be disappointed, but it's not likely aither; still it 'ud be risin' expectations in you, an' if it didn't come to pass, you'd only be more unhappy; an' you know, Connor darlin', I wouldn't wish to be the manes of making your poor heart sore for one minute. God knows the same young heart has suffered enough, an' more than it ought to suffer. Connor?"

"Well, father?"

"Keep up your spirits, darlin', don't be at all cast down, I tell you."

The old man caught his son's hands ere he spoke, and uttered these words with a voice of such tenderness and affection, that Connor, on seeing him assume the office of comforter, contrary to all he had expected, felt himself more deeply touched than if his father had fallen, as was his wont, into all the impotent violence of grief.

"It was only comin' here to-day, Connor, that I thought of this plan; but I wish to goodness your poor mother knew it, for thin maybe she'd let me mintion it to you."

"If it would make me any way unhappy," replied Connor, "I'd rather not hear it; only, whatever it is, father, if it's against my dear mother's wishes, don't put it in practice."

"I couldn't, Connor, widout her consint, barrin' we'd—but there's no us in that; only keep up your spirits, Connor dear. Still I'm glad it came into my head, this plan; for if I thought that I'd never see you agin, I wouldn't know how to part wid you; my heart 'ud fairly break, or my head 'u'd get light. Now, won't you promise me not to fret, acushla machree—an' to keep your heart up, an' your spirits?"

"I'll fret as little as I can, father. You know there's not much pleasure in frettin', an' that no one would fret if they could avoid it; but will you promise me, my dear father, to be guided an' advised, in whatever you do, or intend to do, by my mother—my blessed mother?"

"I will—I will, Connor; an' if I had always done so, maybe it isn't here now you'd be standing, an' my heart breakin' to look at you; but, indeed, it was God, I hope, put this plan into my head; an' the money yesterday—that, too, was so lucky—far more so, Connor dear, than you think. Only for that—but sure no matther, Connor, we're not partin' for evermore now; so acushla machree, let your mind be aisy. Cheer up, cheer up my darlin' son."

Much more conversation of this kind took place between them during the old man's stay, which he prolonged almost to the last hour. Connor wondered, as was but natural, what the plan so recently fallen upon by his father could be. Indeed, sometimes, he feared that the idea of their separation had shaken his intellect, and that his allusions to this mysterious discovery, mixed up, as they were, with the uncommon delight he expressed at having recovered Cusack's money, boded nothing less than the ultimate derangement of his faculties. One thing, however, seemed obvious—that, whatever it might be, whether reasonable or otherwise, his father's mind was exclusively occupied by it; and that, during the whole scene of their parting, it sustained him in a manner for which he felt it utterly impossible to account. It is true he did not leave him without shedding tears, and bitter tears; but they were unaccompanied by the wild vehemence of grief which had, on former occasions, raged through and almost desolated his heart. The reader may entertain some notion of what he would have felt on this occasion, were it not for the "plan," as he called it, which supported him so much, when we tell him that he blessed his son three or four times during their interview, without being conscious that he had blessed him more than once. His last words to him were to keep up his spirits, for that there was little doubt that they would meet again.

The next morning, at daybreak, "their noble boy," as they fondly and proudly called him, was conveyed to the transport, in company with many others; and at the hour of five o'clock P. M., that melancholy vessel weighed anchor, and spread her broad sails to the bosom of the ocean.

Although the necessary affairs of life are, after all, the great assuager of sorrow, yet there are also cases where the heart persists in rejecting the consolation brought by time, and in clinging to the memory of that which it loved. Neither Honor O'Donovan nor Una O'Brien could forget our unhappy hero, nor school their affections into the apathy of ordinary feelings. Of Fardorougha we might say the same; for, although he probably felt the want of his son's presence more keenly

even than his wife, yet his grief, notwithstanding its severity, was mingled with the interruption of a habit—such as is frequently the prevailing cause of sorrow in selfish and contracted minds. That there was much selfishness in his grief, our readers, we dare say, will admit. At all events, a scene which took place between him and his wife, on the night of the day which saw Connor depart from his native land forever, will satisfy them of the different spirit which marked their feelings on that unfortunate occasion.

Honor had, as might be expected, recovered her serious composure, and spent a great portion of that day in offering up her prayers for the welfare of their son. Indeed, much of her secret grief was checked by the alarm which she felt for her husband, whose conduct on that morning before he left home was marked by the wild excitement, which of late had been so peculiar to him. Her surprise was consequently great when she observed, on his return, that he manifested a degree of calmness, if not serenity, utterly at variance with the outrage of his grief, or, we should rather say, the delirium of his despair, in the early part of the day. She resolved, however, with her usual discretion, not to catechize him on the subject, lest his violence might revive, but to let his conduct explain itself, which she knew in a little time it would do. Nor was she mistaken. Scarcely had an hour elapsed, when, with something like exultation, he disclosed his plan, and asked her advice and opinion. She heard it attentively, and for the first time since the commencement of their affliction, did the mother's brow seem unburdened of the sorrow which sat upon it, and her eye to gleam with something like the light of expected happiness. It was, however, on their retiring to rest that night that the affecting contest took place, which exhibited so strongly the contrast between their characters. We mentioned, in a preceding part of this narrative, that ever since her son's incarceration Honor had slept in his bed, and with her head on the very pillow which he had so often pressed. As she was about to retire, Fardorougha, for a moment, appeared to forget his "plan," and everything but the departure of his son. He followed Honor to his bedroom, which he traversed, distractedly clasping his hands, kissing his boy's clothes, and uttering sentiments of extreme misery and despair.

"There's his bed," he exclaimed; "there's our boy's bed—but where is he himself? gone, gone forever! There's his clothes, our darlin' son's clothes; look at them. Oh God! oh God! my heart will break outright. Oh Connor, our boy, our boy, are you gone from us forever! We must sit down to our breakfast in the mornin', to our dinner, an' to our supper at night, but our noble boy's face we'll never see—his voice we'll never hear."

"Ah, Fardorougha, it's thrue, it's thrue!" replied the wife; "but remember he's not in the grave, not in the clay of the churchyard; we haven't seen him carried there, and laid down undher the heart-breakin' sound of the dead-bell; we haven't hard the cowld noise of the clay fallin' in upon his coffin. Oh no, no—thanks, everlastin' thanks to God, that has spared our boy's life! How often have you an' I hard people say over the corpses of their children, 'Oh, if he was only alive I didn't care in what part of the world it was, or if I was never to see his face again, only that he was livin'!' An' wouldn't they, Fardorougha dear, give the world's wealth to have their wishes? Oh they would, they would—an' thanks forever be to the Almighty! our boy is livin' and may yit be happy. Fardorougha, let us not fly into the face of God, who has in His mercy spared our son."

"I'll sleep in his bed," replied the husband; "on the very spot he lay on I'll lie."

This was, indeed, trenching, and selfishly trenching upon the last mourufal privilege of the mother's heart. Her sleeping here was one of those secret but melancholy enjoyments, which the love of a mother or of a wife will often steal, like a miser's theft, from the very hoard of their own sorrows. In fact, she was not prepared for this, and when he spoke she looked at him for some time in silent amazement.

"Oh, no, Fardorougha dear—the mother, the mother, that her breast was so often his pillow, has the best right, now that he's gone, to lay her head where his lay. Oh, for Heaven's sake, lave that poor pleasure to me, Fardorougha!"

"No, Honor, you can bear up undher grief better than I can. I must sleep where my boy slept."

"Fardorougha, I could go upon my knees to you, an' I will, avourneen, if you'll grant me this."

"I can't, I can't," he replied, distractedly; "I could sleep nowhere else. I love everything belongin' to him. I can't, Honor, I can't, I can't."

"Fardorougha, my heart—his mother's heart is fixed upon it, an' was. Oh lave this to me, acushla, lave this to me—it's all I axe!"

"I couldn't, I couldn't—my heart is breakin'—it'll be sweet to me—I'll think I'll be nearer him," and as he uttered these words the tears flowed copiously down his cheeks.

His affectionate wife was touched with com-

passion, and immediately resolved to let him have his way, whatever it might cost herself.

"God pity you," she said; "I'll give it up, I'll give it up, Fardorougha. Do sleep where he slep'; I can't blame you, nor I don't; for sure it's only a proof of how much you love him." She then bade him good-night, and, with spirits dreadfully weighed down by this singular incident, withdrew to her lonely pillow; for Connor's bed had been a single one, in which, of course, two persons could not sleep together. Thus did these bereaved parents retire to seek that rest which nothing but exhausted nature seemed disposed to give them, until at length they fell asleep under the double shadow of night and a calamity which filled their hearts with so much distress and misery.

In the mean time, whatever these two families might have felt for the sufferings of their respective children in consequence of Bartle Flanagan's villainy, that plausible traitor had watched the departure of his victim with a palpitating anxiety almost equal to what some unhappy culprit, in the dock of a prison, would experience when the foreman of his jury hands down the septence which is either to hang or acquit him. Up to the very moment on which the vessel sailed, his cruel but cowardly heart was literally sick with the apprehension that Connor's mitigated sentence might be still further commuted to a term of imprisonment. Great, therefore, was his joy, and boundless his exultation on satisfying himself that he was now perfectly safe in the crime he had committed, and that his path was never to be crossed by him, whom, of all men living, he had most feared and hated. The reader is not to suppose, however, that by the ruin of Connor, and the revenge he consequently had gained upon Fardorougha, the scope of his dark designs was by any means accomplished. Far from it; the fact is, his measures were only in a progressive state. In Nogher M'Cormick's last interview with Connor, our readers will please to remember that a hint had been thrown out by that attached old follower, of Flanagan's entertaining certain guilty purposes involving nothing less than the abduction of Una. Now, in justice even to Flanagan, we are bound to say that no one living had ever received from himself any intimation of such an intention. The whole story was fabricated by Nogher for the purpose of getting Connor's consent to the vengeance which it had been determined to execute upon his enemy. By a curious coincidence, however, the story, though decidedly false so far as Nogher knew to the contrary, happened to be literally and absolutely true. Flanagan, indeed, was too skilful and secret, either to precipitate his own designs until the feeling of the parties should abate and settle down, or to place himself at the mercy of another person's honesty. He knew his own heart too well to risk his life by such dangerous and unseasonable confidence. Some months consequently passed away since Connor's departure, when an event took place which gave him still greater security. This was nothing less than the fulfilment by Fardorougha of that plan to which he looked forward with such prospective satisfaction. Connor had not been a month gone when his father commenced to dispose of his property, which he soon did, having sold out his farm to good advantage. He then paid his rent, the only debt he owed; and, having taken a passage to New South Wales for himself and Honor, they departed with melancholy satisfaction to seek that son without whose society they found their desolate hearth gloomier than the cell of a prison.

This was followed, too, by another circumstance—but one apparently of little importance—which was, the removal of Biddy Nulty to the Bodagh's family, through the interference of Una, by whom she was treated with singular affection, and admitted to her confidence.

Such was the position of the parties after the lapse of five months subsequent to the transportation of Connor. Flanagan had conducted himself with great circumspection, and, so far as public observation could go, with much propriety. There was no change whatsoever perceptible, either in his dress or manner except that alluded to by Nogher of his altogether declining to taste any intoxicating liquor. In truth, so well did he act his part, that the obloquy raised against him at the period of Connor's trial was nearly, if not altogether, removed, and many persons once more adopted an impression of his victim's guilt.

With respect to the Bodagh and his son, the anxiety which we have described them as feeling in consequence of the latter's interview with O'Donovan, was now completely removed. Una's mother had nearly forgotten both the crime and its consequences; but upon the spirit of her daughter there appeared to rest a silent and settled sorrow not likely to be diminished or removed. Her cheerfulness had abandoned her, and many an hour did she contrive to spend with Biddy Nulty, eager in the mournful satisfaction of talking over all that affection prompted of her banished lover.

We must now beg our readers to accompany us to a scene of a different description from any we have yet drawn. The night of a November day had set in, or rather had

advanced so far as nine o'clock, and towards the angle of a small three-cornered field, called by a peculiar coincidence of name, Oona's Handkerchief, in consequence of an old legend connected with it, might be seen moving a number of straggling figures, sometimes in groups of fours and fives; sometimes in twos or threes as the case might be, and not unfrequently did a single straggler advance, and, after a few private words, either join the others or proceed alone to a house situated in the angular corner of the field to which we allude. As the district was a remote one, and the night rather dark, several shots might be heard as they proceeded, and several flashes in the pan seen from the rusty arms of those who were probably anxious to pull a trigger for the first time. The country, at the period we write of, be it observed, was in a comparative state of tranquility, and no such thing as a police corps had been heard of or known in the neighborhood.

At the lower end of a long, level kind of moor called the Black Park, two figures approached a kind of gate or pass that opened into it. One of them stood until the other advanced, and, in a significant tone, asked who comes there?

"A friend to the guard," was the reply.

"Good morrow," said the other.

"Good morrow mornin' to you."

"What age are you in?"

"In the end of the Fifth."

"All right; come on, boy; the true blood's in you, whoever you are."

"An' is it possible you don't know me, Dandy?"

"Faix, it is; I forgot my spectacles to-night. Who the dickins are you at all?"

"I suppose you purtind to forget Ned M'Cormick?"

"Is it Nogher's son?"

"The divil a other; an', Dandy Duffy, how are you, man alive?"

"Why, you see, Ned, I've been so long out of the counthry, an' I'm now so short a time back, that, upon my sowl, I forget a great many of my ould acquaintances, especially them that wor only ships when I wint acrass. Faith, I'm purty well considherin, Ned, I thank you."

"Bad luck to them that sint you acrass, Dandy; not but that you got off purty well on the whole, by all accounts. They say only that Rousin Redhead swore like a man you'd 'a' got a touch of the *Shaggy Shoe*."

"To the divil wid it all now, Ned; let us have no more about it; I don't for my own part like to think of it. Have you any notion of what we're called upon for to-night?"

"Divil the laste; but I believe, Dandy, that Bartle's not the white-headed boy wid you no more nor wid some more of us."

"Him! a double-distilled villain. Faith, there wor never good that had the white liver; an' he has it to the backbone. My brother Lachlin, that's now dead, God rest him, often tould me about the way he tricked him and Barney Bradly when they wor greenhorns about nineteen or twenty. He got them to join him in stealin' a sheep for their Christmas dinner, he said; so they all three stole it; an' the blaggard skinned and cut it up, sendin' my poor boacun of a brother home to hide the skin in the straw in our barn, and poor Barney, wid only the head an' trotters, to hide them in his father's tow-house. Very good; in a day or two the neighbors wor all called upon to clear themselves upon the holy Evangelisp; and the two first that he egg'd an' to do it was my brother an' Barney. Of coorse he switched the primmer himself that he was innocent; but whin it was all over *some one* sint Jarmy Campel, that lost the sheep, to the very spot where they hid the fleece an' trotters. Jarmy didn't wish to say much about it; so he tould them if they'd fairly acknowledge it an' pay him betune them for the sheep, he'd dhrop it. My father an' Andy Bradly did so, an' there it ended; but purshue the morsel of mutton ever they tasted in the mane time. As for Bartle, he managed the thing so well that at the time they never suspected him, although divil a other could betray them, for he was the only one knew it; an' he had the aiten o' the mutton, too, the blaggard! Faith, Ned, I know him well."

"He has conthrived to get a strong back o' the boys, anyhow."

"He has, an' 'tis that, and bekase he's a good hand to be undher for my revinge on Blennerhasset, that made me join him."

"I dunna what could make him refuse to let Alick Nulty join him?"

"Is it my cousin from Annaloghan? an' did he?"

"Divil a lie in it; it's as thrue as you're standin' there; but do you know what is suspected?"

"No."

"Why, that he has an eye on Bodagh Buie's daughter. Alick towld me that, for a long time afther Connor O'Donovan was thransported, the father an' son wor afeard of him. He hard it from his sister Biddy, an' it appears that the Bodagh's daughter tould her family that he used to stare her out of countenance at mass, an' several times struv to put the furraun on her in hopes to get acquainted."

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O'DONOVAN TOOK THE BELOVED ONE IN HIS ARMS, AND, IN THE LONG EMBRACE WHICH ENSUED, SELDOM WERE LOVE AND SORROW SO SINGULARLY AND MOURNFULLY BLENDED.—*Fardorougha the Miser*, Part vi.—*p.* 282.

"He would do it; an' my hand to you, if he undhertakes it he'll not fail; an' I'll tell you another thing, if he suspected that I knew anything about the thraicherous thrick he put on my poor brother, the divil a toe he'd let me join him; but you see I was only a mere gorsoon, a child I may say at the time.

"At all events let us keep an eye on him; an' in regard to Connor O'Donovan's business, let him not be too sure that it's over wid him yet. At any rate, by dad, my father has slipped out a name upon him an' us that will do him no good. The other boys now call us the *Stags of Lisdhu*, that beiu' the place where his father lived, an' the nickname you see rises out of his thrachery to poor Connor O'Donovan."

"Did he ever give any hint himself about carryin' away the Bodagh's pretty daughter?"

"Is it him? Oh, oh! catch him at it; he's a damn sight too close to do any sich thing."

After some further conversation upon that and other topics, they arrived at the place of appointment, which was a hedge school-house; one of those where the master, generally an unmarried man, merely wields his sceptre during school-hours, leaving it open and uninhabited for the rest of the twenty-four.

The appearance of those who were here assembled was indeed singularly striking. A large fire of the unconsumed peat brought by the scholars on that morning, was kindled in the middle of the floor—it's usual site. Around, upon stones, hobs, bosses, and seats of various descriptions, sat the "boys"—some smoking and others drinking; for upon nights of this kind, a shebeen-housekeeper, uniformly a member of such societies, generally attends for the sale of his liquor, if he cannot succeed in prevailing on them to hold their meetings in his own house—a circumstance which for many reasons may not be in every case advisable. As they had not all yet assembled, nor the business of the night commenced, they were, of course, divided into several groups and engaged in various amusements. In the lower end of the house was a knot, busy at the game of "spoiled five," their ludicrous table being the crown of a hat, placed upon the floor in the centre. These all sat upon the ground, their legs stretched out, their torch-bearer holding a lit bunch of fir splinters, stuck for convenience sake into the muzzle of a horse-pistol. In the upper end, again, sat another clique, listening to a man who was reading a treasonable ballad. Such of them as could themselves read stretched over their necks in eagerness to peruse it along with him, and such as could not—indeed, the greater number—gave force to its principles by very significant gestures; some being those of melody, and others those of murder; that is to say, part of them were attempting to hum a tune in a low voice suitable to the words, whilst others more ferocious brandished their weapons, as if those against whom the spirit of the ballad was directed had been then within the reach of their savage passions. Beside the fire, and near the middle of the house, sat a man who, by his black stock and military appearance, together with a scar over his brow that gave him a most repulsive look, was evidently a pensioner or old soldier. This person was engaged in examining some rusty fire-arms that had been submitted to his inspection. His self-importance was amusing, as was also the deferential aspect of those who, with arms in their hands, hammering flints or turning screws, awaited patiently their turn for his opinion of their efficiency. But perhaps the most striking group of all was that in which a thick-necked, bull-headed young fellow, with blood-colored hair, a son of Rousin Redhead's—who, by the way, was himself present—and another beetle-browed slip were engaged in drawing for a wager, upon one of the school-boy's slates, the figure of a coffin and cross-bones. A hardened-looking old sinner, with murder legible in his face, held the few half-pence which they wagered in his open hand, whilst in the other he clutched a pole, surmounted by a bent bayonet that had evidently seen service. The last group worthy of remark was composed of a few persons who were writing threatening notices upon a leaf torn out of a school-boy's copy, which was laid upon what they formerly termed a copy-board, of plain deal, kept upon the knees, as a substitute for desks, while the boys were writing. This mode of amusement was called waiting for the Article-bearer, or the Captain, for such was Bartle Flanagan, who now entered the house, and saluted all present with great cordiality.

"Begad, boys," he said, "our four guards widout is worth any money. I had to pass the sign-word afore I could pass myself, and that's the way it ought to be. But, boys, before we go further, an' for fraid of thraitors, I must call the rowl. You'll stand in a row roun' the walls, an' thin we can make sure that there's no spies among us."

He then called out a roll of those who were members of his lodge and, having ascertained that all was right, he proceeded immediately to business.

"Rousin Redhead, what's the raisin you

didn't take the arms from Captain St. Ledger's stewart? Sixteen men armed was enough to do it, an' yees failed."

"Ay, an' if you had been wid us, and sixteen more to the back o' that, you'd failed too. Begarra, captain dear, it seems that good people is scarce. Look at Mickey Mulvather there, you see his head tied up; but aldo he can play cards well enough, be me sowl, he's short of wan ear any how, an' if you could meet wan o' the same stewart's bullets, goin' abroad at night like ourselves for its divarsion, it might tell how he lost it. Bartle, I tell you a number of us isn't satisfied wid you. You sends us out to meet danger, an' you won't come yourself."

"Don't you know, Rouser, that I always *do* go whenever I can? But I'm caged now; faix I don't sleep in a barn, and can't budge as I used to do."

"An' who's tyin' you to your place, thin?"

"Rouser," replied Bartle, "I wish I had a thousand like you, not but I have fine fellows. Boys, the thruth is this, you must all meet here to-morrow night, for the short an' long of it is, that I'm goin' to run away wid a wife."

"Well," replied Redhead, "sure you can do that widout our assistance, if she's willin' to come."

"Willin'! why," replied Bartle, "it's by her own appointment we're goin'."

"An' if it is, then," said the Rouser, who, in truth, was the leader of the suspicious and disaffected party in Flanagan's lodge, "what the blazes use have you for us?"

"Rouser Redhead," said Bartle, casting a suspicious and malignant glance at him, "might I take the liberty of axin' what you mane by spakin' of me in that disparagin' manner? Do you remimber your oath? or do you forget that you're bound by it to meet at twelve hours' notice, or less, whinever you're called upon? Dar Chriestha! man, if I hear another word of the kind out of your lips, down you go on the black list. Boys," he proceeded, with a wheedling look of good-humor to the rest, "we'll have neither Spies nor Stags here, come or go what may."

"Stags!" replied Rouser Redhead, whose face had already become scarlet with indignation. "Stags, you say, Bartle Flanagan! Arrah, boys, I wondher where is poor Connor O'Donovan by this time?"

"I suppose bushin' it afore now," said our friend of the preceding part of the night. "I bushed it myself for a year and a half, but be Japurs I got sick of it. But any how, Bartle, you oughn't to spake of Stags, for although Connor refused to join us, damn your blood, you had no right to go to inform upon him. Sure, only for the intherest that was made for him, you'd have his blood on your sowl."

"An' if he had itself," observed one of Flanagan's friends, "'twould signify very little. The Bodagh desarved what he got, and more if he had got it. What right has he, one of our own purswadjion as he is to hould out against us the way he does? Sure he's as rich as a Sassenach, an' may hell resave the farden he'll subscribe towards our gettin' arms or ammunition, or towards defindin' us when we're brought to thrial. So hell's delight wid the dirty Bodagh, says myself for wan."

"An' is that by way of defince of Captain Bartle Flanagan?" inquired Rouser Redhead, indignantly. "An' so our worthy captain sint the man *acrass* that punished our inimy, even accordian to your own provin', an' that by *staggin'* against him. Of coorse, had the miser's son been one of huz, Bartle's brains would be scattered to the four quarthers of heaven long agone."

"An' how did I know but he'd *stag* against me?" said Bartle, very calmly.

"Damn well you knew he would *not*," observed Ned M'Cormick, now encouraged by the bold and decided manner of Rouser Redhead. "Before ever you went into Fardorougha's survice you sed to more than one that you'd make him sup sorrow for his harshness to your father and family."

"An' didn't he desarve it, Ned? Didn't he ruin us?"

"*He* might desarve it, an' I suppose he did; but what right had you to punish the innocent for the guilty? You knew very well that both his son and his wife always set their faces against his doin's."

"Boys," said Flanagan, "I don't understand this, and I tell you more I won't bear it. This night let any of you that doesn't like to be undher me say so. Rouser Redhead, you'll never meet in a Ribbon Lodge agin. You're scratched out of wan book, but by way of comfort you're down in another"

"What other, Bartle?"

"The black list. An' now I have nothin' more to say except that if there's anything on your mind that wants absolution, look to it."

We must now pause for a moment to observe upon that which we suppose the sagacity of the reader has already discovered—that is, the connection between what has occurred in Flanagan's lodge, and the last dialogue which took place between Nogher and Connor O'Donovan. It is evident that Nogher had spirits at work for the purpose both of watching and contravening all Flanagan's plans, and, if possible, of drawing him

into some position which might justify the "few friends," as he termed them, first in disgracing him, and afterwards of settling their account ultimately with a man whom they wished to blacken, as dangerous to the society of which they were members. The curse, however, of these secret confederacies, and indeed of ribbonism in general, is, that the savage principle of personal vengeance is transferred from the nocturnal assault, or the midday assassination, which may be directed against religious or political enemies, to the private bickerings and petty jealousies that must necessarily occur in a combination of ignorant and bigoted men, whose passions are guided by no principle but one of practical cruelty. This explains, as we have just put it, and justly put it, the incredible number of murders which are committed in this unhappy country, under the name of waylayings and midnight attacks, where the offence that caused them cannot be traced by society at large, although it is an incontrovertible fact, that to all those who are connected with ribbonism, in its varied phases, it often happens that the projection of such murders is known for weeks before they are perpetrated. The wretched assassin who murders a man that has never offended him personally, and who suffers himself to become the instrument of executing the hatred which originates from a principle of general enmity again *a class*, will not be likely, once his hands are stained with blood, to spare *any one* who may, by direct personal injury, incur his resentment. Every such offence, where secret societies are concerned, is made a matter of personal feeling and trial of strength between factions, and of course a similar spirit is superinduced among persons of the same creed and principles to that which actuates them against those who differ from them in politics and religion. It is true that the occurrence of murders of this character has been referred to as a proof that secret societies are not founded or conducted upon a spirit of religious rancor; but such an assertion is, in some cases, the result of gross ignorance, and, in many more, of far grosser dishonesty. Their murdering each other is not at all a proof of any such thing, but it is a proof, as we have said, that their habit of taking away human life, and shedding human blood upon slight grounds or political feelings, follows them from their conventional principles to their private resentments, and is, therefore, such a consequence as might naturally be expected to result from a combination of men who, in one sense, consider murder no crime. Thus does this secret tyranny fall back upon society, as well as upon those who are concerned in it, as a double curse; and, indeed, we believe that even the greater number of these unhappy wretches whom it keeps within its toils, would be glad if the principle were rooted out of the country forever.

"An' so you're goin' to put my father down on the black list," said the beetle-browed son of the Rouser. "Very well, Bartle, do so; but do you see that?" he added, pointing to the sign of the coffin and the cross-bones, which he had previously drawn upon the slate; "dhar a sphirit Neev, if you do, you'll waken some mornin' in a warmer counthry than Ireland."

"Very well," said Bartle, quietly, but evidently shrinking from a threat nearly as fearful, and far more daring than his own. "You know I have nothin' to do except my duty. Yez are goin' aginst the cause, an' I must report yez; afther whatever happens won't come from me, nor from any one here. It is from thim that's in higher quarters you'll get your doom, an' not from me, or, as I said afore, from any one here. Mark that; but indeed you know it as well as I do, an' I believe, Rouser, a good deal better."

Flanagan's argument, to men who understood its dreadful import, was one before which almost every description of personal courage must quail. Persons were then present, Rouser Redhead among the rest, who had been sent upon some of those midnight missions, which contumacy against the system, when operating in its cruelty, had dictated. Persons of humane disposition, declining to act on these sanguinary occasions, are generally the first to be sacrificed, for individual life is nothing when obstructing the propagation of general principle.

This truth, coming from Flanagan's lips, they themselves, some of whom had executed its spirit, knew but too well. The difference, however, between their apprehension, so far as they were individually concerned, was not much; Flanagan had the person to fear, and his opponents the principle.

Redhead, however, who knew that whatever he had executed upon delinquents like himself, might also upon himself be visited in his turn, saw that his safest plan for the present was to submit; for indeed the meshes of the White-boys' system leave no man's life safe, if he express hostile opinions to it.

"Bartle," said he, "you know I'm no coward; an' I grant that you've a long head at plannin' anything you set about. I don't see, in the mane time, why, afther all, we should quarrel. You know *me*, Bartle; an' if anything happens me, *it won't be for noth-*

in'. I say no more; but I say still that you throw the danger upon uz, and don't—"

"Rouser Redhead," said Bartle, "give me your hand. I say now, what I didn't wish to say to-night afore, by Japurs, you're worth five men; an' I'll tell you all, boys, you must meet the Rouser here to-morrow night, an' we'll have a dhrink at my cost; an', boys—Rouser, hear me—you all know your oaths; we'll do something to-morrow night—an' I say again, Rouser, I'll be wid yez an' among yez; an' to prove my opinion of the Rouser, I'll allow him to head us."

"An', by the cross o' Moses, I'll do it in style," rejoined the hot-headed but unthinking fellow, who did not see that the adroit captain was placing him in the post of danger. "I don't care a damn what it is—we'll meet here to-morrow night, boys, an' I'll show you that I can lead as well as folly."

"Whatever happens," said Bartle, "we oughtn't to have any words or bickerin's among ourselves at any rate. I undherstand that two among yez sthruck one another. Sure yez know that there's not a blow ye giv to a brother but's a perjury—an' there's no use in that, barin an' to help forid the thruth. I'll say no more about it now; but I hope there'll never be another blow given among yez. Now, get a hat, some o' yez, till we draw cuts for six that I want to beat Tom Lynchagan, of Lisdhu; he's worken for St. Ledger, afther gettin' two notices. He's a quiet, civil man, no doubt; but that's not the thing. Obadience, or where's the use of our meetin's at all? Give him a good sound batin', but no further—break no bones."

He then marked slips of paper, equal in number to those who were present, with the numbers 1, 2, 3, &c., to correspond, after which he determined that the three first numbers and the three last should go—all of which was agreed to without remonstrance, or any apparent show of reluctance whatever.

"Now, boys," he continued, "don't forget to attend to-morrow night; an' I say to every man of you, as Darby Spaight said to the divil, when he promised to join the rebellion, '*phe dha phecka laght*,' (bring your pike with you,) bring the weapon."

"An who's the purty girl that's goin' to get you, Captain Bartle?" inquired Dandy Duffy.

"The purtiest girl in this parish, anyhow," replied Flanagan, unawares. The words, however, were scarcely out of his lips, when he felt that he had been indiscreet. He immediately added—"that is, if she is of this parish; but I didn't say she is. Maybe we'll have to thravel a bit to find her out, but come what come may, don't neglect to be all here about half-past nine o'clock, wid your arms an' ammunition."

Duffy, who had sat beside Ned M'Cormick during the night, gave him a significant look, which the other, who had, in truth, joined himself to Flanagan's lodge only to watch his movements, as significantly returned.

When the men deputed to beat Lynchaghan had blackened their faces, the lodge dispersed for the night, Dandy Duffy and Ned M'Cormick taking their way home together, in order to consider of matters, with which the reader, in due time, shall be made acquainted.

PART VII.

Our readers may recollect, that, at the close of that part of our tale which appeared in the preceding number, Dandy Duffy and Ned M'Cormick exchanged significant glances at each other, upon Flanagan's having admitted unawares that the female he designed to take away on the following night was "the purtiest girl in the parish." The truth was, he imagined at the moment that his designs were fully matured, and in the secret vanity, or rather, we should say, in the triumphant villainy of his heart, he allowed an expression to incautiously pass his lips which was nearly tantamount to an admission of Una's name. The truth of this he instantly felt. But even had he not, by his own natural sagacity, perceived it, the look of mutual intelligence which his quick and suspicious eye observed to pass between Duffy and Ned M'Cormick would at once have convinced him. Una was not merely entitled to the compliment so covertly bestowed upon her extraordinary personal attractions, but in addition it might have been truly affirmed that neither that nor any adjoining parish could produce a female, in any rank, who could stand on a level with her in the character of a rival beauty. This was admitted by all who had ever seen the *colleen dhas dhun*, or "the purty brown girl," as she was called, and it followed as a matter of course, that Flanagan's words could imply no other than the Bodagh's daughter.

It is unnecessary to say, that Flanagan, knowing this as he did, could almost have bit a portion of his own tongue off as a punishment for its indiscretion. It was then too late, however, to efface the impression which the words were calculated to make, and he felt besides that he would only strengthen the suspicion by an over-anxiety

to remove it. He, therefore, repeated his orders respecting the appointed meeting on the following night, although he had already resolved in his own mind to change the whole plan of his operations.

Such was the precaution with which this cowardly but accomplished miscreant proceeded towards the accomplishment of his purposes, and such was his apprehension lest the premature suspicion of a single individual might by contingent treachery defeat his design, or affect his personal safety. He had made up his mind to communicate the secret of his enterprise to none until the moment of its execution; and this being accomplished, his ultimate plans were laid, as he thought, with sufficient skill to baffle pursuit and defeat either the malice of his enemies or the vengeance of the law.

No sooner had they left the schoolhouse than the Dandy and M'Cormick immediately separated from the rest, in order to talk over the proceedings of the night, with a view to their suspicions of the "Captain." They had not gone far, however, when they were overtaken by two others, who came up to them at a quick, or, if I may be allowed the expression, an earnest pace. The two latter were Rousin Redhead and his son, Corney.

"So, boys," said the Rouser, "what do you think of our business to-night? Didn't I get well out of his clutches?"

"Be me troth, Rouser, darlin'," replied the Dandy, "you niver wor completely in them till this minnit."

"*Dhar ma lham charth*," said Corney, "I say he's a black-hearted villin."

"But how am I in his clutches, Dandy?" inquired the Rouser.

"Why," rejoined Duffy, "didn't you see that for all you said about his throwin' the post of danger on other people, he's givin' it to you to-morrow night?"

Rousin Redhead stood still for nearly half a minute without uttering a syllable; at length he seized Dandy by the arm, which he pressed with the gripe of Hercules, for he was a man of huge size and strength.

"*Chorp ad dioual*, you giant, is it my arm you're goin' to break?"

'Be the tarnal primmer, Dandy Duffy, but I see it now!" said the Rouser, struck by Bartle's address, and indignant at the idea of having been overreached by him. "Eh, Corney," he continued, addressing the son, "hasn't he the Rouser *set?* I see, boys, I see. I'm a marked man wid him, an' it's likely, for all he said, will be on the black list afore he sleeps. Well, Corney avic, you an' others know how to act if anything happens me."

"I don't think," said M'Cormick, who was a lad of considerable penetration, "that you need be afeard of either him or the black list. Be me sowl, I know the same Bartle well, an' a bigger coward never put a coat on his back. He got as pale as a sheet, to-night, when Corney there threatened him; not but he's desateful enough I grant, but he'd be a greater tyrant only that he's so hen-hearted."

"But what job," said the rouser, "has he for us to-morrow night, do you think? It must be something past the common. Who the *dioual* can he have in his eye to run away wid?"

"Who's the the purtiest girl in the parish, Rouser?" asked Ned. "I thought every one knew that."

"Why, you don't mane for to say," replied Redhead, "that he'd have the spunk in him to run away with Bodagh Buie's daughter? Be the contents o' the book, if I thought he'd thry it, I stick to him like a Throjan; the dirty Bodagh, that, as Larry Lawdher said to-night, never backed or supported us, or gev a single rap to help us, if a penny 'ud save us from the gallis. To hell's delights wid him an' all belongin' to him, I say too; an' I'll tell you what it is, boys, if Flanagan has the manliness to take away his daughter, I'll be the first to sledge the door to pieces."

"*Dhar a spiridh*, an' so will I," said the young beetle-browed tiger beside him; "thim that can an' won't help on the cause, desarves no mercy from it."

Thus spoke from the lips of ignorance and brutality that *esprit de corps* of blood, which never scruples to sacrifice all minor resentments to any opportunity of extending the cause, as it is termed, of that ideal monster, in the promotion of which the worst principles of our nature, still most active, are sure to experience the greatest glut of low and gross gratification. Oh, if reason, virtue, and true religion, were only as earnest and vigorous in extending their own cause, as ignorance, persecution, and bigotry, how soon would society present a different aspect! But, unfortunately, *they cannot* stoop to call in the aid of tyranny, and cruelty, and bloodshed, nor of the thousand other atrocious allies of falsehood and dishonesty, of which ignorance, craft, and cruelty, never fail to avail themselves, and without which they could not proceed successfully.

M'Cormick, having heard Rousin Redhead and his son utter such sentiments, did not feel at all justified in admitting them to any confidence with himself or Duffy. He accordingly replied with more of adroitness than of candor to the savage sentiments they expressed.

"Faith, you're right, Rouser; he'd never have spunk, sure enough, to carry off the

Bodagh's daughter. But, in the mane time, who was spakin' about her? Begor, if I thought he had the heart I'd—but he hasn't."

"I know he hasn't," said the Rouser.

"He's nothing but a white-livered dog," said Duffy.

"I thought, to tell you the truth," said M'Cormick, "that you might give a guess as to the girl, but for the Bodagh's daughter, he has *not* the mettle for that."

"If he had," replied the Rouser, "he might count upon Corney an' myself as right-hand men. We all have a crow to pluck wid the dirty Bodagh, an', be me zounds, it'll puzzle him to find a bag to hould the feathers."

"One 'ud think he got enough," observed M'Cormick, "in the loss of his haggard."

"But that didn't come from uz," said the Rouser; "we have our share to give him yet, an' never fear he'll get it. We'll taich him to abuse us, an' set us at defiance, as he's constantly doin'."

"Well, Rouser," said M'Cormick, who now felt anxious to get rid of him, "we'll be wishin' you a good night; we're goin' to have a while of a *kailyeah** up at my uncle's. Corney, my boy, good night."

"Good night kindly, boys," replied the other, "an' *banaght lath* any how."

"Rouser, you divil," said the Dandy, calling after them, "will you an' blessed Corney there, offer up a Patthernavy for my conversion, for I'm sure that both your prayers will go far?"

Rousin Redhead and Corney responded to this with a loud laugh, and a banter.

"Ay, ay, Dandy; but, be me sowl, if they only go as far as your own goodness sint you before now, it'll be seven years before they come back again; eh, do you smell anything?—ha, ha, ha!"

"The big boshthoon hot me fairly, begad," observed the Dandy. Aside—"The divil's own tongue he has."

"Bad cess to you for a walkin' bonfire, an' go home," replied the Dandy; "I'm not a match for you wid the tongue, at all at all."

"No, nor wid anything else, barrin' your heels," replied the Rouser; "or your hands, if there was a horse in the way. Arrah, Dandy?"

"Well, you graceful youth, well?"

"You ought to be a good workman by this time; you first larned your thrade, an' thin you put in your apprenticeship—ha, ha, ha!"

"Faith, an' Rouser I can promise you a merry end, my beauty; you'll be the only man that'll dance at your own funeral; an' I'll tell you what, Rouser, it'll be like an egg-hornpipe, wid your eyes covered. That's what I call an active death, avouchal!"

"Faith, an' if you wor a priest, Dandy, you'd never die with your face to the congregation. You'll be a rope-dancer yourself yet; only this, Dandy, that you'll be undher the rope instead of over it, so good night."

"Rouser," exclaimed the other. "Rousin Redhead!"

"Go home," replied the Rouser. "Good night, I say; you've thravelled a great deal too far for an ignorant man like me to stand any chance wid you. Your tongue's lighter than your hands* even, and that's payin' it a high compliment."

"Divil sweep you, Brien," said Dandy, "you'd beat the divil an' Docthor Fosther. Good night again!"

"Oh, ma bannaght laht, I say."

And they accordingly parted.

"Now," said Ned, "what's to be done, Dandy? As sure as gun's iron, this limb of hell will take away the Bodagh's daughter, if we don't do something to prevent it."

"I'm not puttin' it past him," returned his companion, "but *how* to prevent it is the thing. He has the boys all on his side, barrin' yourself and me, an' a few more."

"An' you see, Ned, the Bodagh is so much hated, that even some of thim that don't like Flanagan, won't scruple to join him in this."

"An' if we were known to let the cat out o' the bag to the Bodagh, we might as well prepare our coffins at wanst."

"Faith, sure enough—that's but gospel, Ned," replied the Dandy; still it 'ud be the *milliah* murdher to let the double-faced villin carry off such a girl."

"I'll tell you what you'll do, thin, Dandy," rejoined Ned, "what if you'd walk down wid me as far as the Bodagh's."

"For why? Sure they're in bed now, man alive."

"I know that," said M'Cormick; "but how-an-ever, if you come down wid me that far, I'll conthrive to get in somehow, widout wakenin' them."

"The dickens you will! How, the sarra, man?"

"No matther, I will; an' you see," he added, pulling out a flask of spirits, "I'm not goin' impty-handed."

"Phew!" exclaimed Duffy, "is it there you are?—oh, that indeed! Faith I got a whisper of it some time ago, but it wint out

* An evening conversational visit.

* In Ireland, to be light-handed signifies to be a thief.

o' my head. Biddy Nulty, faix—a nate clane girl she is, too."

"But that's not the best of it, Dandy. Sure, blood alive, I can tell you a sacret—may dipind? Honor bright! The Bodagh's daughter, man, is to give her a portion, in regard to her bein' so thrue to Connor O'Donovan. Bad luck to the oath she'd swear aginst him if they'd made a queen of her, but outdone the counsellors and lawyers, an' all the whole bobbery o' them, whin they wanted her to turn king's evidence. Now, it's not but I'd do anything to sarve the purty Bodagh's daughter widout it; but you see, Dandy, if white liver takes her off, I may stand a bad chance for the portion."

"Say no more; I'll go wid you; but how will you get in, Ned?"

"Never you mind that; here, take a pull out of this flask before you go any further. Blood an' flummery! what a night; divil a my finger I can see before me. Here—where's your hand?—that's it; warm your heart, my boy."

"You intind thin, Ned, to give Biddy the hard word about Flanagan?"

"Why, to bid her put them on their guard; sure there can be no harm in that."

"They say, Ned, it's not safe to trust a woman; what if you'd ax to see the Bodagh's son, the young soggarth?"

"I'd trust my life to Biddy—she that was so honest to the Donovans wouldn't be desateful to her sweetheart that—he—hem—she's far gone in consate wid—your sowl. Her brother Alick's to meet me at the Bodagh's on his way from their lodge, for they hould a meetin' to-night too."

"Never say it again. I'll stick to you; so push an, for it's late. You'll be apt to make up the match before you part, I suppose."

"That won't be hard to do any time, Dandy."

Both then proceeded down the same field, which we have already said was called the Black Park, in consequence of its dark and mossy soil. Having, with some difficulty, found the stile at the lower end of it, they passed into a short car track, which they were barely able to follow.

The night, considering that it was the month of November, was close and foggy—such as frequently follows a calm day of incessant rain. The bottoms were plashing, the drains all full, and the small rivulets and streams about the country were above their banks, whilst the larger rivers swept along with the hoarse continuous murmurs of an unusual flood. The sky was one sheet of darkness—for not a cloud could be seen, or anything, except the passing gleam of a cottage taper, lessened by the haziness of the night into a mere point of faint light, and thrown by the same cause into a distance which appeared to the eye much more remote than that of reality.

After having threaded their way for nearly a mile, the water spouting almost at every step up to their knees, they at length came to an old bridle-way, deeply shaded with hedges on each side. They had not spoken much since the close of their last dialogue; for, the truth is, each had enough to do, independently of dialogue, to keep himself out of drains and quagmires. An occasional "hanamondioul, I'm into the hinches;" "holy St. Peter, I'm stuck; "tundher an' turf, where are you at all?" or, "by this an' by that, I dunno where I am," were the only words that passed between them, until they reached the little road we are speaking of, which, in fact, was one unbroken rut, and on such a night almost impassable.

"Now," said M'Cormick, "we musn't keep this devil's gut, for conshumin' to the shoe or stockin' ever we'd bring out of it; however, do you folly me, Dandy, and there's no danger."

"I can do nothing else," replied the other, "for I know no more where I am than the man of the moon, who, if all's thrue that's sed of him, is the biggest blockhead alive."

M'Cormick, who knew the path well, turned off the road into a pathway that ran inside the hedge and along the fields, but parallel with the muddy boreen in question. They now found themselves upon comparatively clear ground, and, with the exception of an occasional slip or two, in consequence of the heavy rain, they had little difficulty in advancing. At this stage of their journey not a light was to be seen nor a sound of life heard, and it was evident that the whole population of the neighborhood had sunk to rest.

"Where will this bring us to, Ned?" asked the Dandy—"I hope we'll soon be at the Bodagh's."

M'Cormick stood and suddenly pressed his arm, "Whisht!" said he, in an under tone, "I think I hard voices."

"No," replied the other in the same low tone.

"I'm sure I did," said Ned, "take my word for it, there's people before us on the boreen—whisht!"

They both listened, and very distinctly heard a confused but suppressed murmur of voices, apparently about a hundred yards before them on the little bridle-way. Without uttering a word they both proceeded as quietly and quickly as possible, and in a few minutes

nothing separated them but the hedge. The party on the road were wallowing through the mire with great difficulty, many of them, at the same time, bestowing very energetic execrations upon it and upon those who suffered it to remain in such a condition. Even oaths, however, were uttered in so low and cautious a tone, that neither M'Cormick nor the Dandy could distinguish their voices so clearly as to recognize those who spoke, supposing that they had known them. Once or twice they heard the clashing of arms or of iron instruments of some sort, and it seemed to them that the noise was occasioned by the accidental jostling together of those who carried them. At length they heard one voice exclaim rather testily. "D—n your blood, Bartle Flanagan, will you have patience till I get my shoe out o' the mud—you don't expect me to lose it, do you? We're not goin' to get a purty wife, whatever you may be."

The reply to this was short, but pithy—"May all the divils in hell's fire pull the tongue out o' you, for nothin' but hell itself, you villin, timpted me to bring you with me."

This was not intended to be heard, nor was it by the person against whom it was uttered, he being some distance behind—but as Ned and his companion were at that moment exactly on the other side of the hedge, they could hear the words of this precious soliloquy—for such it was—delivered as they were with a suppressed energy of malignity, worthy of the heart which suggested them.

M'Cormick immediately pulled Duffy's coat, without speaking a word, as a hint to follow him with as little noise as possible, which he did, and ere many minutes they were so far in advance of the others, as to be enabled to converse without being heard.

"*Thar Dheah* Duffy," said his companion, "there's not a minute to be lost."

"There is not," replied the other—"but what will you do with me? I'll lend a hand in any way I can—but remember that if we're seen, or if it's known that we go against them in this—"

"I know," said the other, "we're gone men; still we must manage it somehow, so as to save the girl; God! if it was only on Connor O'Donovan's account, that's far away this night, I'd do it. Dandy you wor only a boy when Blannarhasset prosecuted you, and people pitied you at the time, and now they don't think much the worse of you for it; an' you know it was proved since, that what you sed then was thrue, that other rogues made you do it, an' thin lift you in the lurch. But d—n it, where's the use of all this? give me your hand, it's life or death—can I thrust you?"

"You may," said the other, "you may, Ned; do whatever you wish with me."

"Then," continued Ned, "I'll go into the house, and do you keep near to them without bein' seen; watch their motions; but above all things, if they take her off—folly on till you see where they'll bring her; after that they can get back enough—the sogers, if they're a wantin'."

"Depind an me, Ned; to the core depind an me."

They had now reached the Bodagh's house, upon which, as upon every other object around them, the deep shadows of night rested heavily. The Dandy took up his position behind one of the porches of the gate that divided the little grass-plot before the hall-door and the farm-yard, as being the most central spot, and from which he could with more ease hear, or as far as might be observe, the plan and nature of their proceedings.

It was at least fifteen minutes before they reached the little avenue that led up to the Bodagh's residence; for we ought to have told our readers, that M'Cormick and Duffy, having taken a short path, left the others—who, being ignorant of it, were forced to keep to the road—considerable behind them. Ned was consequently from ten to fifteen minutes in the house previous to their arrival. At length they approached silently, and with that creeping pace which betokens either fear or caution, as the case may be, and stood outside the gate which led to the grass-plot before the hall-door, not more than three or four yards from the porch of the farm-yard gate where the Dandy stood concealed. And here he had an opportunity of witnessing the extreme skill with which Flanagan conducted this nefarious exploit. After listening for about a minute, he found that their worthy leader was not present, but he almost immediately discovered that he was engaged in placing guards upon all the back windows of the dwelling-house and kitchen. During his absence the following short consultation took place among those whom he left behind him, for the purpose of taking a personal part in the enterprise:

"It was too thrue what Rousin Redhead said to-night," observed one of them, "he always takes care to throw the post of danger on some one else. Now it's not that I'm afeared, but as he's to have the girl himself, it's but fair that his own neck should run the first danger, an' not mine."

They all assented to this.

"Well, then, boys," he proceeded, "if yez support me, we'll make him head this busi-

ness himself. It's his own consarn, not ours; an' besides, as he houlds the Articles, it's his duty to lead us in everything. So I for wan, won't take away his girl, an' himself keepin' back. If there's any one here that'll take my place for his, let him now say so."

They were all silent as to *that* point; but most of them said, they wished, at all events, to give "the dirty Bodagh," for so they usually called him, something to remember them by, in consequence of his having, on all occasions, stood out against the system.

"Still it's fair," said several of them, "that in takin' away the colleen, Bartle should go foremost, as she's for himself an' not for huz."

"Well, then, you'll all agree to this?"

"We do, but whist—here he is."

Deeply mortified was their leader on finding that they had come unanimously to this determination. It was too late now, however, to reason with them, and the crime, to the perpetration of which he brought them, too dangerous in its consequences, to render a quarrel with them safe or prudent. He felt himself, therefore, in a position which, of all others, he did not wish. Still his address was too perfect to allow any symptoms of chagrin or disappointment to be perceptible in his voice or manner, although, the truth is, he cursed them in his heart at the moment, and vowed in some shape or other to visit their insubordination with vengeance.

Such, indeed, is the nature of these secret confederacies that are opposed to the laws of the land, and the spirit of religion. It matters little how open and apparently honest the conduct of such men may be among each other; there is, notwithstanding this, a distrust, a fear, a suspicion, lurking at every heart, that renders personal security unsafe, and life miserable. But how, indeed, can they repose confidence in each other, when they know that in consequence of their connection with such systems, many of the civil duties of life cannot be performed without perjury on the one hand, or risk of life on the other, and that the whole principle of the combination is founded upon hatred, revenge, and a violation of all moral obligation?

"Well, then," said their leader, "as your minds is made up, boys, follow me as quickly as you can, an' don't spake a word in your own voices."

They approached the hall-door, with the exception of six, who stood guarding the front windows of the dwelling-house and kitchen; and, to the Dandy's astonishment, the whole party, amounting to about eighteen, entered the house without either noise or obstruction of any kind.

"By Japurs," thought he to himself, "there's thraichery there, any how."

This now to the Dandy was a moment of intense interest. Though by no means a coward, or a young fellow of delicate nerves, yet his heart beat furiously against his ribs, and his whole frame shook with excitement. He would, in truth, much rather have been engaged in the outrage, than forced as he was, merely to look on without an opportunity of taking a part in it, one way or the other. Such, at least, were his own impressions, when the report of a gun was heard inside the house.

Dhar an Iffrin, thought he again, I'll bolt in an' see what's goin' an—*oh ma shaght millia mallach orth*, Flanagan, if you spill blood—Jasus above! Well, any how, come or go what may, we can hang him for this—glory be to God!

These reflections were very near breaking forth into words.

"I don't like that," said one of the guards to another; "he may take the girl away, but it's not the thing to murdher any one belongin' to a dacent family, an' of our own religion."

"If it's only the Bodagh got it," replied his comrade, who was no other than Micky Malvathra, "blaizes to the hair I care. When my brother Barney, that suffered for *Caam Beal* (crooked mouth) Grime's business, was before his thrial, hell resave the taisther the same Bodagh would give to delind him."

"Damn it," rejoined the other, "but to murdher a man in his bed! Why, now, if it was only comin' home from a fair or market, but at midnight, an' in his bed, begorra it is not the thing, Mickey."

There was now a pause in the conversation for some minutes; at length, screams were heard, and the noise of men's feet, as if engaged in a scufile upon the stairs, for the hall-door lay open. A light, too, was seen, but it appeared to have been blown out; the same noise of feet tramping, as if still in a tumult, approached the door, and almost immediately afterwards Flanagan's party approached, bearing in their arms a female, who panted and struggled as if she had been too weak to shriek or call for assistance. The hall-door was then pulled to and locked by those who were outside.

The Dandy could see, by the passing gleam of light which fell upon those who watched beside him, that their faces were blackened, and their clothes covered by a shirt, as was usual with the Whiteboys of old, and for the same object—that of preventing themselves from being recognized by their apparel.

"So far so good," said Flanagan, who

cared not now whether his voice was known or not; "the prize is mine, boys, an' how to bring ma colleen dhas dhun to a snug place, an' a friendly priest that I have to put the knot on us for life."

"Be ——," thought Duffy, "I'll put a different kind of a knot on you for that, if I should swing myself for it."

They hurried onwards with as much speed as possible, bearing the fainting female in a seat formed by clasping their hands together. Duffy still stood in his place of concealment, waiting to let them get so far in advance as that he might dog them without danger of being heard. Just then a man cautiously approached, and in a whisper asked, "Is that Dandy?"

"It is—Saver above, Ned, how is this? all's lost!"

"No, no—I hope not—but go an' watch them; we'll follv as soon as we get help. My curse on Alick Nulty, he disappointed me an' didn't come; if he had, some of the Bodagh's sarvant boys would be up wid us in the kitchen, an' we could bate them back aisy; for Flanagan, as I tould you, is a dam coward."

"Well, thin, I'll trace them," replied the other; "but you know that in sich darkness as this you haven't a minute to lose, otherwise you'll miss them."

"Go an; but afore you go listen, be the light of day, not that we have much of it now any way—by the vestment, Biddy Nulty's worth her weight in Bank of Ireland notes; now pelt and afther them; I'll tell you again."

Flanagan's party were necessarily forced to retrace their steps along the sludgy boreen we have mentioned, and we need scarcely say, that, in consequence of the charge with which they were encumbered, their progress was proportionally slow; to cross the fields on such a night was out of the question.

The first thing Flanagan did, when he found his prize safe, was to tie a handkerchief about her mouth that she might not scream, and to secure her hands together by the wrists. Indeed, the first of these precautions seemed to be scarcely necessary, for what with the terror occasioned by such unexpected and frightful violence, and the extreme delicacy of her health, it was evident that she could not utter even a shriek. Yet, did she, on the other hand, lapse into fits of such spasmodic violence as, wrought up as she was by the horror of her situation, called forth all her physical energies, and literally gave her the strength of three women.

"Well, well," observed one of the fellows, who had assisted in holding her down during these wild fits, "you may talk of jinteel people, but be the piper o' Moses, that same sick daughter of the Bodagh's is the hardiest sprout I've laid my hands on this month o' Sundays."

"May be you'd make as hard a battle yourself," replied he to whom he spoke, "if you wor forced to a thing you hate as much as she hates Bartle."

"May be so," rejoined the other, with an incredulous shrug, that seemed to say he was by no means satisfied by the reasoning of his companion.

Bartle now addressed his charge with a hope of reconciling her, if possible, to the fate of becoming united to him.

"Don't be at all alarmed, Miss Oona, for indeed you may take my word for it, that I'll make as good and as lovin' a husband as ever had a purty wife. It's two or three years since I fell in consate wid you, an' I needn't tell you, darlin', how happy I'm now, that you're mine. I have two horses waitin' for us at the end of this vile road, an', plase Providence, we'll ride onwards a bit, to a friend's house o' mine, where I've a priest ready to tie the knot; an' to-morrow, if you're willin', we'll start for America; but if you don't like that, we'll live together till you'll be willin' enough, I hope, to go any where I wish. So take heart, darlin', take heart. As for the money I made free wid out o' your desk, it'll help to keep us comfortable; it was your own, you know, an' who has a betther right to be at the spendin' of it?"

This, which was meant for consolation, utterly failed, or rather aggravated the sufferings of the affrighted girl they bore, who once more struggled with a power that resembled the intense muscular strength of epilepsy, more than anything else. It literally required four of them to hold her down, so dreadfully spasmodic were her efforts to be free.

The delay caused by those occasional workings of terror, at a moment when Flanagan expected every sound to be the noise of pursuit, wrought up his own bad passions to a furious height. His own companions could actually hear him grinding his teeth with vexation and venom, whenever anything on her part occurred to retard their flight. All this, however, he kept to himself, owing to the singular command he possessed over his passions. Nay, he undertook, once more, the task of reconciling her to the agreeable prospect, as he termed it, that life presented her.

"We'll be as happy as the day's long," said he, "espichilly when heaven sends us a family; an' upon my troth a purty mother you'll make. I suppose, darlin' love, you

wondher how I got in to-night, but I tell you I've my wits about me; you don't know that it was I encouraged Biddy Nulty to go to live wid you, but I know what I was about then; Biddy it was that left the door open for me, an' that tould me the room you lay in, an' the place you keep your hard goold an' notes; I mintion these things to show you how I have you hemmed in, and that your wisest way is to submit without makin' a rout about it. You know that if you wor taken from me this minit, there 'ud be a stain upon your name that 'ud never lave it, an' it wouldn't be my business, you know, to clear up your character, but the conthrary. As for Biddy, the poor fool, I did all in my power to prevint her bein' fond o' me, but ever since we two lived with the ould miser, somehow she couldn't."

For some time before he had proceeded thus far, there was felt, by those who carried their fair charge, a slight working of her whole body, especially of the arms, and in a moment Flanagan, who walked a little in advance of her, with his head bent down, that he might not be put to the necessity of speaking loud, suddenly received, right upon his nose, such an incredible facer as made the blood spin a yard out of it.

"May all the curses of heaven an' hell blast you, for a cowardly, thraicherous, parjured stag! Why, you black-hearted informer, see now what you've made by your cunnin'. Well, we hope you'll keep your word—won't I make a purty mother, an' won't we be happy as the day's long, espichilly when Heaven sends us a family? Why, you rap of hell, aren't you a laughing-stock this minute? An' to go to take my name too—an' to leave the guilt of some other body's thraichery on me, that you knew in your burnin' sowl to be innocent—me, a poor girl that has only my name an' good character to carry me through the world. Oh, you mane-spirited, revengeful dog, for you're not a man, or you'd not go to take sich revenge upon a woman, an' all for sayin' an' puttin' it out on you, what I ever an' always will do, that struv to hang Connor O'Donovan, knowin' that it was yourself did the crime the poor boy is now sufferin' for. Ha! may the sweetest an' bitterest of bad luck both meet upon you, you villin! Amin I pray this night!"

The scene that followed this discovery, and the unexpected act which produced it, could not, we think, be properly described by either pen or pencil. Flanagan stood with his hands alternately kept to his nose, from which he flung away the blood, as it sprung out in a most copious stream. Two-thirds, indeed we might say three-fourths of his party, were convulsed with suppressed laughter, nor could they prevent an occasional cackle from being heard, when forcibly drawing in their breath, in an effort not to offend their leader. The discovery of the mistake was, in itself, extremely ludicrous, but when the home truths uttered by Biddy, and the indescribable bitterness caused by the disappointment, joined to the home blow, were all put together, it might be said that the darkness of hell itself was not so black as the rage, hatred, and thirst of vengeance, which at this moment consumed Bartle Flanagan's heart. He who had laid his plans so artfully that he thought failure in securing his prize impossible, now not only to feel that he was baffled by the superior cunning of a girl, and made the laughing-stock of his own party, who valued him principally upon his ability in such matters; but, in addition to this, to have his heart and feelings torn, as it were, out of his body, and flung down before him and his confreres in all their monstrous deformity, and to be jeered at, moreover, and despised, and literally cuffed by the female who outreached him—this was too much; all the worst passions within him were fired, and he swore in his own heart a deep and blasphemous oath, that Biddy Nulty never should part from him unless as a degraded girl.

The incident that we have just related happened so quickly that Flanagan had not time to reply a single word, and Biddy followed up her imprecation by a powerful effort to release herself.

"Let me home this minit, you villin," she continued; "now that you find yourself on the wrong scent—boys, don't hould me, nor back that ruffin in his villany."

"Hould her like hell," said Bartle, "an' tie her up wanst more; we'll gag you, too, my lady—ay, will we. Take away your name—I'll take care you'll carry shame upon your face from this night to the hour of your death. Characther indeed!—ho, by the crass I'll have you that little of that will go far wid you."

"May be not," replied Biddy; "the same God that disappointed you in hangin' Connor O'Donovan——"

"Damn you," said he, "take that;" and as he spoke he struck the poor girl a heavy blow in the cheek, which cut her deeply, and for a short time rendered her speechless.

"Bartle," said more than one of them, "that's unmanly, an' it's conthrary to the regulations."

"To perdition wid the regulations! Hasn't the vagabone drawn a pint of blood from my nose already?—look at that!" he exclaimed, throwing away a handful of the

warm gore—"hell seize her! look at that. Ho be the ——" He made another onset at the yet unconscious girl as he spoke, and would have still inflicted further punishment upon her, were it not that he was prevented.

"Stop," said several of them, "if you wor over us fifty times you won't lay another finger on her; that's wanst for all, so be quiet."

"Are yez threatenin' me?" he asked, furiously, but in an instant he changed his tone —"Boys dear," continued the wily but unmanly villain—"boys dear, can you blame me? disappointed as I am by this—by this —*ha anhien na sthreepa*—I'll——" but again he checked himself, and at length burst out into a bitter fit of weeping. "Look at this," he proceeded, throwing away another handful of blood, "I've lost a quart of it by her."

"Be the hand af my body," said one of them in a whisper, "he's like every coward, it's at his own blood he's cryin'; be the vartue of my oath, that man's not the thing to depind on."

"Is she tied an' gagged?" he then inquired.

"She is," replied those who tied her. "It was very asy done, Bartle, afther the blow you hot her."

"It wasn't altogether out of ill-will I hot her aither," he replied, "although, boys dear, you know how she vexed me, but you see, the thruth is, she'd a' given us a great dale o' thronble in gettin' her quiet."

"An' you tuck the right way to do that," they replied ironically; and they added, "Bartle Flanagan, you may thank the oaths we tuck, or be the crass, a single man of us wouldn't assist you in *this* consarn, afther your cowardly behaver to this poor girl. Takin' away the Bodagh's daughter was another thing; you had betther let the girl go home."

Biddy had now recovered, and heard this suggestion with joy, for the poor girl began to entertain serious apprehensions of Flanagan's revenge and violence, if left alone with him; she could not speak, however, and those who bore her, quickened their pace at his desire, as much as they could.

"No," said Bartle, artfully, "I'll keep her prisoner anyhow for this night. I had once a notion of marryin' her—an' may be—as I am disappointed in the other—but, we'll think of it. Now we're at the horses, an' we'll get an faster."

This was indeed true. After the journey we have just described, they at length got out of the boreen, where, in the corner of a field, a little to the right, two horses, each saddled, were tied to the branch of a tree. They now made a slight delay until their charge should be got mounted, and were collected in a group on the road, when a voice called out, "Who goes there?"

"A friend to the guard."

"Good morrow!"

"Good morrow mornin' to you!"

"What Age are you in?"

"The end of the fifth."

"All right," said Bartle, aloud; "now, boys," he whispered to his own party, "we must tell them good-humoredly to pass on —that this is a runaway—jist a girl we're bringin' aff wid us, an' to hould a hard cheek* about it. You know we'd do as much for them."

Both parties now met, the strangers consisting of about twenty men.

"Well, boys," said the latter, "what's the fun?"

"Devil a thing but a girl we're helpin' a boy to take away. What's your own sport?"

"Begorra, we wor in luck to-night; we got as purty a double-barrelled gun as ever you seen, an' a case of murdherin' fine pistols."

"Success, ould heart! that's right; we'll be able to stand a tug whin the 'Day' comes."

"Which of you is takin' away the girl, boys?" inquired one of the strangers.

"Begad, Bartle Flanagan, since there's no use in hidin' it, when we're all as we ought to be."

"Bartle Flanagan!" said a voice—"Bartle Flanagan, is it? An' who's the girl?"

"Blur an' agres, Alick Nulty, don't be too curious, she comes from Bodagh Buie's."

Biddy, on hearing the voice of her brother, made another violent effort, and succeeded in partially working the gag out of her mouth —she screamed faintly, and struggled with such energy that her hands again became loose, and in an instant the gag was wholly removed.

"Oh Alick, Alick, for the love o' God save me from Flanagan! it's me, your sisther Biddy, that's in it; save me, Alick, or I'll be lost; he has cut me to the bone wid a blow, an' the blood's pourin' from me."

"Her brother flew to her. "Whisht, Biddy, don't be afeard!" he exclaimed. "Boys," said he, "let my party stand by me; this is the way Bartle Flanagan keeps his oath."†

"Secure Bartle," said Biddy. "He robbed Bodagh Buie's house, an' has the money about him."

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* To keep it secret.

† One of the clauses of the Ribbon oath was, not to injure or maltreat the wife or sister of a brother Ribbonman.

The horses were already on the road, but, in consequence of both parties filling up the passage in the direction which Bartle and his followers intended taking, the animals could not be brought through them without delay and trouble, even had there been no resistance offered to their progress.

"A robber too!" exclaimed Nulty, "that's more of his parjury to'ards uz. Bartle Flanagan, you're a thraitor, and you'll get a thraitor's death afore you're much oulder. He's not fit to be among us," added Alick, addressing himself to both parties, "an' the truth is, if we don't hang or settle him, he'll some day hang us."

"Bartle's no thraitor," said Mulvather, "but he's a thraitor that says he is."

The coming reply was interrupted by "Boys, good night to yez;" and immediately the clatter of a horse's feet was heard stumbling and floundering back along the deep stony boreen. "Be the vestment he's aff," said one of his party; "the cowardly villin's aff wid himself the minit he seen the approach of danger."

"Sure enough, the bad dhrop's in him," exclaimed several on both sides. "But what the h—l does he mane now, I dunna?" "It'll be only a good joke to-morrow wid him," observed one of them—"but, boys, we must think how to manage him; I can't forgive him for the cowardly blow he hot the poor colleen here, an' for the same rason I didn't dhraw the knot so tight upon her as I could a' done."

"Was it you that nipped my arm?" asked Biddy.

"Faix, you may say that, an' it was to let you know that, let him say as he would, after what we seen of him to-night, we wouldn't allow him to thrate you badly without marryin' you first."

The night having been now pretty far advanced, the two parties separated in order to go to their respective homes—Alick taking Biddy under his protection to her master's. As the way of many belonging to each lodge lay in the same direction, they were accompanied, of course, to the turn that led up to the Bodagh's house. Biddy, notwithstanding the severe blow she had got, related the night's adventure with much humor, dwelling upon her own part in the transaction with singular glee.

"There's some thraicherous villin in the Bodagh's," said she, "be it man or woman; for what'id you think but the hall-door was left lying to only—neither locked nor boulted. But, indeed, anyhow, it's the start was taken out o' me whin Ned M'Cormick—that *you* wor to meet in our kitchen, Alick—throth, I won't let *Kitty Lowry* wait up for *you* so long another time." She added this to throw the onus of the assignation off her own shoulders, and to lay it upon those of Alick and Kitty. "But, anyhow, I had just time to throw her clothes upon me and get into her bed. Be me sowl, but I acted the fright an' sickness in style. I wasn't able to spake a word, you persave, till we got far enough from the house to give Miss Oona time to hide herself. Oh, thin, the robbin' villin how he put the muzzle of his gun to the lock of Miss Oona's desk, when he couldn't get the key, an' *blewn* it to pieces, an' thin he took every fardin' he could lay his hands upon."

She then detailed her own feelings during the abduction, in terms so ludicrously abusive of Flanagan, that those who accompanied her were exceedingly amused; for what she said was strongly provocative of mirth, yet the chief cause of laughter lay in the vehement sincerity with which she spoke, and in the utter unconsciousness of uttering anything that was calculated to excite a smile. There is, however, a class of such persons, whose power of provoking laughter consists in the utter absence of humor. Those I speak of never laugh either at what they say themselves, or what any one else may say; but they drive on right ahead with an inverted originality that is perfectly irresistible.

We must now beg the reader to accompany them to the Bodagh's, where a scene awaited them for which they were scarcely prepared. On approaching the house they could perceive, by the light glittering from the window chinks, that the family were in a state of alarm; but at this they were not surprised; for such a commotion in the house, after what had occurred, was but natural. They went directly to the kitchen door and rapped.

"Who is there?" said a voice within.

"It's Biddy; for the love o' God make haste, Kitty, an' open."

"What Biddy are you? I won't open."

"Biddy Nulty. You know me well enough, Kitty; so make haste an' open, Alick, mark my words," said she in a low voice to her brother, "Kitty's the very one that practised the desate this night—that left the hall-door open. Make haste, Kitty, I say."

"I'll do no such thing indeed," replied the other; "it was you left the hall-door open to-night, an' I heard you spakin' to fellows outside. I have too much regard for my masther's house an' family to let you or any one else in to-night. Come in the mornin'."

"Folly me, Alick," said Biddy, "folly me."

She went immediately to the hall-door, and gave such a single rap with the knocker, as brought more than Kitty to the door.

"Who's there?" inquired a voice, which she and her brother at once knew to be Ned M'Cormick's.

"Ned, for the love o' God, let me an' Alick in!" she replied; "we got away from that netarnal villin."

Instantly the door was opened, and the first thing Ned did was to put his arms about Biddy's neck, and—we were going to say kiss her.

"Saints above!" said he, "what's this?" on seeing that her face was dreadfully disfigured with blood.

"Nothin' to signify," she replied; "but thanks be to God, we got clane away from the villin, or be the Padheren Partha, the villin it was that got clane away from hus. How is Miss Oona?"

"She went over to a neighbor's house for safety," replied Ned, smiling, "an' will be back in a few minutes; but who do you think, above all men in the five quarters o' the earth, we have got widin? Guess now."

"Who?" said Biddy; "why, I dunna, save—but no, it couldn't."

"Faix but it could, though," said Ned, mistaking her, as the matter turned out.

"Why, *vick na hoïah, no!* Connor O'Donovan back! Oh! no, no, Ned; that 'ud be too good news to be thrue."

The honest lad shook his head with an expression of regret that could not be mistaken as the exponent of a sterling heart. And yet, that the reader may perceive how near akin that one circumstance was to the other in his mind, we have only to say, that whilst the regret for Connor was deeply engraven on his features, yet the expression of triumph was as clearly legible as if his name had not been at all mentioned.

"Who, then, Ned?" said Alick. "Who the dickens is it?"

"Why, divil resave the other than Bartle Flanagan himself—*secured*—and the constables sent for—an' plaze the Saver he'll be in the stone jug afore his head gets gray any how, the black-hearted villin!"

It was even so; and the circumstances accounting for it are very simple. Flanagan, having mounted one of the horses, made the best of his way from what he apprehended was likely to become a scene of deadly strife. Such was the nature of the road, however, that anything like a rapid pace was out of the question. When he had got over about half the boreen he was accosted in the significant terms of the Ribbon pass-word of that day.

"Good morrow!"

"Good morrow mornin' to you!"

"Arrah what Age may you be, neighbor?"

Now the correct words were, "What Age are we in?"* but they were often slightly changed, sometimes through ignorance and sometimes from design, as in the latter case less liable to remark when addressed to persons not *up*. "In the end of the Fifth," was the reply.

"An' if you wor shakin' hands wid a friend, how would you do it? Or stay—all's right so far—but give us a grip of your *cham ahas* (right hand)."

Flanagan, who apprehended pursuit, was too cautious to trust himself within reach of any one coming from the direction in which the Bodagh lived. He made no reply, therefore, to this, but urged his horse forward, and attempted to get clear of his catechist.

"*Dhar Dhegh!* it's Flanagan," said a voice which was that of Alick Nulty; and the next moment the equestrian was stretched in the mud, by a heavy blow from the but of a carbine. Nearly a score of men were immediately about him; for the party he met on his return were the Bodagh's son, his servants, and such of the cottiers as lived near enough to be called up to the rescue. On finding himself secured, he lost all presence of mind, and almost all consciousness of his situation.

"I'm gone," said he; "I'm a lost man; all Europe can't save my life. Don't kill me, boys; don't kill me; I'll go wid yez quietly—only, if I am to die, let me die by the laws of the land."

"The laws of the land?" said John O'Brien; "oh, little, Bartle Flanagan, you respected them. You needn' be alarmed now—you are safe here—to the laws of the land we will leave you; and by them you must stand or fall."

Bartle Flanagan, we need scarcely say, was well guarded until a posse of constables should arrive to take him into custody. But, in the mean time, a large and increasing party sat up in the house of the worthy Bodagh; for the neighbors had been alarmed, and came flocking to his aid. 'Tis true, the danger was now over; but the kind Bodagh, thankful in his heart to the Almighty for the escape of his daughter, would not let them go without first partaking of his hospitality. His wife, too, for the same reason, was in a flutter of delight; and as her heart was as Irish as her husband's, and consequently as hospitable, so did she stir about, and work, and order right and left until abundant refreshments were smoking on the table. Nor was the gentle and melancholy Una herself, now that the snake was at all events scotched,

* This order or throng of the Ages is taken from Pastorini.

averse to show herself among them—for so they would have it. Biddy Nulty had washed her face ; and, notwithstanding the poultice of stirabout which her mistress with her own hands applied to her wound, she really was the most interesting person present, in consequence of her heroism during the recent outrage. After a glass of punch had gone round, she waxed inveterately eloquent, indeed, so much so that the mourner, the *colleen dhas dhun*, herself was more than once forced to smile, and in some instances fairly to laugh at the odd grotesque spirit of her descriptions.

"The rascal was quick ! " said the Bodagh, " but upon my credit, Biddy, you wor a pop afore him for all that. Divil a thing I, or John, or the others, could do wid only one gun an' a case o' pistols against so many—still we would have fought life or death for poor Una anyhow. But Biddy, here, good girl, by her cleverness and invention saved us the danger, an' maybe was the manes of savin' some of our liver or theirs. God knows I'd have no relish to be shot myself," said the pacific Bodagh, "nor would I ever have a day or night's pace if I had the blood of a fellow-crathur on my sowl—upon my sowl I wouldn't."

"But, blood alive, masther, what could I 'a' done only for Ned M'Cormick, that gave us the hard word ? " said Biddy, anxious to transfer the merit of the transaction to her lover.

"Well, well, Bid," replied the Bodagh, "maybe neither Ned nor yourself will be a loser by it. If you're bent on layin' your heads together we'll find you a weddin' present, anyway."

" Bedad, sir, I'm puzzled to know how they got in so aisy," said Ned.

"That matter remains to be cleared up yet," said John. "There is certainly treachery in the camp somewhere."

"I am cock sure the hall-door was not latched," said Duffy ; " for they had neither stop nor stay at it."

"There is a villing among us sartainly," observed Mrs. O'Brien ; "for as heaving is above me, I locked it wid my own two hands this blessed night."

"I thought it might be wid the kay, Bridget," said the Bodagh, laughing at his own easy joke ; "for you see, doors is ginerally locked wid kays—ha ! ha ! ha ! "

"Faix, but had Oona been tuck away to-night wid that vag o' the world, it's not laughin' you'd be."

"God, He sees, that's only thruth, too, Bridget," he replied ; "but still there's some rogue about the place that opened the door for the villins."

" *Dar ma chuirp*, I'll hould goold I put the saddle on the right horse in no time," said Biddy. "Misthress, will you call Kitty Lowry, ma'am, i' you plase ? I'll do everything above boord ; no behind backs for me ; blazes to the one alive hates foul play more nor I do."

We ought to have observed that one of Biddy's peculiarities was a more than usual readiness at letting fly, and not unfrequently at giving an oath ; and as her character presented a strange compound of simplicity and cleverness, honesty and adroitness, her master and mistress, and fellow-servants, were frequently amused by this unfeminine propensity. For instance, if Una happened to ask her, "Biddy, did you iron the linen ? " her usual reply was, "No, blast the iron, miss, I hadn't time." Of course the family did everything in their power to discourage such a practice ; but on this point they found it impossible to reform her. Kitty Lowry's countenance, when she appeared, certainly presented strong indications of guilt ; but still there was a hardness of outline about it which gave promise at the same time of the most intrepid assurance. Biddy, on the other hand, was brimful of consequence, and a sense of authority, on finding that the judicial power was on this occasion entrusted chiefly to her hands. She rose up when Kitty entered, and stuck a pair of red formidable fists with great energy into her sides.

"Pray ma'am," said she, "what's the raisin' you refused to let me in to-night, afther gettin' away wid my life from that netarnal blackguard, Bartle Flanagan—what's the raisin I say, ma'am, that you kep' me out afther you *knewn* who was in it ? "

There was here visible a slight vibration of the head, rather gentle at the beginning, but clearly prophetic of ultimate energy, and an unequivocal determination to enforce whatever she might say with suitable action even in its widest sense.

"An' pray, ma'am," said the other, for however paradoxical it may appear, it is an established case that in all such displays between women, politeness usually keeps pace with scurrility ; "An' pray, ma'am," replied Kitty, "is it to the likes o' you we're to say our catechize ? "

Biddy was resolved not to be outdone in politeness, and replied—

"Af you plaise, ma'am," with a courtesy.

"Lord protect us ! what will we hear next, I wondher ? Well, ma'am ? " Here her antagonist stood, evidently waiting for the onset.

"You'll hear more than'll go down your back pleasant afore I've done wid you, ma'am."

"Don't be makin' us long for it in the mane time, Miss Biddy."

"You didn't answer my question, *Miss* Kitty. Why did you refuse to let me in to-night?"

"For good raisons—bekase I hard you cologgin' an' whisperin' wid a pack of fellows 'ithout."

"An' have you the brass to say so, knowin' that it's false an' a lie into the bargain?" (Head energetically shaken.)

"Have I the brass, is it? I keep my brass in my pocket, ma'am, not in my face, like some of our friends." (Head shaken in reply to the action displayed by Kitty.)

This was a sharp retort; but it was very well returned.

"Thank you, ma'am," replied Biddy, "if it's faces you're spakin' about, I know you're able to outface me any day; but whatever's in my face there's no desate in my heart, Miss Lowry. Put that in your pocket." (One triumphant shake of the head at the conclusion.)

"There's as much in your heart as'll shame your face, yet, Miss Nulty. Put that in yours." (Another triumphant shake of the head.)

"Thank God," retorted Biddy, "none o' *my* friends ever knewn what a shamed face is. I say, madam, none o' *my* family iver wore a shamed face. *Thiguthu shin?*" (Do you understand that?)

This, indeed, was a bitter hit; for the reader must know that a sister of Lowry's had not passed through the world without the breath of slander tarnishing her fair fame.

"Oh, it's well known your tongue's no slander, Biddy."

"Thin that's more than can be said of yours, Kitty."

"If my sisther met with a misfortune, it was many a betther woman's case than ever you'll be. Don't shout till you get out of the wood, ma'am. You dunna what's afore yourself. Any how, it's not be lettin' fellows into the masther's kitchen whin the family's in bed, an' dhrinkin' whiskey wid them, that'll get you through the world wid your character safe. * * * An' you're nothin' but a barge, or you'd not dhraw down my sisther's name that never did you an ill turn, whatever she did to herself, poor girl!"

"An' do you dar' for to call me a barge? * * * * Blast your insurance! be this an' be that, for a farden I'd malivogue the devil out o' you."

"We're not puttin' it past you, madam, you're blaggard enough to fight like a man; but we're not goin' to make a blaggard an' a bully of ourselves, in the mane time."

[The conversation, of which we are giving a very imperfect report, was garnished by both ladies with sundry vituperative epithets, which it would be inconsistent with the dignity of our history to record.]

"That's bekase you haven't the blood of a hen in you * * * sure we know what you are! But howld! be me sowl, you're *doin'* me for all that. Ah, ha! I see where you're ladin' me; but it won't do, Miss Kitty Lowry. I'll bring you back to the catechize agin. You'd light the straw to get away in the smoke; but you're worth two gone people yet, dhough."

"Worth half a dozen o' you, any day."

"Well, as we're both to the fore, we'll soon see that. How did you know, my lady, that the masther's hall door was left open to-night? Answer me that, on the nail!"

This was what might be very properly called a knock-down blow; for if the reader but reflects a moment he will see that Kitty, on taxing her antagonist, after her rescue, with leaving it open, directly betrayed herself, as there was and could have been no one in the house cognizant of the fact at the time unless the guilty person. With this latter exception, Alick Nulty was the only individual aware of it, and from whom the knowledge of it could come. Kitty, therefore, by her over-anxiety to exculpate herself from a charge which had not been made, became the unconscious instrument of disclosing the fact of her having left the door open.

This trying query, coming upon her unexpectedly as it did, threw her into palpable confusion. Her face became at once suffused with a deep scarlet hue, occasioned by mingled shame and resentment, as was at once evident from the malignant and fiery glare which she turned upon her querist.

"Get out," she replied; "do you think I'd think it worth my while to answer the likes o' you? I'd see you farther than I could look first. You, indeed! faugh! musha bad luck to your impidence!"

"Oh, i' you plaise, ma'am," said Biddy, dropping a courtesy, that might well be termed the very pink of politeness—"we hope you'll show yourself a betther Christin than to be ignorant o' your catechize. So, ma'am, if it 'ud be plaisin' to you afore the company maybe you'd answer it."

"Who made you my misthress, you blaggard flipe? who gave you authority to ax me sich a question?" replied the other. "A fellow-servant like myself! to the devil I pitch you. You, indeed! Faix, it's well come up wid the likes o' you to ballyrag over me."

"Well, but ma'am dear, will you answer—that is, i' you plaise, for sure we can't for-

get our manners, you know—will you jist answer what I axed you? Oh, be me sowl, your face condimns you, my lady!" said Biddy, abruptly changing her tone; "it does, you yolla Mullatty, it does. You bethrayed the masther's house, an' Miss Oona, too, you villin o' blazes! If you could see your face now—your guilty face!"

The spirit of her antagonist, being that of a woman, could bear no more. The last words were scarcely uttered, when Lowry made a spring like a tigress at her opponent, who, however, received this onset with a skill and intrepidity worthy of Penthesilea herself. They were immediately separated, but not until they had twisted and twined about one another two or three times, after which, each displayed, by way of a trophy, a copious handful of hair that had changed proprietorship during their brief but energetic conflict.

In addition to this, there were visible on Kitty's face five small streams of liquid gore, which, no doubt, would have been found to correspond with the red expanded talons of her antagonist.

John O'Brien then put the question seriously to Lowry, who, now that her blood was up, or probably feeling that she had betrayed herself, declined to answer it at all.

"I'll answer nothin' I don't like," she replied, "an' I'll not be ballyraged by any one—not even by you, Misther John; an' what's more, I'll lave the sarvice at the shriek o' day to-morrow. I wouldn't live in the house wid that one; my life 'udn't be safe undher the wan roof wid her."

"Thin you'll get no carrecther from any one here," said Mrs. O'Brien; "for, indeed, any way, there was never a minute's peace in the kitchen since you came into it."

"Divil cares," she replied, with a toss of her head; "if I don't, I must only live widout it, and will, I hope."

She then flounced out of the room, and kept grumbling in an insolent tone of voice, until she got to her bed. Alick Nulty then detailed all the circumstances he had witnessed, by which it appeared unquestionable that Kitty Lowry had been aware of Flanagan's design, and was consequently one of his accomplices. This in one sense was true, whilst in another and the worst they did her injustice. It is true that Bartle Flanagan pretended affection for her, and contrived on many occasions within the preceding five months, that several secret meetings should take place between them, and almost always upon a Sunday, which was the only day she had any opportunity of seeing him. He had no notion, however, of entrusting her with his secret. In fact, no man could possibly lay his plans with deeper design or more ingenious precaution for his own safety than Flanagan. Having gained a promise from the credulous girl to elope with him on the night in question, he easily induced her to leave the hall door open. His exploit, however, having turned out so different in its issue from that which Kitty expected, she felt both chagrined and confounded, and knew not at first whether to ascribe the abduction of Biddy Nulty to mistake or design; for, indeed, she was not ignorant of Flanagan's treacherous conduct to the sex—no female having ever repulsed him, whose character he did not injure whenever he could do so with safety. Biddy's return, however, satisfied her that Bartle must have made a blunder of some kind, or he would not have taken away her fellow-servant instead of herself; and it was the bitterness which weak minds always feel when their own wishes happen to be disappointed, that prompted her resentment against poor Biddy, who was unconsciously its object. Flanagan's primary intention was still, however, in some degree, effected, so far as it regarded the abduction. The short space of an hour gave him time to cool and collect himself sufficiently to form the best mode of action under the circumstances. He resolved, therefore, to plead mistake, and to produce Kitty Lowry to prove that his visit that night to the Bodagh's house was merely to fulfil their mutual promise of eloping together.

But there was the robbery staring him in the face; and how was he to manage that? This, indeed, was the point on which the accomplished villain felt by the sinking of his heart that he had overshot his mark. When he looked closely into it, his whole frame became cold and feeble from despair, the hard paleness of mental suffering settled upon his face, and his brain was stunned by a stupor which almost destroyed the power of thinking.

All this, however, availed him not. Before twelve o'clock the next day informations had been sworn against him, and at the hour of three he found himself in the very room which had been assigned to Connor O'Donovan, sinking under the double charge of abduction and robbery.

And now once more did the mutability of public feeling and opinion as usual become apparent. No sooner had fame spread abroad the report of Flanagan's two-fold crime, and his imprisonment, than those very people who had only a day or two before inferred that Connor O'Donovan was guilty, because his accuser's conduct continued correct and blameless, now changed their tone, and insisted that the hand of God was visible in

Flanagan's punishment. Again were all the dark traits of his character dragged forward and exposed; and this man reminded that man, as that man did some other man, that he had said more than once that Bartle Flanagan would be hanged for swearing away an innocent young man's life. Such, however, without reference to truth or justice, is public opinion among a great body of the people, who are swayed by their feelings only, instead of their judgment. The lower public will, as a matter of course, feel at random upon everything, and like a fortune-teller, it will for that reason, and for that only, sometimes be found on the right side. From the time which elapsed between the period of Bartle's imprisonment and that of his trial, many strange circumstances occurred in connection with it, of which the public at large were completely ignorant. Bartle was now at the mercy of a man who had been long looked upon with a spirit of detestation and vengeance by those illegal confederations with which he had uniformly declined to associate himself. Flanagan's party, therefore, had now only two methods of serving him, one was intimidation, and the other a general subscription among the various lodges of the district, to raise funds for his defence. To both of these means they were resolved to have recourse.

Many private meetings they held among themselves upon those important matters, at which Dandy Duff and Ned M'Cormick attended, as was their duty; and well was it for them the part they took in defeating Bartle Flanagan, and serving the Bodagh and his family, was unknown to their confederates. To detail the proceedings of their meetings, and recount the savage and vindictive ferocity of such men, would be paying the taste and humanity of our readers a bad compliment. It is enough to say that a fund was raised for Flanagan's defence, and a threatening notice written to be pasted on the Bodagh Buie's door—of which elegant production the following is a literal copy:—

"Buddha Bee—You 'ave wan iv our boys *in* for abjection an' rubbry—an' it seems is resolved to parsequte the poor boy at the nuxt 'Shizers—now dhis is be way av a dalikit hint to yew an' yoos that aff butt wan spudh av his blud is spiled in quensequence av yewr parsequtin' im as the winther's comin' on an' the wether gettin' cowld an' the long nights settin' in yew may as well prapare yewr caughin an' not that same remimber you've a praty dother an may no more about her afore you much shoulder.

"Simon Pether Starlight."

This and several others of the same class were served upon the Bodagh, with the intention of intimidating him from the prosecution of Flanagan. They had, however, quite mistaken their man. The Bodagh, though peaceable and placable, had not one atom of the coward in his whole composition. On the contrary, he was not only resolute in resisting what he conceived to be oppressive or unjust, but he was also immovably obstinate in anything wherein he fancied he had right on his side. And even had his disposition been inclined to timidity or pliancy, his son John would have used all his influence to induce him to resist a system which is equally opposed to the laws of God and of man, as well as to the temporal happiness of those who are slaves to the terrible power which, like a familiar devil, it exercises over its victims under the hollow promise of protection.

PART VIII. AND LAST.

As the Bodagh and his son took the usual legal steps to forward the prosecution, it was but natural that they should calculate upon the evidence of Dandy Duffy, Ned M'Cormick, and Alick Nulty. John O'Brien accordingly informed them, on the very night of the outrage, that his father and himself would consider them as strong evidence against Bartle Flanagan, and call upon them as such. This information placed these young men in a position of incredible difficulty and danger. They knew not exactly at that moment how to proceed consistently with the duty which they owed to society at large, and that which was expected from them by the dark combination to which they were united. M'Cormick, however, begged of John O'Brien not to mention their names until the day after the next, and told him if he could understand their reason for this request, he would not hesitate to comply with it.

O'Brien, who suspected the true cause of their reluctance, did not on this occasion press them further, but consented to their wishes, and promised not to mention their names, even as indirectly connected with the outrage, until the time they had specified had elapsed.

In the course of the following day Nogher M'Cormick presented himself to the Bodagh and his son, neither of whom felt much difficulty in divining the cause of his visit.

"Well," said Nogher, after the first usual civilities had passed, "glory be to God, gintlemen, this is desperate fine weather for the season—barrin' the wet."

John smiled, but the plain matter-of-fact Bodagh replied,

"Why, how the devil can you call this good weather, neighbor, when it's raining for the last week, night and day?"

"I do call it good weather for all that," returned Nogher, "for you ought to know that every weather's good that God sends."

"Well," said the Bodagh, taken aback a little by the Nogher's piety, "there's truth in that, too, neighbor."

"I *am* right," said Nogher, "an' it's nothin' else than a sinful world to say that this is bad weather, or that's bad weather—bekase the Scriptur says, 'vo be to thee——'"

"But, pray," interrupted John, "what's your business with my father and me?"

Nogher rubbed down his chin very gravely and significantly,

"Why," said he, "somethin' for your own good, gentlemen."

"Well, what is that?" said John, anxious to bring him to the point as soon as possible.

"The truth, gentlemen, is this—I'm an ould man, an' I hope that I never was found to be anything else than an honest one. They're far away this day that could give me a good carrechtur—two o' them anyhow I'll never forget—Connor an' his mother; but I'll never see them agin; an' the ould man too, *I* never could hate him, in regard of the love he bore his son. Long, long was the journey he tuck to see that son, an', as he tould me the day he wint into the ship, to die in his boy's arms; for he said heaven wouldn't be heaven to him, if he died anywhere else."

Nogher's eyes filled as he spoke, and we need scarcely say that neither the Bodagh nor his son esteemed him the less for his attachment to Connor O'Donovan and his family.

"The sooner I end the business I come about to-day," said he, "the better. You want my son Ned, Dandy Duffy, an' Alick Nulty, to join in givin' evidence against blaggard Bartle Flanagan. Now the truth is, gintlemen, you don't know the state o' the country. If they come into a court of justice against him, their lives won't be worth a traneen. Its aginst their oath, I'm tould, as Ribbonmen, to prosecute one another; an' from hints I resaved, I'm afraid they can't do it, as I said, barrin' at the risk o' their lives."

"Father," said John, "as far as I have heard, he speaks nothing but truth."

"I believe he does not," rejoined the Bodagh, "an', by my sowl, I'll be bound he's an honest man—upon my credit, I think you are, M'Cormick."

"I'm thankful to you, sir," said Nogher.

"I'm inclined to think further," said John, "that we have proof enough against Flanagan without them."

"Thin, if you think so, John, God forbid that we'd be the manes of bringin' the young men into throuble. All I'm sorry for is, that they allowed themselves to be hooked into sich a dark and murdherous piece of villainy."

"I know, sir, it's a bad business," said Nogher, "but it can't be helped now; no man's safe that won't join it."

"Faith, and I won't for one," replied the Bodagh, "not but that they sent many a threat to me. Anything against the laws o' the counthry is bad, and never ends but in harm to them that's consarned in it."

"M'Cormick," added the son, "villain as Flanagan is, we shall let him once more loose upon society, sooner than bring the lives of your son, and the two other young men into jeopardy. Such, unhappily, is the state of the country, and we must submit to it."

"I thank you, sir," said Nogher. "The truth is, they're sworn, it seems, *not* to prosecute one another, let whatever may happen; an' any one of them that breaks *that* oath—God knows I wish they'd think of others as much as they do of it—barrin' a stag that's taken up, an' kep safe by the Government, is sure to be knocked on the head."

"Say no more, M'Cormick," said the Bodagh's inestimable son, "say no more. No matter how this may terminate, we shall not call upon them as evidences. It must be so, father," he added, "and God help the country in which the law is a dead letter, and the passions and bigoted prejudices of disaffected or seditious men the active principle which impresses its vindictive horrors upon society! Although not myself connected with them, I know their oath, and—but I say no more. M'Cormick, your friends are safe; we shall not, as I told you, call upon them, be the result what it may; better that one guilty should escape, than that three innocent persons should suffer."

Nogher again thanked him, and having taken up his hat, was about to retire, when he paused a moment, and, after some consideration with himself, said—

"You're a scholar, sir, an'—but maybe I'm sayin' what I oughtn't to say—but sure, God knows, it's all very well known long ago."

"What is it, M'Cormick?" asked John; "speak out plainly; we will not feel offended."

"'Twas only this, sir," continued Nogher, "I'm an unlarned man; but *he* would write to *you* may be—I mane Connor—an' if he

did, I'd be glad to hear—but I hope I don't offind you, sir. You wouldn't think of me, may be, although many and many's the time I nursed him on these knees, an' carried him about in these arms, an he cried—ay, as God is my judge, he cried bitterly—when, as he said, at the time—'Nogher, Nogher, my affectionate friend, I'll never see you more.'"

John O'Brien shook him cordially by the hand, and replied—"I will make it a point to let you know anything that our family may hear from him."

"An' if you write to him, sir, just in a single line, to say that the affectionate ould friend never forgot him."

"That, too, shall be done," replied John; "you may rest assured of it."

The Bodagh, whose notions in matters of delicacy and feeling were rough but honest, now rang the bell with an uncommon, nay, an angry degree of violence.

"Get up some spirits here, an' don't be asleep. You must take a glass of whiskey before you go," he said, addressing Nogher.

"Sir," replied Nogher, "I'm in a hurry home, for I'm *aff* my day's work."

"By —— but you must," rejoined the Bodagh; "and what's your day's wages?"

"Ten pence,"

"There's half-a-crown; an' I tell you more, you must come an' take a *cot-tack* undher me, and you'll find the change for the better, never fear."

In point of fact in was so concluded, and Nogher left the Bodagh's house with a heart thankful to Providence that he had ever entered it.

The day of Flanagan's trial, however, now approached, and our readers are fully aware of the many chances of escaping justice which the state of the country opened to him, notwithstanding his most atrocious villainy. As some one, however, says in a play—in that of Othello, we believe—"God is above all," so might Flanagan have said on this occasion. The evidence of Biddy Nulty, some of the other servants, and the Bodagh, who identified some of the notes, was quite sufficient against him, with respect to the robbery. Nor was any evidence adduced of more circumstantial weight than Kitty Lowry's, who, on being satisfied of Flanagan's designs against Una, and that she was consequently no more than his dupe, openly acknowledged the part she had taken in the occurrences of the night on which the outrages were committed. This confession agreed so well with Bartle's character for caution and skill in everything he undertook, that his object in persuading her to leave the hall door open was not only clear, but perfectly consistent with the other parts of his plan. It was a capital crime; and when fame once more had proclaimed abroad that Bartle Flanagan was condemned to be hanged for robbing Bodagh Buie, they insisted still more strongly that the sentence was an undeniable instance of retributive justice. Striking, indeed, was the difference between his deportment during the trial, and the manly fortitude of Connor O'Donovan, when standing under as heavy a charge at the same bar. The moment he entered the dock, it was observed that his face expressed all the pusillanimous symptoms of the most unmanly terror. His brows fell, or rather hung over his eyes, as if all their muscular power had been lost—giving to his countenance not only the vague sullenness of irresolute ferocity, but also, as was legible in his dead small eye, the cold calculations of deep and cautious treachery; nor was his white, haggard cheek a less equivocal assurance of his consummate cowardice. Many eyes were now turned upon him; for we need scarcely say that his part of a case which created so much romantic interest as the conviction of Connor O'Donovan, and the history it developed of the mutual affection which subsisted between him and Una, was by no means forgotten. And even if it had, his present appearance and position would, by the force of ordinary association, have revived it in the minds of any then present.

Deprived of all moral firmness, as he appeared to be, on entering the dock, yet, as the trial advanced, it was evident that his heart and spirits were sinking still more and more, until at length his face, in consequence of its ghastliness, and the involuntary hanging of his eyebrows, indicated scarcely any other expression than that of utter helplessness, or the feeble agony of a mind so miserably prostrated, as to be hardly conscious of the circumstances around him. This was clearly obvious when the verdict of "guilty" was uttered in the dead silence which prevailed through the court. No sooner were the words pronounced than he looked about him wildly, and exclaimed—

"What's that? what's that? Oh, God—sweet Jasus! sweet Jasus!"

His lips then moved for a little, and he was observed to mark his breast privately with the sign of the cross; but in such a manner as to prove that the act was dictated by the unsettled incoherency of terror, and not by the promptings of piety or religion.

The judge now put on the black cap, and was about to pronounce the fatal sentence, when the prisoner shrieked out, "Oh, my Lord—my Lord, spare me! Oh, spare me, for I'm not fit to die. I daren't meet God!"

"Alas!" exclaimed the judge, "unhappy man, it is too often true, that those who are least prepared to meet their Almighty Judge, are also the least reckless in the perpetration of those crimes which are certain, ere long, to hurry them into His presence. You find now, that whether as regards this life or the next, he who observes the laws of his religion and his country, is the only man who can be considered, in the true sense of the word, his own friend; and there is this advantage in his conduct, that, whilst he is the best friend to himself, it *necessarily* follows that he must be a benefactor in the same degree to society at large. To such a man the laws are a security, and not, as in your case, and in that of those who resemble you, a punishment. It is the wicked only who hate the laws, because they are conscious of having provoked their justice. In asking me to spare your life, you are aware that you ask me for that which I cannot grant. There is nothing at all in your case to entitle you to mercy; and if, by the life you have led, you feel that you are unfit to die, it is clear upon your own principles, and by the use you have made of life, that you are unfit to live."

He then proceeded to exhort him, in the usual terms, to sue for reconciliation with an offended God, through the merits and sufferings of Christ. After which he sentenced him to be executed on the fifth day from the close of the assizes. On hearing the last words of the judge, he clutched the dock at which he stood with a convulsive effort; his hands and arms, however, became the next moment relaxed, and he sank down in a state of helpless insensibility. On reviving he found himself in his cell, attended by two of the turnkeys, who felt now more alarmed at his screams and the horror which was painted on his face, than by the fainting fit from which he had just recovered. It is not our design to dwell at much length upon the last minutes of such a man; but we will state briefly, that, as might be expected, he left nothing unattempted to save his own life. On the day after his trial, he sent for the sheriff, and told him, that, provided his life were granted by the government, he could make many important disclosures, and give very valuable information concerning the state and prospects of Ribbonism in the country, together with a long list of the persons who were attached to it in that parish. The sheriff told him that this information, which might under other circumstances have been deemed of much value by the government, had already been anticipated by another man during the very short period that had elapsed since his conviction. There was nothing which he could now disclose, the sheriff added, that he himself was not already in possession of, even to the rank which he, Flanagan, was invested with among them, and the very place where he and they had held their last meeting. But, independently of that, he proceeded, it is not usual for government to pardon the principals in any such outrage as that for which you have been convicted. I shall, however, transmit your proposal to the Secretary, who may act in the matter as he thinks proper.

In the meantime his relatives and confederates were not idle outside, each party having already transmitted a petition to the Castle in his behalf. That of his relations contained only the usual melancholy sentiments, and earnest entreaties for mercy, which are to be found in such documents. The memorial, however, of his confederates was equally remarkable for its perverted ingenuity, and those unlucky falsehoods which are generally certain to defeat the objects of those who have recourse to them.

It went to say that the petitioners feared very much that the country was in a dangerous state, in consequence of the progressive march of Ribbonism in parts of that parish, and in many of the surrounding districts. That the unhappy prisoner had for some time past made himself peculiarly obnoxious to this illegal class of persons; and that he was known in the country as what is termed "*a marked man*," ever since he had the courage to prosecute, about two years ago, one of their most notorious leaders, by name Connor O'Donovan, of Lisnamona; who was, at the period of writing that memorial, a convict during life in New South Wales, for a capital White-boy offence.

That said Connor O'Donovan, having seduced the affections of a young woman named Una O'Brien, daughter of a man called Michael O'Brien, otherwise Bodagh Buie, or the Yellow Churl, demanded her in marriage from her father and family, who unanimously rejected his pretensions. Upon which, instigated by the example and practice of the dark combination of which he was so distinguished a leader, he persuaded memorialist, partly by entreaties, but principally by awful and mysterious threats, to join him in the commission of this most atrocious crime. That, from the moment he had been forced into the participation of such an act, his conscience could not permit him to rest night or day; and he consequently came forward boldly and fearlessly, and did what he considered his duty to God and his country.

That, in consequence of this conscientious act, O'Donovan, the Ribbon ringleader, was

capitally convicted ; but through the interest of some leading gentlemen of the parish, who were ignorant of his habits and connections, the sentence was, by the mercy of government, commuted to transportation for life.

That, upon his banishment from the country, the girl whose affections he had seduced, became deranged for some time ; but, after her recovery, expressed, on many occasions, the most bitter determinations to revenge upon petitioner the banishment of her lover ; and that the principal evidence upon which petitioner was convicted, was hers * and that of a girl named Bridget Nulty, formerly a servant in his father's house, and known to have been his paramour.

That this girl, Bridget Nulty, was taken into O'Brien's family at the suggestion of his daughter Una ; and that, from motives of personal hatred, she and Bridget Nulty, aided by another female servant of O'Brien's named Kitty Lowry, formed the conspiracy of which petitioner is unhappily the victim.

It then proceeded to detail how the conspiracy of Una O'Brien and the two females she had taken in as accomplices, was carried into effect ; all of which was done with singular tact and ingenuity ; every circumstance being made to bear a character and design diametrically opposed to truth. It concluded by stating that great exultation had been manifested by the Ribbonmen of that parish, who, on the night of petitioner's conviction, lit bonfires in several parts of the neighborhood, fired shots, sounded horns, and displayed other symptoms of great rejoicing ; and hoped his excellency would, therefore, interpose his high prerogative, and prevent petitioner from falling a sacrifice to a conspiracy on one hand, and the resentment of a traitorous confederacy on the other ; and all this only for having conscientiously and firmly served the government of the country.

Our readers need not be surprised at the ingenuity of this plausible petition, for the truth is that before government supported any system of education at all in Ireland, the old hedge school-masters were, almost to a man, office-bearers and leaders in this detestable system. Such men, and those who were designed for the priesthood, with here and there an occasional poor scholar, were uniformly the petition writers, and, indeed, the general scribes of the little world in which they lived. In fact, we have abundance of public evidence to satisfy us, that persons of considerable literary attainments have been connected with Ribbonism in all its stages.

This fine writing, however, was unfortunately counteracted in consequence of the information already laid before the sheriff by no less a personage than Rouser Redhead, who, fearing alike the treachery and enmity of his leader, resolved thus to neutralize any disclosures he should happen to make. But lest this might not have been sufficient to exhibit the character of that document, the proposal of Bartle himself to make disclosures was transmitted to the Secretary of State, by the same post ; so that both reached that gentleman, *pari passu*, to his no small astonishment.

Had Flanagan's confederates consulted him, he would of course have dissuaded them from sending any petition at all, or at least, only such as he could approve of, but such is the hollowness of this bond, and so little confidence is placed in its obligation, that when any of its victims happen to find themselves in a predicament similar to Flanagan's, his companions without lead such a life of terror, and suspicion, and doubt, as it would be difficult to describe. But when, as in Bartle's case, there exists a strong distrust in his firmness and honesty, scarcely one can be found hardy enough to hold any communication with him. This easily and truly accounts for the fact of their having got this petition written and sent to government in his name. The consequence was, that, on the day previous to that named for his execution, his death warrant reached the sheriff, who lost no time in apprising him of his unhappy fate.

This was a trying task to that humane and amiable gentleman, who had already heard of the unutterable tortures which the criminal suffered from the horror of approaching death, and the dread of eternity ; for neither by penitence nor even by remorse, was he in the slightest degree moved.

"To die!" said he, staggering back ; "to be in eternity to-morrow! to have to face God before twelve o'clock! tarrible! tarrible! tarrible! Can no one save me? To die to-morrow!—tarrible!—tarrible!—tarrible! Oh that I could sink into the earth! that the ground 'ud swally me!"

The sheriff advised him to be a man, and told him to turn to God, who, if he repented, would in no wise cast him out. "Act," said he, "as O'Donovan did, whom you yourself prosecuted and placed in the very cell in which you now stand."

"Connor O'Donovan!" he exclaimed, "*he* might well bear to die ; *he* was innocent ; it was I that burned Bodagh Buie's haggard ;

* This was a falsehood, inasmuch as Una, having been concealed in another room, could give, and did give, no evidence that any way affected his life.

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IT WAS THE STRUGGLE OF STRONG MEN, DRAGGING A STRONG MAN TO THE MOST FRIGHTFUL OF ALL PRECIPICES—DEATH!—*Fardorougha the Miser*, Part viii and last.—*p.* 311.

he had neither act nor part in it no more than the child unborn. I swore away his life out of revinge to his father an' jealousy of himself about Una O'Brien. Oh, if I had as little to answer for now as he, I could die—die! Sweet Jasus, an' must I die to-morrow—be in the flames o' hell afore twelve o'clock? tarrible! tarrible!"

It was absolutely, to use his own word, "terrible," to witness the almost superhuman energy of his weakness. On making this last disclosure to the sheriff, the latter stepped back from a feeling of involuntary surprise and aversion, exclaiming as he did it,—

"Oh, God forgive you, unhappy and guilty man! you have much, indeed, to answer for; and, as I said before, I advise you to make the most of the short time that is allotted to you, in repenting and seeking pardon from God."

The culprit heard him not, however, for his whole soul was fearfully absorbed in the contemplation of eternity and punishment, and death.

"Sir," said the turnkey, "that's the way he's runnin' about the room almost since his thrial; not, to be sure, altogether so bad as now, but clappin' his hands, an' screamin' an' groanin', that it's frightful to listen to him. An' his dhrames, sir, is worse. God, sir, if you'd hear him asleep, the hair would stand on your head; indeed, one of us is ordered to be still with him."

"It is right," replied the sheriff, who, after recommending him to get a clergyman, left him, and, with his usual promptness and decision, immediately wrote to the Secretary of State, acquainting him with Flanagan's confession of his own guilt, and of Connor O'Donovan's innocence of the burning of O'Brien's haggard; hoping, at the same time, that government would take instant steps to restore O'Donovan to his country and his friends.

Soon after the sheriff left him, a Roman Catholic clergyman arrived, for it appeared that against the priest who was chaplain of the jail he had taken an insurmountable prejudice, in consequence of some fancied resemblance he supposed him to bear to the miser's son. The former gentleman spent that night with him, and, after a vast deal of exertion and difficulty, got him so far composed, as that he attempted to confess to him, which, however, he did only in a hurried and distracted manner.

But how shall we describe the scene, and we have it from more than one or two witnesses, which presented itself, when the hour of his execution drew nigh. His cries and shriekings were distinctly heard from a considerable distance along the dense multitudes which were assembled to witness his death; thus giving to that dreadful event a character of horror so deep and gloomy, that many persons, finding themselves unable to bear it, withdrew from the crowd, and actually fainted on hearing the almost supernatural tones of his yells and howlings within.

In the mean time, the proceedings in the press-room were of a still more terrific description He now resembled the stag at bay; his strength became more than human. On attempting to tie his hands, five men were found insufficient for the woeful task. He yelled, and flung them aside like children, but made no attempt at escape, for, in truth, he knew not what he did. The sheriff, one of the most powerful and athletic men to be found in the province, was turned about and bent like an osier in his hands. His words, when the fury of despair permitted his wild and broken cries to become intelligible, were now for life—only life upon any terms; and again did he howl out his horrors of death, hell, and judgment. Never was such a scene, perhaps, witnessed.

At length his hands were tied, and they attempted to get him up to the platform of death, but to their amazement he was once more loose, and, flying to the priest, he clasped him with the gripe of Hercules.

"Save me, save me!" he shouted. "Let me live! I can't die! You're puttin' me into hell's fire! How can I face God? No, it's tarrible! it's tarrible! tarrible! Life, life, life—only life—oh, only life!"

As he spoke he pressed the reverend gentleman to his breast and kissed him, and shouted with a wildness of entreaty, which far transcended in terror the most outrageous paroxysms of insanity.

"I will not lave the priest," shrieked he; "so long as I stay with him so long I'll be out of the punishments of eternity. I will stick to you. Don't—don't put me away, but have pity on me! No—I'll not go, I'll not go!"

Again he kissed his lips, cheeks, and forehead, and still clung to him with terrific violence, until at last his hands were finally secured beyond the possibility of his again getting them loose. He then threw himself upon the ground, and still resisted, with a degree of muscular strength altogether unaccountable in a person even of his compact and rather athletic form. His appearance upon the platform will long be remembered by those who had the questionable gratification of witnessing it. It was the struggle of strong men dragging a strong man to the most frightful of all precipices—Death.

When he was seen by the people in the act of being forced with such violence to the drop, they all moved, like a forest agitated by a sudden breeze, and uttered that strange murmur, composed of many passions, which can only be heard where a large number of persons are congregated together under the power of something that is deep and thrilling in its interest. At length, after a struggle for life, and a horror of death possibly unprecedented in the annals of crime, he was pushed upon the drop, the spring was touched, and the unhappy man passed shrieking into that eternity which he dreaded so much. His death was instantaneous, and, after hanging the usual time, his body was removed to the goal; the crowd began to disperse, and in twenty minutes the streets and people presented nothing more than their ordinary aspect of indifference to everything but their own affairs.*

Such, and so slight, after all, is the impression which death makes upon life, when the heart and domestic affections are not concerned.

And now, gentle and patient reader—for well, indeed, has thy patience been tried, during the progress of this tantalizing narrative—we beg to assure thee, that unless thou art so exquisitely tender-hearted as to mourn over the fate of Bartle Flanagan, the shadows which darkened the morning and noon of our story have departed, and its eve will be dewy, and calm, and effulgent.

Flanagan's execution, like any other just and necessary vindication of the law, was not without its usual good effect upon the great body of the people; for, although we are not advocates for a sanguinary statute-book, neither are we the eulogists of those who, with sufficient power in their hands, sit calmly and serenely amidst scenes of outrage and crime, in which the innocent suffer by the impunity of the guilty. Fame, who is busy on such occasions, soon published to a far distance Flanagan's confession of having committed the crime for which O'Donovan was punished. John O'Brien had it himself from the sheriff's lips, as well as from a still more authentic statement written by the priest who attended him, and signed by the unhappy culprit's mark, in the presence of that gentleman, the governor of the gaol, and two turnkeys. The sheriff now heard, from O'Brien, for the first time, that O'Donovan's parents, having disposed of all their property, followed him to New South Wales, a circumstance by which he was so much struck at the moment, that he observed to O'Brien,—

"Do you not think it the duty of the Government, considering all the young man and his parents have suffered by that rascal's malice, to bring the whole family back at its own expense? For my part, aware as I am of the excellent disposition of the Secretary, I think, if we ask them, it will be done."

"Our best plan, perhaps," replied John, "is to get a memorial to that effect signed by those who subscribed to the former one in his behalf. I think it is certainly necessary, for, to tell you the truth, I doubt whether they are in possession of funds sufficient for the expenses of so long a journey."

"I know," said the sheriff, "that there is little time to be lost, for S——," naming the governor of the gaol, "tells me that the next convict ship sails in a fortnight. We must, therefore, push forward the business as rapidly as we can."

Well and truly did they keep their words, for we have the satisfaction of adding, that on the seventh day from the date of that conversation, they received a communication from the Castle, informing them that, after having taken the peculiar hardships of O'Donovan's singular case into mature consideration, they deemed the prayer of the memorial such as they felt pleasure in complying with; and that the Colonial Secretary had been written to, to take the proper steps for the return of the young man and his parents to their own country at the expense of the Government.

This was enough, and almost more than O'Brien expected. He had now done as much as could be done for the present, and nothing remained but to await their arrival with hope and patience. In truth, the prospect that now presented itself to the Bodagh's family was one in which, for the sake of the beloved Una, they felt a deep and overwhelming interest. Ever since Connor's removal from the country her spirits had gradually become more and more depressed. All her mirth and gayety had abandoned her; she disrelished reading; she avoided company; she hardly ever laughed, but, on the contrary, indulged in long fits of bitter grief while upon her solitary rambles. Her chief companion was Biddy Nulty, whom she exempted from her usual employment whenever she wished that Connor should be the topic of their conversation. Many a time

* We have only to say, that W—m C—k, Esq., of L—sb—e, sheriff of the county of D—n, and those who officially attended, about four years ago, the execution of a man named M—y—, at the gaol of D—np—k, for a most heinous murder, will, should they happen to see this description, not hesitate to declare that it falls far, far short of what they themselves witnessed upon this "terrible" occasion. There is nothing mentioned here which did not then occur, but there is much omitted.

have they strolled together through the garden, where Una had often stood, and, pointing to the summer-house, where the acknowledgments of their affection were first exchanged, said to her humble companion,—

"Biddy, that is the spot where he first told me that he loved me, and where I first acknowledged mine to him."

She would then pull out from her heart the locket which contained his rich brown hair, and, after kissing it, sit and weep on the spot which was so dear to her.

Biddy's task, then, was to recount to the unhappy girl such anecdotes as she remembered of him; and, as these were all to his advantage, we need scarcely say that many an entertainment of this kind she was called upon to furnish to her whose melancholy enjoyment was now only the remembrance of him, and what he had once been to her.

"I would have been in a convent long before now, Biddy," said she, a few days before Flanagan's trial, "but I cannot leave my father and mother, because I know they could not live without me. My brother John has declined Maynooth lest I should feel melancholy for want of some person to amuse me and to cheer me; and now I feel that it would be an ungrateful return I should make if I entered a convent and left my parents without a daughter whom they love so well, and my brother without a sister on whom he doats."

"Well, Miss," replied Biddy, "don't be cast down; for my part I'd always hope for the best. Who knows, Miss, but a betther lafe may be turned up for you yet? I'd hould a naggin' that God nivir intinded an innocent creature like you to spind the rest of your life in sadness and sorrow, as you're doin'. Always hope for the best."

"Ah, Biddy," she replied, "you don't know what you speak of. *His* sentence is one that can never be changed; and as for hoping for the best how can I do that, Biddy, when I know that I have no 'best' to hope for. He was my best in this world; but he is gone. Now go in, Biddy, and leave me to myself for a little. You know how I love to be alone."

"May God in heaven pity you, Miss Oona," exclaimed the poor girl, whilst the tears gushed from her eyes, "as I do this day! Oh, keep up your heart, Miss, darlin'! for where there's life there's hope."

Little did she then dream, however, that hope would be soon restored to her heart, or that the revolution of another year should see her waiting with trembling delight for the fulness of her happiness.

On the evening previous to Bartle Flanagan's execution, she was pouring out tea for her father and mother, as was usual, when her brother John came home on his return from the assizes. Although the smile of affection with which she always received him lit up her dark glossy eyes, yet he observed that she appeared unusually depressed, and much more pale than she had been for some time past.

"Una, are you unwell, dear?" he asked, as she handed him a cup of tea.

She looked at him with a kind of affectionate reproof in her eyes, as if she wondered that he should be ignorant of the sorrow which preyed upon her.

"Not in health, John," she replied; "but that man's trial, and the many remembrances it has stirred up in my mind, have disturbed me. I am very much cast down, as you may see. Indeed, to speak the truth, and without disguise, I think that my heart is broken. Every one knows that a breaking heart is incurable."

"You take it too much to yourself, a lanna dhas," said her mother; "but you must keep up your spirits, darlin'—time will work wonders."

"With me, mother, it never can."

"Una," said John, with affected gravity, "you have just made two assertions which I can prove to be false."

She looked at him with surprise.

"False, dear John?"

"Yes, false, dear Una; and I will prove it, as I said. In the first place, there *is* a cure for a breaking heart; and, in the next place, time *will* work wonders even for you."

"Well," said she, assuming a look of sickly cheerfulness, "I should be very ungrateful, John, if I did not smile for you, even when you don't smile yourself, after all the ingenious plans you take to keep up my spirits."

"My dear girl," replied John, "I will not trifle with you; I ask you now to be firm, and say whether you are capable of hearing good news."

"Good news to me! I hope I am, John."

"Well, then, I have to inform you that this day Bartle Flanagan has confessed that it was not Connor O'Donovan who burned our haggard, but himself. The sheriff has written to inform the Government, so that we will have Connor back again with a name and character unsullied."

She looked at him for a moment, then at her parents; and her cheek still got paler, and after a slight pause she burst into a vehement and irrepressible paroxysm of grief.

"John, is this true?" inquired his father.

"*Vic na hoiah!* John—blessed mother! —thrue?—but is it, John? is it?"

"Indeed, it is, mother—the villain, now, that he has no hope of his life, confessed it this day!"

"God knows, darlin'," exclaimed the Bodagh's warm-hearted wife, now melting into tears herself, "it's no wondher you should cry tears of joy for this. God wouldn't be above us, a cushla oge machree, or he'd sind brighter days before your young and innocent heart."

Una could not speak, but wept on; the grief she felt, however, became gradually milder in its character, until at length her violent sobbings were hushed; and, although the tears still flowed, they flowed in silence.

"We will have him back, sartinly," said the Bodagh; "don't cry, dear, we'll have him here again with no disateful villain to swear away his life."

"I could die now," said the noble-minded girl; "I think I could die now, without even seeing him. His name is cleared, and will be cleared; his character untainted; and that is dearer to me even than his love. Oh, I knew it! I knew it!" she fervently exclaimed; "and when all the world was against him, I was for him; I and his own mother—for we were the two that knew his heart best."

"Well," said John, smiling, "if I brought you gloomy news once, I believe I have brought you pleasant news twice. You remember when I told you he was not to die."

"Indeed, John, dear, you are the best brother that ever God blessed a sister with; but I hope this is not a dream. Oh, can it be possible! and when I awake in the morning, will it be to the sorrowful heart I had yesterday? I am bewildered. After this, who should ever despair of the goodness of God, or think that the trial he sends but for a time is to last always?"

"Bridget," said the gracious Bodagh, "we must have a glass of punch; an' upon my reputaytion, Oona, we'll drink to his speedy return."

"Throth, an' Oona will take a glass, herself, this night," added her mother; "an' thanks be to Goodness she'll be our *colleen dhas dhun* again—won't you have a glass, asthore machree?"

"I'll do anything that any of you wishes me, mother," replied Una.

She gave, as she uttered the words, a slight sob, which turned their attention once more to her, but they saw at once, by the brilliant sparkle of her eyes, that it was occasioned by the unexpected influx of delight and happiness which was accumulating around her heart.

"Mother," she said, "will you make the punch for them to-night? I cannot rest till I let poor Biddy Nulty know what has happened. Cleared!" she added, exultingly, "his name and character cleared!"

The beautiful girl then left the room, and, short as was the space which had elapsed since she heard her brother's communication, they could not help being struck at the light elastic step with which she tripped out of it. Brief, however, as the period was, she had time to cast aside the burthen of care which had pressed her down and changed her easy pace to the slow tread of sorrow.

"God help our poor colleen dhas," exclaimed her mother, "but she's the happy creature, this night!"

"And happy will the hearth be where her light will shine," replied her father, quoting a beautiful Irish proverb to that effect.

"The ways of Providence are beautiful when seen aright or understood," observed her brother. "She was too good to be punished, but not too perfect to be tried. Their calamitous separation will enhance the value of their affection for each other when they meet; for pure and exalted as her love for him is, yet I am proud to say that Connor is worthy of her and it."

That night her mother observed that Una spent a longer time than usual at her devotions, and, looking into her room when passing, she saw her on her knees, and heard her again sobbing with the grateful sense of a delighted heart. She did not again address her, and they all retired to happier slumbers than they had enjoyed for many a night.

Our readers have already had proofs of Una's consideration, generosity, and common delicacy. Her conduct at the approach of her lover's trial, and again when he was about to leave her and his country forever, they cannot, we are sure, have forgotten. When her brother had shown the official communication from the Castle, in which government expressed its intention of bringing Connor and his parents home at its own expense, the Bodagh and his wife, knowing that the intended husband of their daughter possessed no means of supporting her, declared, in order to remove any shadow of anxiety from her mind, that O'Donovan, after their marriage, should live with themselves, for they did not wish, they said, that Una should be separated from them. This was highly gratifying to her, but beyond her lover's welfare, whether from want of thought or otherwise, it is not easy to say, she saw that their sympathy did not extend. This troubled her, for she knew how Connor loved his parents, and how

much any want of comfort they might feel would distress him. She accordingly consulted with her ever faithful confidant, John, and begged of him to provide for them, at her own expense, a comfortable dwelling, and to furnish it, as near as might be practicable in the manner in which their former one had been furnished. She also desired him to say nothing to their parents about this, "for I intend," she added, "to have a little surprise for them all."

About the time, therefore, when the vessel in which they were to arrive was expected, a snug, well-furnished house, convenient to the Bodagh's, amply stored with provisions, and kept by a daughter of Nogher M'Cormick, awaited them. Nothing that could render them easy was omitted, and many things also were procured, in the shape of additional comforts, to which they had not been accustomed before.

At length the arrival of the much wished-for vessel was announced, and John O'Brien, after having agreed to let Una know by letter where the Bodagh's car should meet them, mounted the day coach, and proceeded to welcome home his future brother-in-law, prepared, at the same time, to render both to him and his parents whatever assistance they stood in need of, either pecuniary or otherwise, after so long and so trying a voyage.

The meeting of two such kindred spirits may be easily conceived. There were few words wasted between them, but they were full of truth and sincerity.

"My noble fellow," said O'Brien, clasping Connor's hand, "she is at home with a beating heart and a happy one, waiting for you."

"John," replied the other fervently, "the wealth of the universe is below her price. I'm not worthy of her, except in this, that I could shed my heart's dearest blood to do her good."

"Little you know of it yet," said the other smiling significantly, "but you will soon."

It appeared that Fardorougha's wife had borne the hardships of both voyages better than her husband, who, as his son sensibly observed, had been too much worn down before by the struggle between his love for him and his attachment to his money.

"His cares are now nearly over," said Connor, with a sigh. "Indeed, he is so far gone that I don't know how to have him while I'm providin' a home for him to die in."

"That is already done," replied O'Brien. "Una did not forget it. They have a house near ours, furnished with everything that can contribute to their comfort."

Connor, on hearing this, paused, and his cheek became pale and red alternately with emotion—his nerves thrilled, and a charm of love and pleasure diffused itself over his whole being.

"There is no use in my speaking," he exclaimed; "love her more than I do I cannot."

In consequence of Fardorougha's illness, they were forced to travel by slower and shorter stages than they intended. O'Brien, however, never left them; for he knew that should the miser die on the way, they would require the presence and services of a friend. In due time, however, they reached the place appointed by John for the car to meet them; and ere many hours had passed, they found themselves once more in what they could call their home. From the miser's mind the power of observing external nature seemed to have been altogether withdrawn; he made no observation whatever upon the appearance or novelty of the scene to which he was conveyed, nor of the country through which he passed; but when put to bed he covered himself with the bed-clothes, and soon fell into a slumber.

"Connor," said his mother, "your father's now asleep, an' won't miss you; lose no time, thin, in goin' to see *her;* and may God strinthen you both for sich a mectin'!"

They accordingly went.

The Bodagh was out, but Una and her mother were sitting in the parlor when the noise of a jaunting-car was heard driving up to the door; Una involuntarily looked out of the window, and seeing two she started up, and putting her hands together, hysterically exclaimed thrice, "Mother, mother, mother, assist me, assist me—he's here!" Her mother caught her in her arms; and at the same moment Connor rushed in. Una could only extend her arms to receive him; he clasped her to his heart, and she sobbed aloud several times rapidly, and then her head sank upon his bosom.

Her mother and brother were both weeping.

Her lover looked down upon her, and, as he hung over the beautiful and insensible girl, the tears which he shed copiously bedewed her face. After a few minutes she recovered, and her brother, with his usual delicacy, beckoned to his mother to follow him out of the room, knowing that the presence of a third person is always a restraint upon the interchange of even the tenderest and purest affection. Both, therefore, left them to themselves; and we, in like manner, must allow that delicious interview to be sacred only to themselves, and unprofaned by the gaze or presence of a spectator.

The Bodagh and his wife were highly

gratified at the steps their children had taken to provide for the comfort of Fardorougha and his wife. The next day the whole family paid them a visit, but on seeing the miser, it was clear that his days were numbered. During the most vigorous and healthy period of his life, he had always been thin and emaciated; but now, when age, illness, the severity of a six months' voyage, and, last of all, the hand of death, left their wasting traces upon his person, it would indeed be difficult to witness an image of penury more significant of its spirit. We must, however, do the old man justice. Since the loss of his money or rather since the trial and conviction of his son, or probably since the operation of both events upon his heart, he had seldom, if ever, by a single act or expression, afforded any proof that his avarice survived, or was able to maintain its hold upon him, against the shock which awakened the full power of a father's love.

About ten o'clock, a. m., on the fourth day after their arrival, Connor, who had run over to the Bodagh's, was hurriedly sent for by his mother, who desired Nelly M'Cormick to say that his father incessantly called for him, and that he must not lose a moment in coming. He returned immediately with her, and found the old man reclining in bed, supported by his wife, who sat behind him.

"Is my boy comin'?" he said, in a thin, wiry, worn voice, but in words which, to any person near him, were as distinct almost as ever—"is my boy Connor comin'?"

"I am here, father," replied Connor, who had just entered the sick room; "sure I am always with you."

"You are, you are," said he, "you were ever an' always good. Give me your hand, Connor."

Connor did so.

"Connor, darlin'," he proceeded, "don't be like me. I loved money too much; I set my heart on it, an' you know how it was taken away from me. The priest yesterday laid it upon me, out of regard to my reignin' sin, as he called it, to advise you afore I die against lovin' the wealth o' this world too much."

"I hope I never will, father, your own misfortune ought to be a warnin' to me."

"Ay, you may say that; it's I indeed that was misfortunate; but it was all through P—— an' that nest o' robbers, the Isle o' Man."

"Don't think of him or it now, my dear father—don't be discomposin' your mind about them."

Connor and his mother exchanged a melancholy glance; and the latter, who, on witnessing his frame of mind, could not help shedding bitter tears, said to him—

"Fardorougha dear, Fardorougha asthore machree, won't you be guided by me? You're now on your death-bed, an' think of God's marcy—it's that you stand most in need of. Sure, avourneen, if you had all the money you ever had, you couldn't bring a penny of it where you're goin'."

"Well, but I'm givin' Connor advice that'll sarve him. Sure I'm not biddin' him to set his heart on it, for I tould the priest I wouldn't; but is that any raison why he'd not *save* it? I didn't tell the priest that I wouldn't bid him do *that*."

"Father," said Connor, "for the love o' God will you put these thoughts out o' your heart and mind?"

"So Connor dear," proceeded the old man, not attending to him, "in makin' any bargain, Connor, be sure to make as *hard* a one as you can; but for all that be honest, an' never lind a penny o' money widout interest."

"I think he's wandherin'," whispered his mother. "Oh grant it may be so, marciful Jasus this day!"

"Honor ahagur."

"Well, darlin', what is it?"

"There's another thing that throubles me—I never knew what it was to feel myself far from my own till now."

"How is that, dear?"

"My bones won't rest in my own country; I won't sleep wid them that belong to me. How will I lie in a strange grave, and in a far land? Oh, will no one bring me back to my own?"

The untutored sympathies of neither wife nor son could resist this beautiful and affecting trait of nature, and the undying love of one's own land, emanating, as it did, so unexpectedly, from a heart otherwise insensible to the ordinary tendernesses of life.

"Sure you are at home, avourneen," said Honor; "an' will rest wid your friends and relations that have gone before you."

"No," said he, "I'm not, I'm far away from them, but now I feel more comforted; I have *one* wid me that's dearer to me than them all. Connor and I will sleep together, won't we, Connor?"

This affectionate transition from every other earthly object to himself, so powerfully smote the son's heart that he could not reply.

"What ails him, Connor?" said his wife. "Help me to keep up his head—Saver above!"

Connor raised his head, but saw at a glance that the last struggle in the old man's heart was over. The miser was no more.

Little now remains to be said. The grief for old age, though natural, is never abiding.

The miser *did* sleep with his own ; and after a decent period allotted to his memory, need we say that our hero and heroine, if we may be permitted so to dignify them, were crowned in the enjoyment of those affections which were so severely tested, and at the same time so worthy of their sweet reward.

Ned M'Cormick and Biddy Nulty followed their example, and occupied the house formerly allotted to Fardorougha and his wife. John O'Brien afterwards married, and the Bodagh, reserving a small but competent farm for himself, equally divided his large holdings between his son and son-in-law. On John's moiety he built a suitable house ; but Una and her husband, and Honor, all live with themselves, and we need scarcely say, for it is not long since we spent a week with them, that the affection of the old people for their grandchildren is quite enthusiastic, and that the grandchildren, both boys and girls, are worthy of it.

THE BLACK BARONET;

OR, THE CHRONICLES OF BALLYTRAIN.

PREFACE.

THE incidents upon which this book is founded seem to be extraordinary and startling, but they are true; for, as Byron says, and as we all know, "Truth is strange—stranger than Fiction." Mr. West, brother to the late member from Dublin, communicated them to me exactly as they occurred, and precisely as he communicated them, have I given them to the reader, at least, as far as I can depend upon my memory. With respect, however, to *his* facts, they related only to the family which is shadowed forth under the imaginary name of Gourlay; those connected with the aristocratic house of Cullamore, I had from another source, and they are equally authentic. The Lord Dunroe, son to the Earl of Cullamore, is not many years dead, and there are thousands still living, who can bear testimony to the life of profligacy and extravagance, which, to the very last day of his existence, he persisted in leading. That his father was obliged to get an act of Parliament passed to legitimize his children, is a fact also pretty well known to many.

At first, I had some notion of writing a distinct story upon each class of events, but, upon more mature consideration, I thought it better to construct such a one as would enable me to work them both up into the same narrative; thus contriving that the incidents of the one house should be connected with those of the other, and the interest of both deepened, not only by their connection, but their contrast. It is unnecessary to say, that the prototypes of the families who appear upon the stage in the novel, were, in point of fact, personally unknown to each other, unless, probably, by name, inasmuch as they resided in different and distant parts of the kingdom. They were, however, contemporaneous. Such circumstances, nevertheless, matter very little to the novelist, who can form for his characters whatsoever connections, whether matrimonial or otherwise, he may deem most proper; and of this, he must be considered himself as the *sole*, though probably not the *best*, judge. The name of Red Hall, the residence of Sir Thomas Gourlay, is purely fictitious, but not the description of it, which applies very accurately to a magnificent family mansion not a thousand miles from the thriving little town of Ballygawley. Since the first appearance, however, of the work, I have accidentally discovered, from James Frazer's admirable "Hand-book for Ireland," the best and most correct work of the kind ever published, and the only one that can be relied upon, that there actually is a residence named Red Hall in my own native county of Tyrone. I mention this, lest the respectable family to whom it belongs might take offence at my having made it the ancestral property of such a man as Sir Thomas Gourlay, or the scene of his crimes and outrages. On this point, I beg to assure them that the coincidence of the name is purely accidental, and that, when I wrote the novel, I had not the slightest notion that such a place actually existed. Some of those coincidences are very odd and curious. For instance, it so happens that there is at this moment a man named Dunphy actually residing on Constitution Hill, and engaged in the very same line of life which I have assigned to one of my principal characters of that name in the novel, that of a huckster; yet of this circumstance I knew nothing. The titles of Cullamore and Dunroe are taken from two hills, one greater than the other, and not far asunder, in my native parish; and I have heard it said, by the people of that neighborhood, that Sir William Richardson, father to the late amiable Sir James Richardson Bunbury, when expecting at the period of the Union to receive a coronet instead of a baronetcy, had made his mind up to select either one or the other of them as the designation of his rank.

I think I need scarcely assure my readers that old Sam Roberts, the retired soldier, is drawn from life; and I may add, that I have scarcely done the fine old fellow and his fine

old wife sufficient justice. They were two of the most amiable and striking originals I ever met. Both are now dead, but I remember Sam to have been for many years engaged in teaching the sword exercise in some of the leading schools in and about Dublin. He ultimately gave this up, however, having been appointed to some comfortable situation in the then Foundling Hospital, where *his* Beck died, and he, poor fellow, did not, I have heard, long survive her.

Owing to painful and peculiar circumstances, with which it would be impertinent to trouble the reader, there were originally only five hundred copies of this work published. The individual for whom it was originally written, but who had no more claim upon it than the Shah of Persia, misrepresented me, or rather calumniated me, so grossly to Messrs. Saunders & Otley, who published it, that he prevailed upon them to threaten me with criminal proceedings for having disposed of my own work, and I accordingly received an attorney's letter, affording me that very agreeable intimation. Of course they soon found they had been misled, and that it would have been not only an unparalleled outrage, but a matter attended with too much danger, and involving too severe a penalty to proceed in. Little I knew or suspected at the time, however, that the sinister and unscrupulous delusions which occasioned me and my family so much trouble, vexation, and embarrassment, were only the foreshadowings of that pitiable and melancholy malady which not long afterwards occasioned the unhappy man to be placed apart from society, which, it is to be feared, he is never likely to rejoin. I allude to those matters, not only to account for the limited number of the work that was printed, but to satisfy those London publishers to whom the individual in question so foully misrepresented me, that my conduct in every transaction I have had with booksellers has been straightforward, just, and honorable, and that I can publicly make this assertion, without the slightest apprehension of being contradicted. That the book was cushioned in this country, I am fully aware, and this is all I shall say upon that part of the subject. Indeed it was never properly published at all—never advertised—never reviewed, and, until now, lay nearly in as much obscurity as if it had been still in manuscript. A few copies of it got into circulating libraries, but, in point of fact, it was never placed before the public at all. Whatever be its merits, however, it is now in the hands of a gentleman who will do it justice, and, if it fails, the fault will not at least be his.

My object in writing the book was to exhibit, in contrast, three of the most powerful passions that can agitate the human heart—I mean love, ambition, and revenge. To contrive the successive incidents, by which the respective individuals on whose characters they were to operate should manifest their influence with adequate motives, and without departing from actual life and nature, as we observe them in action about us, was a task which required a very close study of the human mind when placed in peculiar circumstances. In this case the great struggle was between love and ambition. By ambition, I do not mean the ambition of the truly great man, who wishes to associate it with truth and virtue, and whose object is, in the first place, to gratify it by elevating his country and his kind; no, but that most hateful species of it which exists in the contrivance and working out of family arrangements and insane projects for the aggrandizement of our offspring, under circumstances where we must know that they cannot be accomplished without wrecking the happiness of those to whom they are proposed. Such a passion, in its darkest aspect—and in this I have drawn it—has nothing more in view than the cruel, selfish and undignified object of acquiring some poor and paltry title or distinction for a son or daughter, without reference either to inclination or will, and too frequently in opposition to both. It is like introducing a system of penal laws into domestic life, and establishing the tyranny of a moral despot among the affections of the heart. Sometimes, especially in the case of an only child, this ambition grows to a terrific size, and its miserable victim acts with all the unconscious violence of a monomaniac.

In Sir Thomas Gourlay, the reader will perceive that it became the great and engrossing object of his life, and that its violence was strong in proportion to that want of all moral restraint, which resulted from the creed of an infidel and sceptic. And I may say here, that it was my object to exhibit occasionally the gloomy agonies and hollow delusions of the latter, as the hard and melancholy system on which he based his cruel and unsparing ambition. His character was by far the most difficult to manage. Love has an object; and, in this case, in the person of Lucy Gourlay it had a reasonable and a noble one. Revenge has an object; and in the person of Anthony Corbet, or Dunphy, it also had, according to the unchristian maxims of life, an unusually strong argument on which to work and sustain itself. But, as for Sir Thomas Gourlay's mad ambition, I felt that, considering

his sufficiently elevated state of life, I could only compensate for its want of all rational design, by making him scorn and reject the laws both civil and religious by which human society is regulated, and all this because he had blinded his eyes against the traces of Providence, rather than take his own heart to task for its ambition. Had he been a Christian, I do not think he could have acted as he did. He shaped his own creed, however, and consequently, his own destiny. In Lady Edward Gourlay, I have endeavored to draw such a character as only the true and obedient Christian can present; and in that of his daughter, a girl endowed with the highest principles, the best heart, and the purest sense of honor—a woman who would have been precisely such a character as Lady Gourlay was, had she lived longer and been subjected to the same trials. Throughout the whole work, however, I trust that I have succeeded in the purity and loftiness of the moral, which was to show the pernicous effects of infidelity and scepticism, striving to sustain and justify an insane ambition; or, in a word, I endeavored

"To vindicate the ways of God to man."

A literary friend of mine told me, a few days ago, that the poet Massinger had selected the same subject for his play of "A New Way to pay Old Debts," the same in which Sir Giles Overreach is the prominent character. I ought to feel ashamed to say, as I did say, in reply to this, that I never read the play alluded to, nor a single line of Massinger's works; neither have I ever seen Sir Giles Overreach even upon the stage. If, then, there should appear any resemblance in the scope or conduct of the play or novel, or in the character of Sir Thomas Gourlay and Overreach, I cannot be charged either with theft or imitation, as I am utterly ignorant of the play and of the character of Sir Giles Overreach alluded to.

I fear I have dwelt much too long on this subject, and I shall therefore close it by a short anecdote.

Some months ago I chanced to read a work—I think by an American writer—called, as well as I can recollect, "The Reminiscences of a late Physician." I felt curious to read the book, simply because I thought that the man who could, after "The Diary of a late Physician," come out with a production so named, must possess at the least either very great genius or the most astounding assurance. Well, I went on perusing the work, and found almost at once that it was what is called a catchpenny, and depended altogether, for its success, upon the fame and reputation of its predecessor of nearly the same name. I saw the trick at once, and bitterly regretted that I, in common I suppose with others, had been taken in and bit. Judge of my astonishment, however, when, as I proceeded to read the description of an American lunatic asylum, I found it to be *literatim et verbatim* taken—stolen—pirated—sentence by sentence and page by page, from my own description of one in the third volume of the first edition of this book, and which I myself took from close observation, when, some years ago, accompanied by Dr. White, I was searching in the Grangegorman Lunatic Asylum and in Swift's for a case of madness arising from disappointment in love. I was then writing "Jane Sinclair," and to the honor of the sex, I have to confess that in neither of those establishments, nor any others either in or about Dublin, could I find such a case. Here, however, in the Yankee's book, there were neither inverted commas, nor the slightest acknowledgment of the source from which the unprincipled felon had stolen it.

With respect to mad-houses, especially as they were conducted up until within the last thirty years, I must say with truth, that if every fact originating in craft, avarice, oppression, and the most unscrupulous ambition for family wealth and hereditary rank, were known, such a dark series of crime and cruelty would come to light as the public mind could scarcely conceive nay, as would shock humanity itself. Nor has this secret system altogether departed from us. It is not long since the police offices developed some facts rather suspicious, and pretty plainly impressed with the stamp of the old practice. The Lunatic Commission is now at work, and I trust it will not confine its investigations merely to public institutions of that kind, but will, if it possess authority to do so, strictly and rigidly examine every private asylum for lunatics in the kingdom.

Of one other character, Ginty Cooper, I have a word to say. Any person acquainted with the brilliant and classical little capital of Cultra, lying on the confines of Monaghan and Cavan, will not fail to recognize the remains of grace and beauty, which once characterized that celebrated and well-known individual.

With respect to the watch-house scene, and that in the police office, together with the delineation of the "Old Charlies," as the guardians of the night were then called; to which I may add the portraits of the two magistrates; I can confidently refer to thousands now alive for their truth. Those matters took place long before our present admirable body of metropolitan police were established. At that period, the police magis-

tracies were bestowed, in most cases, from principles by no means in opposition to the public good, and not, as now, upon gentlemen perfectly free from party bias, and well qualified for that difficult office by legal knowledge, honorable feeling, and a strong sense of public duty, impartial justice, and humanity.

WILLIAM CARLETON.

(DUBLIN, October 26, 1857.)

CHAPTER I.

A Mail-coach by Night, and a Bit of Moonshine.

IT has been long observed, that every season sent by the Almighty has its own peculiar beauties; yet, although this is felt to be universally true—just as we know the sun shines, or that we cannot breathe without air—still we are all certain that even the same seasons have brief periods when these beauties are more sensibly felt, and diffuse a more vivid spirit of enjoyment through all our faculties. Who has not experienced the gentle and serene influence of a calm spring evening? and perhaps there is not in the whole circle of the seasons anything more delightful than the exquisite emotion with which a human heart, not hardened by vice, or contaminated by intercourse with the world, is softened into tenderness and a general love for the works of God, by the pure spirit which breathes of holiness, at the close of a fine evening in the month of March or April.

The season of spring is, in fact, the resurrection of nature to life and happiness. Who does not remember the delight with which, in early youth, when existence is a living poem, and all our emotions sanctify the spirit-like inspiration—the delight, we say, with which our eye rested upon a primrose or a daisy for the first time? And how many a long and anxious look have we ourselves given at the peak of Knockmany, morning after morning, that we might be able to announce, with an exulting heart, the gratifying and glorious fact, that the snow had disappeared from it—because we knew that *then* spring must have come! And that universal song of the lark, which fills the air with music; how can we forget the bounding joy with which our young heart drank it in as we danced in ecstacy across the fields? Spring, in fact, is the season dearest to the recollection of man, inasmuch as it is associated with all that is pure, and innocent, and beautiful, in the transient annals of his early life. There is always a mournful and pathetic spirit mingled with our remembrances of it, which resembles the sorrow that we feel for some beloved individual whom death withdrew from our affections at that period of existence when youth had nearly completed its allotted limits, and the promising manifestations of all that was virtuous and good were filling the parental hearts with the happy hopes which futurity held out to them. As the heart, we repeat, of such a parent goes back to brood over the beloved memory of the early lost, so do our recollections go back, with mingled love and sorrow, to the tender associations of spring, which may, indeed, be said to perish and pass away in its youth.

These reflections have been occasioned, first, by the fact that its memory and associations are inexpressibly dear to ourselves; and, secondly, because it is toward the close of this brief but beautiful period of the year that our chronicles date their commencement.

One evening, in the last week of April, a coach called the "Fly" stopped to change horses at a small village in a certain part of Ireland, which, for the present, shall be nameless. The sun had just sunk behind the western hills; but those mild gleams which characterize his setting at the close of April, had communicated to the clouds that peculiarly soft and golden tint, on which the eye loves to rest, but from which its light was now gradually fading. When fresh horses had been put to, a stranger, who had previously seen two large trunks secured on the top, in a few minutes took his place beside the guard, and the coach proceeded.

"Guard," he inquired, after they had gone a couple of miles from the village, "I am quite ignorant of the age of the moon. When shall we have moonlight?"

"Not till it's far in the night, sir."

"The coach passes through the town of Ballytrain, does it not?"

"It does, sir."

"At what hour do we arrive there?"

"About half-past three in the morning sir."

The stranger made no reply, but cast his eyes over the aspect of the surrounding country.

The night was calm, warm, and balmy. In the west, where the sun had gone down, there could still be noticed the faint traces of that subdued splendor with which he sets in spring. The stars were up, and the whole character of the sky and atmosphere was full of warmth, and softness, and hope. As the eye stretched across a country that seemed to be rich and well cultivated, it felt that dream-like charm of dim romance,

which visible darkness throws over the face of nature, and which invests her groves, her lordly mansions, her rich campaigns, and her white farm-houses, with a beauty that resembles the imagery of some delicious dream, more than the realities of natural scenery.

On passing along, they could observe the careless-looking farmer driving home his cows to be milked and put up for the night; whilst, further on, they passed half-a-dozen cars returning home, some empty and some loaded, from a neighboring fair or market, their drivers in high conversation—a portion of them in friendship, some in enmity, and in general all equally disposed, in consequence of their previous libations, to either one or the other. Here they meet a solitary traveler, fatigued and careworn, carrying a bundle slung over his shoulder on the point of a stick, plodding his weary way to the next village. Anon they were passed by a couple of gentlemen-farmers or country squires, proceeding at a brisk trot upon their stout cobs or bits of half-blood, as the case might be; and, by and by, a spanking gig shoots rapidly ahead of them, driven by a smart-looking servant in murrey-colored livery, who looks back with a sneer of contempt as he wheels round a corner, and leaves the plebeian vehicle far behind him.

As for the stranger, he took little notice of those whom they met, be their rank of position in life what it might; his eye was seldom off the country on each side of him as they went along. It is true, when they passed a village or small market-town, he glanced into the houses as if anxious to ascertain the habits and comforts of the humbler classes. Sometimes he could catch a glimpse of them sitting around a basket of potatoes and salt, their miserable-looking faces lit by the dim light of a rush-candle into the ghastly paleness of spectres. Again, he could catch glimpses of greater happiness; and if, on the one hand, the symptoms of poverty and distress were visible, on the other there was the jovial comfort of the wealthy farmer's house, with the loud laughter of its contented inmates. Nor must we omit the songs which streamed across the fields, in the calm stillness of the hour, intimating that they who sang them were in possession, at all events, of light, if not of happy hearts.

As the night advanced, however, all these sounds began gradually to die away. Nature and labor required the refreshment of rest, and, as the coach proceeded at its steady pace, the varied evidences of waking life became few and far between. One after another the lights, both near and at a distance, disappeared. The roads became silent and solitary, and the villages, as they passed through them, were sunk in repose, unless, perhaps, where some sorrowing family were kept awake by the watchings that were necessary at the bed of sickness or death, as was evident by the melancholy steadiness of the lights, or the slow, cautious motion by which they glided from one apartment to another.

The moon had now been for some time up, and the coach had just crossed a bridge that was known to be exactly sixteen miles from the town of which the stranger had made inquiries.

"I think," said the latter, addressing the guard, "we are about sixteen miles from Ballytrain."

"You appear to know the neighborhood, sir?" replied the guard.

"I have asked you a question, sir," replied the other, somewhat sternly, "and, instead of answering it, you ask me another."

"I beg your pardon, sir," replied the guard, smiling, "it's the custom of the country. Yes, sir, we're exactly sixteen miles from Ballytrain—that bridge is the mark. It's a fine country, sir, from this to that——"

"Now, my good fellow," replied the stranger, "I ask it as a particular favor that you will not open your lips to me until we reach the town, unless I ask you a question. On that condition I will give you a half-a-crown when we get there."

The fellow put his hand to his lips, to hint that he was mute, and nodded, but spoke not a word, and the coach proceeded in silence.

To those who have a temperament fraught with poetry or feeling, there can be little doubt that to pass, of a calm, delightful spring night, under a clear, starry sky, and a bright moon, through a country eminently picturesque and beautiful, must be one of those enjoyments which fill the heart with a memory that lasts forever. But when we suppose that a person, whose soul is tenderly alive to the influence of local affections, and who, when absent, has brooded in sorrow over the memory of his native hills and valleys, his lakes and mountains—the rivers, where he hunted the otter and snared the trout, and who has never revisited them, even in his dreams, without such strong emotions as caused him to wake with his eyelashes steeped in tears—when such a person, full of enthusiastic affection and a strong imagination, returns to his native place after a long absence, under the peculiar circumstances which we are describing, we need not feel surprised that the heart of the stranger was filled with such a conflicting tumult of feel-

ings and recollections as it is utterly impossible to portray.

From the moment the coach passed the bridge we have alluded to, every hill, and residence, and river, and lake, and meadow, was familiar to him, and he felt such an individual love and affection for them, as if they had been capable of welcoming and feeling the presence of the light-hearted boy, whom they had so often made happy.

In the gairish eye of day, the contemplation of this exquisite landscape would have been neither so affecting to the heart, nor so beautiful to the eye. He, the stranger, had not seen it for years, except in his dreams, and now he saw it in reality, invested with that ideal beauty in which fancy had adorned it in those visions of the night. The river, as it gleamed dimly, according as it was lit by the light of the moon, and the lake, as it shone with pale but visionary beauty, possessed an interest which the light of day would never have given them. The light, too, which lay on the sleeping groves, and made the solitary church spires, as they went along, visible, in dim, but distant beauty, and the clear outlines of his *own* mountains, unchanged and unchangeable—all, all crowded from the force of the recollections with which they were associated, upon his heart, and he laid himself back, and, for some minutes, wept tears that were at once both sweet and bitter.

In proportion as they advanced toward the town of Ballytrain, the stranger imagined that the moon shed a diviner radiance over the surrounding country; but this impression was occasioned by the fact that its aspect was becoming, every mile they proceeded, better and better known to him. At length they came to a long but gradual elevation in the road, and the stranger knew that, on reaching its eminence, he could command a distinct view of the magnificent valley on which his native parish lay. He begged of the coachman to stop for half a minute, and the latter did so. The scene was indeed unrivalled. All that constitutes a rich and cultivated country, with bold mountain scenery in the distance, lay stretched before him. To the right wound, in dim but silver-like beauty, a fine river, which was lost to the eye for a considerable distance in the wood of Gallagh. To the eye of the stranger, every scene and locality was distinct beyond belief, simply because they were lit up, not only by the pale light of the moon, but by the purer and stronger light of his own early affections and memory.

Now it was, indeed, that his eye caught in, at a glance, all those places and objects that had held their ground so strongly and firmly in his heart. The moon, though sinking, was brilliant, and the cloudless expanse of heaven seemed to reflect her light, whilst, at the same time, the shadows that projected from the trees, houses, and other elevated objects, were dark and distinct in proportion to the flood of mild effulgence which poured down upon them from the firmament. Let not our readers hesitate to believe us when we say, that the heart of the stranger felt touched with a kind of melancholy happiness as he passed through their very shadows—proceeding, as they did, from objects that he had looked upon as the friends of his youth, before life had opened to him the dark and blotted pages of suffering and sorrow. There, dimly shining to the right below him, was the transparent river in which he had taken many a truant plunge, and a little further on he could see without difficulty the white cascade tumbling down the precipice, and mark its dim scintillations, that looked, under the light of the moon, like masses of shivered ice, were it not that such a notion was contradicted by the soft dash and continuous murmur of its waters.

But where was the gray mill, and the large white dwelling of the miller? and that new-looking mansion on the elevation—it was not there in his time, nor several others that he saw around him; and, hold—what sacrilege is this? The coach is not upon the OLD road—not on that with every turn and winding of which the light foot of his boyhood was so familiar! What, too! the school-house down—its very foundations razed—its light-hearted pupils, some dead others dispersed, its master in the dust, and its din, bustle, and monotonous murmur—all banished and gone, like the pageantry of a dream. Such, however, is life; and he who, on returning to his birthplace after an absence of many years, expects to find either the country or its inhabitants as he left them, will experience, in its most painful sense, the bitterness of disappointment. Let every such individual prepare himself for the consequences of death, change, and desolation.

At length the coach drove into Ballytrain, and, in a few minutes, the passengers found themselves opposite to the sign of the Mitre, which swung over the door of the principal inn of that remarkable town.

"Sir," said the guard, addressing the stranger, "I think I have kept my word."

The latter, without making any reply, dropped five shillings into his hand; but, in the course of a few minutes—for the coach changed horses there—he desired him to

call the waiter or landlord, or any one to whom he could intrust his trunks until morning.

"You are going to stop in the 'Mithre,' sir, of course?" said the guard, inquiringly.

The traveler nodded assent, and, having seen his luggage taken into the inn, and looking, for a moment, at the town, proceeded along the shadowy side of the main street, and, instead of seeking his bed, had, in a short time, altogether vanished, and in a manner that was certainly mysterious, nor did he make his appearance again until noon on the following day.

It may be as well to state here that he was a man of about thirty, somewhat above the middle size, and, although not clumsy, yet, on being closely scanned, he appeared beyond question to be very compact, closely knit, well-proportioned, and muscular. Of his dress, however, we must say, that it was somewhat difficult to define, or rather to infer from it whether he was a gentleman or not, or to what rank or station of life he belonged. His hair was black and curled; his features regular; and his mouth and nose particularly aristocratic; but that which constituted the most striking feature of his face was a pair of black eyes, which kindled or became mellow according to the emotions by which he happened to be influenced.

"My good lad," said he to "Boots," after his return, "will you send me the landlord?"

"I can't, sir," replied the other, "he's not at home."

"Well, then, have the goodness to send me the waiter."

"I will, sir," replied the monkey, leaving the room with an evident feeling of confident alacrity.

Almost immediately a good-looking girl, with Irish features, brown hair, and pretty blue eyes, presented herself.

"Well, sir?" she said, in an interrogative tone.

"Why," said the stranger, "I believe it is impossible to come at any member of this establishment; I wish to see the waiter."

"I'm the waiter, sir," she replied, with an unconscious face.

"The deuce you are!" he exclaimed; "however," he added, recovering himself, "I cannot possibly wish for a better. It is very likely that I may stop with you for some time—perhaps a few months. Will you see now that a room and bed are prepared for me, and that my trunks are put into my own apartment? Get a fire into my sitting-room and bedchamber. Let my bed be well aired; and see that everything is done cleanly and comfortably, will you?"

"Sartinly, sir, an' I hope we won't lave you much to complain of. As for the sheets, wait till you try them. The wild myrtles of Drumgau, beyant the demesne 'ishout, is foulded in them; an' if the smell of them won't make you think yourself in Paradise, 'tisn't my fault."

The stranger, on looking at her somewhat more closely, saw that she was an exceedingly neat, tight, clean-looking young woman, fair and youthful.

"Have you been long in the capacity of waiter, here?" he asked.

"No, sir," she replied; "about six months."

"Do you never keep male waiters in this establishment?" he inquired.

"Oh, yes, sir; Paudeen Gair and I generally act week about. This is my week, sir, an' he's at the plough."

"And where have you been at service before you came here, my good girl?"

"In Sir Thomas Gourlay's, sir."

The stranger could not prevent himself from starting.

"In Sir Thomas Gourlay's!" he exclaimed. "And pray in what capacity were you there?"

"I was own maid to Miss Gourlay, sir."

"To Miss Gourlay! and how did you come to leave your situation with her?"

"When I find you have a right to ask, sir," she replied, "I will tell you; but not till then."

"I stand reproved, my good girl," he said; "I have indeed no right to enter into such inquiries; but I trust I have for those that are more to the purpose. What have you for dinner?"

"Fish, flesh, and fowl, sir," she replied, with a peculiar smile, "and a fine fat buck from the deer-park."

"Well, now," said he, "that really promises well—indeed it is more than I expected—you had no quarrel, I hope, at parting? I beg your pardon—a fat buck, you say. Come, I will have a slice of that."

"Very well, sir," she replied; "what else would you wish?"

"To know, my dear, whether Sir Thomas is as severe upon her as—ahem!—anything at all you like—I'm not particular—only don't forget a slice of the buck, out of the haunch, my dear; and, whisper, as you and I are likely to become better acquainted—all in a civil way, of course—here is a trifle of earnest, as a proof that, if you be attentive, I shall not be ungenerous."

"I don't know," she replied, shaking her head, and hesitating; "you're a sly-looking gentleman—and, if I thought that you had any——"

"Design, you would say," he replied; "no —none, at any rate, that is improper; it is offered in a spirit of good-will and honor, and in such you may fairly accept of it. So," he added, as he dropped the money into her hand, "Sir Thomas insisted that you should go? Hem!—hem!"

The girl started in her turn, and exclaimed, with a good deal of surprise:

"Sir Thomas insisted! How did *you* come to know that, sir? *I* tould you no such thing."

"Certainly, my dear, you—a—a—hem—did you not say something to that effect? Perhaps, however," he added, apprehensive lest he might have alarmed, or rather excited her suspicions—"perhaps I was mistaken. I only imagined, I suppose, that you said something to that effect; but it does not matter —I have no intimacy with the Gourlays, I assure you—I think that is what you call them—and none at all with Sir Thomas—is not that his name? Goodby now; I shall take a walk through the town—how is this you name it? Ballytrain, I think—and return at five, when I trust you will have dinner ready."

He then put on his hat, and sauntered out, apparently to view the town and its environs, fully satisfied that, in consequence of his having left it when a boy, and of the changes which time and travel had wrought in his appearance, no living individual there could possibly recognize him.

CHAPTER II.

The Town and its Inhabitants.

The town itself contained about six thousand inhabitants, had a church, a chapel, a meeting-house, and also a place of worship for those who belonged to the Methodist connection. It was nearly half a mile long, lay nearly due north and south, and ran up an elevation or slight hill, and down again on the other side, where it tapered away into a string of cabins. It is scarcely necessary to say that it contained a main street, three or four with less pretensions, together with a tribe of those vile alleys which consist of a double row of beggarly cabins, or huts, facing each other, and lying so closely, that a tall man might almost stand with a foot on the threshold of each, or if in the middle, that is half-way between them, he might, were he so inclined, and without moving to either side, shake hands with the inhabitants on his right and left. To the left, as you went up from the north, and nearly adjoining the cathedral church, which faced you, stood a bishop's palace, behind which lay a magnificent demesne. At that time, it is but just to say that the chimneys of this princely residence were never smokeless, nor its saloons silent and deserted as they are now, and have been for years. No, the din of industry was then incessant in and about the offices of that palace, and the song of many a light heart and happy spirit rang sweetly in the valleys, on the plains and hills, and over the meadows of that beautiful demesne, with its noble deer-park stretching up to the heathy hills behind it. Many a time, when a school-boy, have we mounted the demesne wall in question, and contemplated its meadows, waving under the sunny breeze, together with the long strings of happy mowers, the harmonious swing of whose scythes, associated with the cheerful noise of their whetting, caused the very heart within us to kindle with such a sense of pure and early enjoyment as does yet, and ever will, constitute a portion of our best and happiest recollections.

At the period of which we write it mattered little whether the prelate who possessed it resided at home or not. If he did not, his family generally did; but, at all events, during their absence, or during their residence, constant employment was given, every working-day in the year, to at least one hundred happy and contented poor from a neighboring and dependent village, every one of whom was of the Roman Catholic creed.

I have stood, not long ago, upon a beautiful elevation in that demesne, and, on looking around me, I saw nothing but a deserted and gloomy country. The happy village was gone —razed to the very foundations—the demesne was a solitude—the songs of the reapers and mowers had vanished, as it were, into the recesses of memory, and the magnificent palace, dull and lonely, lay as if it were situated in some land of the dead, where human voice or footstep had not been heard for years.

The stranger, who had gone out to view the town, found, during that survey, little of this absence of employment, and its consequent destitution, to disturb him. Many things, it is true, both in the town and suburbs, were liable to objection.

Abundance there was; but, in too many instances, he could see, at a glance, that it was accompanied by unclean and slovenly habits, and that the processes of husbandry and tillage were disfigured by old usages, that were not only painful to contemplate, but disgraceful to civilization.

The stranger was proceeding down the town, when he came in contact with a ragged,

dissipated-looking young man, who had, however, about him the evidences of having seen better days. The latter touched his hat to him, and observed, "You seem to be examining our town, sir?"

"Pray, what is your name?" inquired the stranger, without seeming to notice the question.

"Why, for the present, sir," he replied, "I beg to insinuate that I am rather under a cloud; and, if you have no objection, would prefer to remain anonymous, or to preserve my *incognito*, as they say, for some time longer."

"Have you no *alias*, by which you may be known?"

"Unquestionably, an *alias* I have," replied the other; "for as to passing through life, in the broad, anonymous sense, without some token to distinguish you by, the thing, to a man like me, is impossible. I am consequently known as Frank Fenton, a name I borrowed from a former friend of mine, an old school-fellow, who, while he lived, was, like myself, a bit of an original in his way. How do you like our town, sir?" he added, changing the subject.

"I have seen too little of it," replied the stranger, "to judge. Is this your native town, Mr. Fenton?" he added.

"No, sir; not my native town," replied Fenton; "but I have resided here from hand to mouth long enough to know almost every individual in the barony at large."

During this dialogue, the stranger eyed Fenton, as he called himself, very closely; in fact, he watched every feature of his with a degree of curiosity and doubt that was exceedingly singular.

Have you, sir, been here before?" asked Fenton; "or is this your first visit?"

"It is not my first visit," replied the other; "but it is likely I shall reside here for some months."

"For the benefit of your health, I presume?" asked modest Frank.

"My good friend," replied the stranger, "I wish to make an observation. It is possible, I say, that I may remain here for some months; now, pray, attend, and mark me—whenever you and I chance, on any future occasion, to meet, it is to be understood between us that you are to answer me in anything I ask, which you know, and I to answer you in nothing, unless I wish it."

"Thank you, sir," he replied, with a low and not ungraceful bow; "that's a compliment all to the one side, like Clogher."*

"Very well," returned the stranger; "I have something to add, in order to make this arrangement more palatable to you."

"Hold, sir," replied the other; "before you proceed further, you must understand *me*. I shall pledge myself under no terms—and I care not what they may be—to answer any question that may throw light upon my own personal identity, or past history."

"That will not be necessary," replied the stranger.

"What do you mean, sir?" asked Fenton, starting; "do you mean to hint that you know me?"

"Nonsense," said the other; "how could I know a man whom I never saw before? No; it is merely concerning the local history of Ballytrain and its inhabitants that I am speaking."

There was a slight degree of dry irony, however, on his face, as he spoke.

"Well," said the other, "in the mean time, I don't see why *I* am to comply with a condition so dictatorially laid down by a person of whom I know nothing."

"Why, the truth is," said our strange friend, "that you are evidently a lively and intelligent fellow, not badly educated. I think—and, as it is likely that you have no very direct connection with the inhabitants of the town and surrounding country, I take it for granted that, in the way of mere amusement, you may be able to——"

"Hem! I see—to give you all the scandal of the place for miles about; that is what you would say? and so I can. But suppose a spark of the gentleman should—should—but come, hang it, that is gone, hopelessly gone. What is your wish?"

"In the first place, to see you better clothed. Excuse me—and, if I offend you, say so—but it is not my wish to say anything that might occasion you pain. Are you given to liquor?"

"Much oftener than liquor is given to me, I assure you; it is my meat, drink, washing, and lodging—without it I must die. And, harkee, now; when I meet a man I like, and who, after all, has a touch of humanity and truth about him, to such a man, I say, I myself am all truth, at whatever cost; but to every other—to your knave, your hypocrite, or your trimmer, for instance, all falsehood—deep, downright, wanton falsehood. In fact, I would scorn to throw away truth upon them.

"You are badly dressed."

"Ah! after all, how little is known of the human heart and character!" exclaimed Fenton. "The subject of dress and the associations connected with it have all been effaced from my mind and feelings for years. So long as we are capable of looking to our dress, there is always a sense of honor and

* The proverb is pretty general throughout Tyrone. The town of Clogher consists of only a single string of houses.

self-respect left. Dress I never think of, unless as a mere animal protection against the elements."

"Well, then," observed the other, surveying this unfortunate wretch with compassion, "whether all perception of honor and self-respect is lost in you I care not. Here are five pounds for you; that is to say—and pray understand me—I commit them absolutely to your own keeping—your own honor, your self-respect, or by whatever name you are pleased to call it. Purchase plain clothes, get better linen, a hat and shoes: when this is done, if you have strength of mind and resolution of character to do it, come to me at the head inn, where I stop, and I will only ask you, in return, to tell me anything you know or have heard about such subjects as may chance to occur to me at the moment."

On receiving the money, the poor fellow fastened his eyes on it with such an expression of amazement as defies description. His physical strength and constitution, in consequence of the life he led, were nearly gone—a circumstance which did not escape the keen eye of the stranger, on whose face there was an evident expression of deep compassion. The unfortunate Frank Fenton trembled from head to foot, his face became deadly pale, and after surveying the notes for a time, he held them out to the other, exclaiming, as he extended his hand—

"No, no! have it, no! You are a decent fellow, and I will not impose upon you. Take back your money; I know myself too well to accept of it. I never could keep money, and I wouldn't have a shilling of this in my possession at the expiration of forty-eight hours."

"Even so," replied the stranger, "it comes not back to me again. Drink it—eat it—spend it is you may; but I rely on your own honor, notwithstanding what you say, to apply it to a better purpose."

"Well, now, let me see," said Fenton, musing, and as if in a kind of soliloquy; "you are a good fellow, no doubt of it—that is, if you have no lurking, dishonest design in all this. Let me see. Why, now, it is a long time since I have had the enormous sum of five shillings in my possession, much less the amount of the national debt, which I presume must be pretty close upon five pounds; and in honest bank notes, too. One, two, three—ha!—eh! eh!—oh yes," he proceeded, evidently struck with some discovery that astonished him. "Ay!" he exclaimed, looking keenly at a certain name that happened to be written upon one of the notes; "well, it is all right! Thank you, sir; I will keep the money."

CHAPTER III.

Pauden Gair's Receipt how to make a Bad Dinner a Good One—the Stranger finds Fenton as mysterious as Himself.

The stranger, on reaching the inn, had not long to wait for dinner, which, to his disappointment, was anything but what he had been taught to expect. The fair "waiter" had led his imagination a very ludicrous dance, indeed, having, as Shakspeare says, kept the word of promise to his ear, but broken it to his hope, and, what was still worse, to his appetite. On sitting down, he found before him two excellent salt herrings to begin with; and on ringing the bell to inquire why he was provided with such a dainty, the male waiter himself, who had finished the field he had been ploughing, made his appearance, after a delay of about five minutes, very coolly wiping his mouth, for he had been at dinner.

"Are you the waiter?" asked the stranger, sharply.

"No, sir, I'm not the waiter, myself; but I and Peggy Moylan is."

"And why didn't you come when I rang for you at first?"

"I was just finishin' my dinner, sir," replied the other, pulling a bone of a herring from between his teeth, then going over and deliberately throwing it into the fire.

The stranger was silent with astonishment, and, in truth, felt a stronger inclination to laugh than to scold him. This fellow, thought he, is clearly an original; I must draw him out a little.

"Why, sir," he proceeded, "was I served with a pair of d—d salt herrings, as a part of my dinner?"

"Whist, sir," replied the fellow, "don't curse anything that God—blessed be his name—has made; it's not right, it's sinful."

"But why was I served with two salt herrings, I ask again?"

"Why wor you sarved with them?—Why, wasn't it what we had ourselves?"

"Was I not promised venison?"

"Who promised it to you?"

"That female waiter of yours."

"Peggy Moylan? Well, then, I tell you the fau't wasn't hers. We had a party o' gintlemen out here last week, and the sorra drop of it they left behind them. Devil a drop of venison there is in the house now. You're an Englishman, at any rate, sir, I think by your discourse?"

"Was I not promised part of a fat buck from the demesne adjoining, and where is it? I thought I was to have fish, flesh, and fowl."

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On lifting the cover, a pair of enormous legs, with spurs on them an inch and a half long were projected at full length, toward the guest, as if the old cock—for such it was—were determined to defend himself to the last.—*Black Baronet, Page* 329.

"Well, and haven't you fish?" replied the fellow. "What do you call them!" he added, pointing to the herrings; "an' as to a fat buck, faith, it isn't part of one, but a whole one you have. What do you call *that?*" He lifted an old battered tin cover, and discovered a rabbit, gathered up as if it were in the act of starting for its burrow. "You see, Peggy, sir, always keeps her word; for it was a buck *rabbit* she meant. Well, now, there's the fish and the flesh; and here," he proceeded, uncovering another dish, "is the fowl."

On lifting the cover, a pair of enormous legs, with spurs on them an inch and a half long, were projected at full length toward the guest, as if the old cock—for such it was—were determined to defend himself to the last.

"Well," said the stranger, "all I can say is, that I have got a very bad dinner."

"Well, an' what suppose? Sure it has been many a better man's case. However, you have one remedy; always ait the more of it—that's the sure card; ever and always when you have a bad dinner, ait, I say, the more of it. I don't think, sir, beggin' your pardon, that you've seen much of the world yet."

"Why do you think so?" asked the other, who could with difficulty restrain his mirth at the fellow's cool self-sufficiency and assurance.

"Because, sir, no man that has seen the world, and knows its ups and downs, would complain of sich a dinner as that. Do you wish for any liquor? But maybe you don't. It's not every one carries a full purse these times; so, at any rate, have the sense not to go beyant your manes, or whatsomever allowance you get."

"Allowance! what do you mean by allowance?"

"I mane," he replied, "that there's not such a crew of barefaced liars on the airth as you English travellers, as they call you. What do you think, but one of them had the imperance to tell me that he was allowed a guinea a-day to live on! Troth, I crossed myself, and bid him go about his business, an' that I didn't think the house or place was safe while he was in it—for it's I that has the mortal hatred of a liar."

"What liquor have you got in the house?"

"No—if there's one thing on airth that I hate worse than another, it's a man that shuffles—that won't tell the truth, or give you a straight answer. We have plenty o' liquor in the house—more than you'll use, at any rate."

"But what descriptions? How many kinds? for instance——"

"Kinds enough, for that matther—all sorts and sizes of liquor."

"Have you any wine?"

"Wine! Well, now, let me speak to you as a friend; sure, 't is n't wine you'd be thinking of?"

"But, if I pay for it?"

"Pay for it—ay, and break yourself—go beyant your manes, as I said. No, no—I'll give you no wine—it would be only aidin' you in extravagance, an' I wouldn't have the sin of it to answer for. We have all enough, and too much to answer for, God knows."

The last observation was made *sotto voce*, and with the serious manner of a man who uttered it under a deep sense of religious truth.

"Well," replied the stranger, "since you won't allow me wine, have you no cheaper liquor? I am not in the habit of dining without something stronger than water."

"So much the worse for yourself. We have good porther."

"Bring me a bottle of it, then."

"It's beautiful on draught."

"But I prefer it in bottle."

"I don't doubt it. Lord help us! how few is it that knows what's good for them! Will you give up your own will for wanst, and be guided by a wiser man? for health—an' sure health's before everything—for health, ever and always prefer draught porther."

"Well, then, since it must be draught, I shall prefer draught ale."

"Rank poison. Troth, somehow I feel a liking for you, an' for that very reason, devil a drop of draught ale I'll allow to cross your lips. Jist be guided by me, an' you'll find that your health an' pocket will both be the bettther for it. Troth, it's fat and rosy I'll have you in no time, all out, if you stop with us. Now ait your good dinner, and I'll bring you the porther immediately."

"What's your name?" asked the stranger, "before you go."

"I'll tell you when I come back—wait till I bring you the porther, first."

In the course of about fifteen mortal minutes, he returned with a quart of porter in his hand, exclaiming—

"Bad luck to them for pigs, they got into the garden, and I had to drive them out, and cut a lump of a bush to stop the gap wid; however, I think they won't go back that way again. My name you want? Why, then, my name is Paudeen Gair—that is, Sharpe, sir; but, in troth, it is n't Sharpe by name and Sharpe by nature wid me, although you'd get them that 'ud say otherwise."

"How long have you been here?" asked the other.

"I've been laborin' for the master goin' on fourteen years; but I'm only about twelve months attendin' table."

"How long has your fellow-servant—Peggy, I think, you call her—been here?"

"Not long."

"Where had she been before, do you know."

"Do I know, is it? Maybe 'tis you may say that."

"What do you mean? I don't understand you."

"I know that well enough, and it is n't my intention you should."

"In what family was she at service."

"Whisper; in a bad family, wid *one* exception. God protect *her*, the darlin'! Amin! *A wurra yeelsh!*—an' may the curse that's hanging over *him* never fall upon her this day!"

A kind and complacent spirit beamed in the fine eyes of the stranger, as the waiter uttered these benevolent invocations; and, putting his hand in his pocket, he said,

"My good friend Paudeen, I am richer than you are disposed to give me credit for; I see you are a good-hearted fellow, and here's a crown for you."

"No! consumin' to the farden, till I know whether you're able to afford it or not. It's always them that has least of it, unfortunately, that's readiest to give it. I have known many a foolish creature to do what you are doing, when, if the truth was known, they could badly spare it; but, at any rate, wait till I deserve it; for, upon my reputaytion, I won't finger a testher of it sooner."

He then withdrew, and left the other to finish his dinner as best he might.

For the next three or four days the stranger confined himself mostly to his room, unless about dusk, when he glided out very quietly, and disappeared rather like a spirit than anything else; for, in point of fact, no one could tell what had become of him, or where he could have concealed himself, during these brief but mysterious absences. Paudeen Gair and Peggy observed that he wrote at least three or four letters every day, and knew that he must have put them into the post-office with his own hands, inasmuch as no person connected with the inn had been employed for that purpose.

On the fourth day, after breakfast, and as Pat Sharpe—by which version of his name he was sometimes addressed—was about to take away the things, his guest entered into conversation with him as follows:

"Paudeen, my good friend, can you tell me where the wild, ragged fellow, called Fenton, could be found?"

"I can, sir. Fenton? Begorra, you'd hardly know him if you seen him; he's as smooth as a new pin—has a plain, daicent suit o' clothes on him. It's whispered about among us this long time, that, if he had his rights, he'd be entitled to a great property; and some people say now that he has come into a part of it."

"And pray, what else do they say of him?"

"Why, then, I heard Father M'Mahon himself say that he had great learnin', an' must a' had fine broughten-up, an' could act the real gintleman whenever he wished."

"Is it known who he is, or whether he is a native of this neighborhood?"

"No, sir; he doesn't belong to this neighborhood; an' the truth is, that nobody here that ever I heard of knows anything at all, barrin' guesswork, about the unfortunate poor creature. If ever he was a gintleman," exclaimed the kind-hearted waiter, "he's surely to be pitied, when one sees the state he's brought to."

"Well, Paudeen, will you fetch him to me, if you know where he is? Say I wish to see him."

"What name, if you plaise?" asked the waiter, with assumed indifference; for the truth was, that the whole establishment felt a very natural curiosity to know who the stranger was.

"Never mind the name, Paudeen, but say as I desire you."

Paudeen had no sooner disappeared than the anonymous gentleman went to one of his trunks, and, pulling out a very small miniature, surveyed it for nearly half a minute; he then looked into the fire, and seemed absorbed in long and deep reflection. At length, after once more gazing closely and earnestly at it, he broke involuntarily into the following soliloquy:

"I know," he exclaimed, "that resemblances are often deceitful, and not to be depended upon. In this case, however, there is scarcely a trace that could constitute any particular peculiarity—a peculiarity which, if it existed, would strengthen—I know not whether to say—my suspicions or my hopes. The early disappearance of that poor boy, without the existence of a single vestige by which he could be traced, resembles one of those mysteries that are found only in romances. The general opinion is, that he has been made away with, and is long dead; yet of late, a different impression has gone abroad, although we know not exactly how it has originated."

He then paced, with a countenance of gloom, uncertainty, and deep anxiety, through the room, and after a little time, proceeded:

"I shall, at all events, enter into conversation with this person, after which I will make inquiries concerning the gentry and nobility of the neighborhood, when I think I shall be able to observe whether he will pass the Gourlay family over, or betray any consciousness of a particular knowledge of their past or present circumstances. 'Tis true, he may overreach me; but if he does, I cannot help it. Yet, after all," he proceeded, "if he should prove to be the person I seek, everything may go well; I certainly observed faint traces of an honorable feeling about him when I gave him the money, which, notwithstanding his indigence and dissipation, he for a time refused to take."

He then resumed his seat, and seemed once more buried in thought and abstraction.

Our friend Paudeen was not long in finding the unfortunate object of the stranger's contemplation and interest. On meeting him, he perceived that he was slightly affected with liquor, as indeed was the case generally whenever he could procure it.

"Misther Fenton," said Paudeen, "there's a daicent person in our house that wishes to see you."

"Who do you call a decent person, you bog-trotting Ganymede?" replied the other.

"Why, a daicent tradesman, I think, from —thin sorra one of me knows whether I ought to say from Dublin or London."

"What trade, Ganymede?"

"Troth, that's more than I can tell; but I know that he wants you, for he sent me to bring you to him."

"Well, Ganymede, I shall see your tradesman," he replied. "Come, I shall go to him."

On reaching the inn, Paudeen, in order to discharge the commission intrusted to him fully, ushered Fenton upstairs, and into the stranger's sitting-room. "What's this?" exclaimed Fenton. "Why, you have brought me to the wrong room, you blundering villain. I thought you were conducting me to some worthy tradesman. You have mistaken the room, you blockhead; this is a gentleman. How do you do, sir? I hope you will excuse this intrusion; it is quite unintentional on my part; yet I am glad to see you."

"There is no mistake at all in it," replied the other, laughing. "That will do, Paudeen," he added—"thank you."

"Faix," said Paudeen to himself, when descending the stairs, "I'm afeard that's no tradesman—whatever he is. He took on him a look like a lord when that unfortunate Fenton went into the room. Troth, I'm fairly puzzled, at any rate!"

"Take a seat, Mr. Fenton," said the stranger, handing him a chair, and addressing him in terms of respect.

"Thank, you, sir," replied the other, putting, at the same time, a certain degree of restraint upon his manner, for he felt conscious of being slightly influenced by liquor.

"Well," continued the stranger, "I am glad to see that you have improved your appearance."

"Ay, certainly, sir, as far as four pounds —or, I should rather say, three pounds went, I did something for the outer man."

"Why not the five?" asked the other. "I wished you to make yourself as comfortable as possible, and did not imagine you could have done it for less."

"No, sir, not properly, according to the standard of a gentleman; but I assure you, that, if I were in a state of utter and absolute starvation, I would not part with one of the notes you so generously gave me, scarcely to save my life."

"No!" exclaimed the stranger, with a good deal of surprise. "And pray, why not, may I ask?"

"Simply," said Fenton, "because I have taken a fancy for it beyond its value. I shall retain it as pocket-money. Like the Vicar of Wakefield's daughters, I shall always keep it about me; and then, like them also, I will never want money."

"That is a strange whim," observed the other, "and rather an unaccountable one, besides."

"Not in the slightest degree," replied Fenton, "if you knew as much as I do; but, at all events, just imagine that I am both capricious and eccentric; so don't be surprised at anything I say or do."

"Neither shall I," replied "the anonymous." "However, to come to other matters, pray what kind of a town is this of Ballytrain?"

"It is by no means a bad town," replied Fenton, "as towns and times go. It has a market-house, a gaol, a church, as you have seen—a Roman Catholic chapel, and a place of worship for the Presbyterian and Methodist. It has, besides, that characteristic locality, either of English legislation or Irish crimes—or, perhaps, of both—a gallows-green. It has a public pump, that has been permitted to run dry, and public stocks for limbs like those of your humble servant, that are permitted to stand (the stocks I mean) as a libel upon the inoffensive morals of the town."

"How are commercial matters in it?"

"Tolerable. Our shopkeepers are all very fair as shopkeepers. But, talking of that, perhaps you are not aware of a singular

custom which even I—for I am not a native of this place—have seen in it?"

"What may it have been?" asked the stranger.

"Why, it was this: Of a fair or market-day," he proceeded, "there lived a certain shopkeeper here, who is some time dead—and I mention this to show you how the laws were respected in this country; this shopkeeper, sir, of a fair or market-day had a post that ran from his counter to the ceiling; to this post was attached a single handcuff, and it always happened that, when any person was caught in the act of committing a theft in his shop, one arm of the offender was stretched up to this handcuff, into which the wrist was locked; and, as the handcuff was movable, so that it might be raised up or down, according to the height of the culprit, it was generally fastened so that the latter was forced to stand upon the top of his toes so long as was agreeable to the shopkeeper of whom I speak."

"You do not mean to say," replied his companion, who, by the way, had witnessed the circumstances ten times for Fenton's once, "that such an outrage upon the right of the subject, and such a contempt for the administration of law and justice, could actually occur in a Christian and civilized country?"

"I state to you a fact, sir," replied Fenton, "which I have witnessed with my own eyes; but we have still stranger and worse usages in this locality."

"What description of gentry and landed proprietors have you in the neighborhood?"

"Hum! as to that, there are some good, more bad, and many indifferent, among them. Their great fault in general is, that they are incapable of sympathizing, as they ought, with their dependents. The pride of class, and the influence of creed besides, are too frequently impediments, not only to the progress of their own independence, but to the improvement of their tenantry. Then, many of them employ servile, plausible, and unprincipled agents, who, provided they wring the rent, by every species of severity and oppression, out of the people, are considered by their employers valuable and honest servants, faithfully devoted to their interests; whilst the fact on the other side is, that the unfortunate tenantry are every day so rapidly retrograding from prosperity, that most of the neglected and oppressed who possess means to leave the country emigrate to America."

"Why, Fenton, I did not think that you looked so deeply into the state and condition of the country. Have you no good specimens of character in or about the town itself?"

"Unquestionably, sir. Look out now from this window," he proceeded, and he went to it as he spoke, accompanied by the stranger; "do you see," he added, "that unostentatious shop, with the name of James Trimble over the door?"

"Certainly," replied the other, "I see it most distinctly."

"Well, sir, in that shop lives a man who is ten times a greater benefactor to this town and neighborhood than is the honorable and right reverend the lordly prelate, whose silent and untenanted palace stands immediately behind us. In every position in which you find him, this admirable but unassuming man is always the friend of the poor. When an industrious family, who find that they cannot wring independence, by hard and honest labor, out of the farms or other little tenements which they hold, have resolved to seek it in a more prosperous country, America, the first man to whom they apply, if deficient in means to accomplish their purpose, is James Trimble. In him they find a friend, if he knows, as he usually does, that they have passed through life with a character of worth and hereditary integrity. If they want a portion of their outfit, and possess not means to procure it, in kind-hearted James Trimble they are certain to find a friend, who will supply their necessities upon the strength of their bare promise to repay him. Honor, then—honor, sir, I say again, to the unexampled faith, truth, and high principle of the industrious Irish peasant, who, in no instance, even although the broad Atlantic has been placed between them, has been known to defraud James Trimble of a single shilling. In all parochial and public meetings—in every position where his influence can be used—he is uniformly the friend of the poor, whilst his high but unassuming sense of honor, his successful industry, and his firm, unshrinking independence, make him equally appreciated and respected by the rich and poor. In fact, it is such men as this who are the most unostentatious but practical benefactors to the lower and middle classes."

He had proceeded thus far, when a carriage-and-four came dashing up the street, and stopped at the very shop which belonged to the subject of Fenton's eulogium. Both went to the window at the same moment, and looked out.

"Pray, whose carriage is that?" asked the stranger, fastening his eyes, with a look of intense scrutiny, upon Fenton's face.

"That, sir," he replied, "is the carriage of Sir Thomas Gourlay."

As he spoke, the door of it was opened, and a lady of surpassing elegance and beauty stepped out of it, and entered the shop of the benevolent James Trimble.

"Pray, who is that charming girl?" asked the stranger again.

To this interrogatory, however, he received no reply. Poor Fenton tottered over to a chair, became pale as death, and trembled with such violence that he was incapable, for the time, of uttering a single word.

"Do you know, or have you ever known, this family?" asked the other.

After a pause of more than a minute, during which the emotion subsided, he replied:

"I have already said that I could not—" he paused. "I am not well," said he; "I am quite feeble—in fact, not in a condition to answer anything. Do not, therefore, ask me—for the present, at least."

Fifteen or twenty minutes had elapsed before he succeeded in mastering this singular attack. At length he rose, and placing his chair somewhat further back from the window, continued to look out in silence, not so much from love of silence, as apparently from inability to speak. The stranger, in the mean time, eyed him keenly; and as he examined his features from time to time, it might be observed that an expression of satisfaction, if not almost of certainty, settled upon his own countenance. In a quarter of an hour, the sound of the carriage-wheels was heard on its return, and Fenton, who seemed to dread also a return of his illness, said:

"For heaven's sake, sir, be good enough to raise the window and let in air. Thank you, sir."

The carriage, on this occasion, was proceeding more slowly than before—in fact, owing to a slight acclivity in that part of the street, the horses were leisurely walking past the inn window at the moment the stranger raised it. The noise of the ascending sash reached Miss Gourlay (for it was she), who, on looking up, crimsoned deeply, and, with one long taper finger on her lips, as if to intimate caution and silence, bowed to the stranger. The latter, who had presence of mind enough to observe the hint, did not bow in return, and consequently declined to appropriate the compliment to himself. Fenton now surveyed his companion with an appearance of as much interest and curiosity as the other had bestowed on him. He felt, however, as if his physical powers were wholly prostrated.

"I am very weak," said he, bitterly, "and near the close of my brief and unhappy day. I have, however, one cure—get me drink—drink, I say; that is what will revive me. Sir, my life, for the last fourteen years, has been a battle against thought; and without drink I should be a madman—a madman! oh, God!"

The other remonstrated with him in vain; but he was inexorable, and began to get fierce and frantic. At length, it occurred to him, that perhaps the influence of liquor might render this strange individual more communicative, and that by this means he might succeed in relieving himself of his doubts—for he still *had* doubts touching Fenton's identity. In this, however, he was disappointed, as a circumstance occurred which prevented him from then gratifying Fenton's wish, or winning him into confidence.

CHAPTER IV.

An Anonymous Letter—Lucy Gourlay avows a previous Attachment.

Whilst Fenton was thus sketching for the stranger a few of the public characters of Ballytrain, a scene, which we must interrupt them to describe, was taking place in the coffee-room of the "Mitre." As everything, however, has an origin, it is necessary, before we raise the curtain, which, for the present, excludes us from that scene, to enable the reader to become acquainted with the cause of it. That morning, after breakfast, Sir Thomas Gourlay went to his study, where, as usual, he began to read his letters and endorse them—for he happened to be one of those orderly and exact men who cannot bear to see even a trifle out of its place. Having despatched three or four, he took up one—the last—and on opening it read, much to his astonishment and dismay, as follows:

"Sir Thomas Gourlay,—There is an adventurer in disguise near you. Beware of your daughter, and watch her well, otherwise she may give you the slip. I write this, that you may prevent her from throwing herself away upon an impostor and profligate. I am a friend to *her*, but none to *you;* and it is on her account, as well as for the sake of *another*, that you are now warned."

On perusing this uncomfortable document, his whole frame became moved with a most vehement fit of indignation. He rose from his seat, and began to traverse the floor with lengthy and solemn strides, as a man usually does who knows not exactly on whom to vent his rage. There hung a

large mirror before him, and, as he approached it from time to time, he could not help being struck by the repulsive expression of his own features. He was a tall, weighty man, of large bones and muscles; his complexion was sallow, on a black ground; his face firm, but angular; and his forehead, which was low, projected a good deal over a pair of black eyes, in one of which there was a fearful squint. His eyebrows, which met, were black, fierce-looking, and bushy, and, when agitated, as now, with passion, they presented, taken in connection with his hard, irascible lips, short irregular teeth and whole complexion, an expression singularly stern and malignant.

On looking at his own image, he could not help feeling the conviction, that the visage which presented itself to him was not such a one as was calculated to diminish the unpopularity which accompanied him wherever he went, and the obloquy which hung over his name.

Sir Thomas Gourlay, however, although an exceedingly forbidding and ugly man, was neither a fool nor novice in the ways of the world. No man could look upon his plotting forehead, and sunken eyes closely placed, without feeling at once that he was naturally cunning and circumventive. Nor was this all; along with being deep and designing, he was also subject to sudden bursts of passion, which, although usual in such a temperament, did not suddenly pass away. On the contrary, they were sometimes at once so tempestuous and abiding, that he had been rendered ill by their fury, and forced to take to his bed for days together. On the present occasion, a considerable portion of his indignation was caused by the fact, that he knew not the individual against whom to direct it. His daughter, *as a daughter*, had been to him an object of perfect indifference, from the day of her birth up to that moment; that is to say, he was utterly devoid of all *personal* love and tenderness for her, whilst, at the same time, he experienced, in its full force, a cold, conventional ambition, which, although without honor, principle, or affection, yet occasioned him to devote all his efforts and energies to her proper establishment in the world. In her early youth, for instance, she had suffered much from delicate health, so much, indeed, that she was more than once on the very verge of death; yet, on no occasion, was he ever known to manifest the slightest parental sorrow for her illness. Society, however, is filled with such fathers, and with too many mothers of a like stamp. So far, however, as Lucy Gourlay was concerned, this proud, unprincipled spirit of the world supplied to her, to a certain extent at least, the possession of that which affection ought to have given. Her education was attended to with the most solicitous anxiety—not in order to furnish her mind with that healthy description of knowledge which strengthens principle and elevates the heart, but that she might become a perfect mistress of all the necessary and fashionable accomplishments, and shine, at a future day, an object of attraction on that account. A long and expensive array of masters, mistresses, and finishers, from almost every climate and country of Europe, were engaged in her education, and the consequence was, that few young persons of her age and sex were more highly accomplished. If his daughter's head ached, her father never suffered that circumstance to disturb the cold, stern tenor of his ambitious way; but, at the same time, two or three of the most eminent physicians were sent for, as a matter of course, and then there were nothing but consultations until she recovered. Had she died, Sir Thomas Gourlay would not have shed one tear, but he would have had all the pomp and ceremony due to her station in life solemnly paraded at her funeral, and it is very likely that one or other of our eminent countrymen, Hogan or M'Dowall, had they then existed, would have been engaged to erect her a monument.

And yet the feeling which he experienced, and which regulated his life, was, after all, but a poor pitiful parody upon true ambition. The latter is a great and glorious principle, because, where it exists, it never fails to expand the heart, and to prompt it to the performance of all those actions that elevate our condition and dignify our nature. Had he experienced anything like such a feeling as this, or even the beautiful instincts of parental affection, he would not have neglected, as he did, the inculcation of all those virtues and principles which render education valuable, and prevent it from degenerating into an empty parade of mere accomplishments.

It is true, Sir Thomas Gourlay enjoyed the reputation of being an admirable father, and, indeed, from mere worldly principle he was so, and we presume gave himself credit for being so. In the mean time, our readers are to learn that earth scarcely contained a man who possessed a greedier or more rapacious spirit; and, if ever the demon of envy, especially with respect to the possession of wealth and property, tortured the soul of a human being, it did that of our baronet. His whole spirit, in fact, was dark, mean, and intensely selfish; and for this reason, it was a fearful thing for any one to

stand in his way when in the execution of his sordid projects, much less to attempt his defeat in their attainment. Reckless and unscrupulous, he left no means unattempted, however odious and wicked, to crush those who offended him, or such as stood in the way of his love of wealth and ambition.

For some minutes after the perusal of the anonymous letter, one would have imagined that the image which met his gaze, from time to time, in the looking-glass, was that of his worst and deadliest enemy, so fierce and menacing were the glances which he cast on it as he paced the floor. At length he took up the document, and, having read it again, exclaimed:

"Perhaps, after all, I'm angry to no purpose; certainly to no purpose, in one sense, I am, inasmuch as I know not who this anonymous person is. But stay, let me be cautious—*is* there such a person? May this communication not be a false one—written to mislead or provoke me? Lucy knows that I am determined she shall marry Lord Dunroe, and I am not aware that she entertains any peculiar objection to him. In the mean time, I will have some conversation with her, in order to ascertain what her present and immediate feeling on the subject is. It is right that I should see my way in this."

He accordingly rang the bell, when a well-powdered footman, in rich livery, entered.

"Let Miss Gourlay understand that I wish to see her."

This he uttered in a loud, sharp tone of voice, for it was in such he uniformly addressed his dependents.

The lackey bowed and withdrew, and, in the course of a few minutes, his daughter entered the study, and stood before him. At the first glance, she saw that something had discomposed him, and felt a kind of instinctive impression that it was more or less connected with herself.

Seldom, indeed, was such a contrast between man and woman ever witnessed, as that which presented itself on this occasion. There stood the large, ungainly, almost misshapen father, with a countenance distorted, by the consequences of ill-suppressed passion, into a deeper deformity—a deformity that was rendered ludicrously hideous, by a squint that gave, as we have said, to one of his eyes, as he looked at her, the almost literal expression of a dagger. Before him, on the other hand, stood a girl, whose stature was above the middle height, with a form that breathed of elegance, ease, and that exquisite grace which marks every look, and word, and motion of the high-minded and accomplished lady. Indeed, one would imagine that her appearance would have soothed and tranquillized the anger of any parent capable of feeling that glowing and prideful tenderness, with which such an exquisitely beautiful creature was calculated to fill a parent's heart. Lucy Gourlay was a dark beauty—a brunette so richly tinted, that the glow of her cheek was only surpassed by the flashing brilliancy of her large, dark eyes, that seemed, in those glorious manifestations, to kindle with inspiration. Her forehead was eminently intellectual, and her general temperament—Celtic by the mother's side—was remarkable for those fascinating transitions of spirit which passed over her countenance like the gloom and sunshine of the early summer. Nothing could be more delightful, nor, at the same time, more dangerous, than to watch that countenance whilst moving under the influence of melancholy, and to observe how quickly the depths of feeling, or the impulses of tenderness, threw their delicious shadows into its expression—unless, indeed, to watch the same face when lit up by humor, and animated into radiance by mirth. Such is a faint outline of Lucy Gourlay, who, whether in shadow or whether in light, was equally captivating and irresistible.

On entering the room, her father, incapable of appreciating even the natural graces and beauty of her person, looked at her with a gaze of sternness and inquiry for some moments, but seemed at a loss in what terms to address her. She, however, spoke first, simply saying:

"Has anything discomposed you, papa?"

"I *have* been discomposed, Miss Gourlay"—for he seldom addressed her as Lucy—"and I wish to have some serious conversation with you. Pray be seated."

Lucy sat.

"I trust, Miss Gourlay," he proceeded, in a style partly interrogatory and partly didactic—"I trust you are perfectly sensible that a child like you owes full and unlimited obedience to her parents."

"So long, at least, sir, as her parents exact no duties from her that are either unreasonable or unjust, or calculated to destroy her own happiness. With these limitations, I reply in the affirmative."

"A girl like you, Miss Gourlay, has no right to make exceptions. Your want of experience, which is only another name for your ignorance of life, renders you incompetent to form an estimate of what constitutes, or may constitute, your happiness."

"Happiness!—in what sense, sir?"

"In *any* sense, madam."

"Madam!" she replied, with much feeling. "Dear papa—if you will allow me to call you so—why address me in a tone of such coldness, if not of severity? All I ask of you is, that, when you do honor me by an interview, you will remember that I am your daughter, and not speak to *me* as you would to an utter stranger."

"The tone which I may assume toward you, Miss Gourlay, must be regulated by your own obedience."

"But in what have I ever failed in obedience to you, my dear papa?"

"Perhaps you compliment your obedience prematurely, Lucy—it has never yet been seriously tested."

Her beautiful face crimsoned at this assertion; for she well knew that many a severe imposition had been placed upon her during girlhood, and that, had she been any other girl than she was, her very youth would have been forced into opposition to commands that originated in whim, caprice, and selfishness. Even when countenanced, however, by the authority of her other parent, and absolutely urged against compliance with injunctions that were often cruel and oppressive, she preferred, at any risk, to accommodate herself to them rather than become the cause of estrangement or ill-feeling between him and her mother, or her mother's friends. Such a charge as this, then, was not only ungenerous, but, as he must have well known, utterly unfounded.

"I do not wish, sir," she replied, "to make any allusion to the past, unless simply to say, that, if severe and trying instances of obedience have been exacted from me, under very peculiar circumstances, I trust I have not been found wanting in my duty to you."

"That obedience, Miss Gourlay, which is reluctantly given, had better been forgotten."

"You have forced me to remember it in my own defence, papa; but I am not conscious that it was reluctant."

"You contradict me, madam."

"No, sir; I only take the liberty of setting you right. My obedience, if you recollect, was cheerful; for I did not wish to occasion ill-will between you and mamma—my *dear* mamma."

"I believe you considered that you had only *one* parent, Miss Gourlay?"

"That *loved* me, sir, you would add. But, papa, why should there be such a dialogue as this between you and your daughter—your orphan daughter, and your only child? It is not natural. Something, I see, has discomposed your temper; I am ignorant of it."

"I made you aware, some time ago, that the Earl of Cullamore and I had entered into a matrimonial arrangement between you and his son, Lord Dunroe."

A deadly paleness settled upon her countenance at these words—a paleness the more obvious, as it contrasted so strongly with the previous rich hue of her complexion, which had been already heightened by the wanton harshness of her father's manner. The baronet's eyes, or rather his eye, was fixed upon her with a severity which this incident rapidly increased.

"You grow pale, Miss Gourlay; and there seems to be something in this allusion to Lord Dunroe that is painful to you. How is this, madam? I do not understand it."

"I am, indeed, pale, and I *feel* that I am: for what is there that could drive the hue of modesty from the cheek of a daughter, sooner than the fact of her own father purposing to unite her to a profligate? You seldom jest, papa; but I hope you do so now."

"I am not disposed to make a jest of your happiness, Miss Gourlay."

"Nor of my misery, papa. You surely cannot but know—nay, you cannot but feel—that a marriage between me and Lord Dunroe is impossible. His profligacy is so gross, that his very name is indelicate in the mouth of a modest woman. And is this the man to whom you would unite your only child and daughter? But I trust you still jest, sir. As a man, and a gentleman, much less as a parent, you would not think seriously of making such a proposal to *me?*"

"All very fine sentiment—very fine stuff and nonsense, madam; the young man is a little wild—somewhat lavish in expenditure—and for the present not very select in the company he keeps; but he is no fool, as they say, and we all know how marriage reforms a man, and thoroughly sobers him down."

"Often at the expense, papa," she replied with tears, "of many a broken heart. That surely, is not a happy argument; for, perhaps, after all, I should, like others, become but a victim to my ineffectual efforts at his reformation."

"There is one thing, Miss Gourlay, you are certain to become, and that is, Countess of Cullamore, at his father's death. Remember this; and remember also, that, victim or no victim, I am determined you shall marry him. Yes, you *shall* marry him," he added, stamping with vehemence, "or be turned a beggar upon the world. Become a victim, indeed! Begone, madam, to your room, and prepare for that obedience which your mother never taught you."

She rose as he spoke, and with a graceful inclination of her head, silently withdrew.

This dialogue caused both father and daughter much pain. Certain portions of it, especially near the close, were calculated to force upon the memory of each, analogies that were as distressing to the warm-hearted girl, as they were embarrassing to her parent. The truth was, that her mother, then a year dead, had indeed become a victim to the moral profligacy of a man in whose character there existed nothing whatsoever to compensate her for the utter absence of domestic affection in all its phases. His principal vices, so far as they affected the peace of his family, were a brutal temper, and a most scandalous dishonesty in pecuniary transactions, especially in his intercourse with his own tenantry and tradesmen. Of moral obligation he seemed to possess no sense or impression whatever. A single day never occurred in which he was not guilty of some most dishonorable violation of his word to the poor, and those who were dependent on him. Ill-temper therefore toward herself, and the necessity of constantly witnessing a series of vile and unmanly frauds upon a miserable scale, together with her incessant efforts to instil into his mind some slight principle of common integrity, had, during an unhappy life, so completely harrassed a mind naturally pure and gentle, and a constitution never strong, that, as her daughter hinted, and as every one intimate with the family knew, she literally fell a victim to the vices we have named, and the incessant anxiety they occasioned her. These analogies, then, when unconsciously alluded to by his daughter, brought tears to her eyes, and he felt that the very grief she evinced was an indirect reproach to himself.

"Now," he exclaimed, after she had gone, "it is clear, I think, that the girl entertains something more than a mere moral objection to this match. I would have taxed her with some previous engagement, but that I fear it would be premature to do so at present. Dunroe is wild, no doubt of it; but I cannot believe that women, who are naturally vain and fond of display, feel so much alarm at this as they pretend. I never did myself care much about the sex, and seldom had an opportunity of studying their general character, or testing their principles; but still I incline to the opinion, that, where there is *not* a previous engagement, rank and wealth will, for the most part, outweigh every other consideration. In the meantime I will ride into Ballytrain, and reconnoitre a little. Perhaps the contents of this communication are true—perhaps not; but, at all events, it can be no harm to look about me in a quiet way."

He then read the letter a third time—examined the handwriting closely—locked it in a private drawer—rang the bell—ordered his horse—and in a few minutes was about to proceed to the "Mitre" inn, in order to make secret inquiries after such persons as he might find located in that or the other establishments of the town. At this moment, his daughter once more entered the apartment, her face glowing with deep agitation, and her large, mellow eyes lit up with a fixed, and, if one could judge, a lofty purpose. Her reception, we need hardly say, was severe and harsh.

"How, madam," he exclaimed, "did I not order you to your room? Do you return to bandy undutiful hints and arguments with me?"

"Father," said she, "I am not ignorant, alas! of your stern and indomitable character; but, upon the subject of forced and unsuitable matches, I may and I do appeal directly to the experience of your own married life, and of that of my beloved mother. She was, unhappily for herself—"

"And for me, Miss Gourlay."

"Well, perhaps so; but if ever woman was qualified to make a man happy, she was. At all events, sir, unhappily she was forced into marriage with you, and you deliberately took to your bosom a reluctant bride. She possessed extraordinary beauty, and a large fortune. I, however, am not about to enter into your heart, or analyze its motives; it is enough to say that, although she had no previous engagement or affection for any other, she was literally dragged by the force of parental authority into a union with you. The consequence was, that her whole life, owing to—to—the unsuitableness of your tempers, and the strongly-contrasted materials which formed your characters, was one of almost unexampled suffering and sorrow. With this example before my eyes, and with the memory of it brooding over and darkening your own heart—yes, papa—my dear papa, let me call you with the full and most distressing recollections connected with it strong upon both of us, let me entreat and implore that you will not urge nor force me into a union with this hateful and repulsive profligate. I go upon my knees to you, and entreat, as you regard my happiness, my honor, and my future peace of mind, that you will not attempt to unite me to this most unprincipled and dishonorable young man."

Her father's brow grew black as a thunder-cloud; the veins of his temples swelled up, as if they had been filled with ink, and, after a few hasty strides through the study, he turned upon her such a

look of fury as we need not attempt to describe.

"Miss Gourlay," said he, in a voice dreadfully deep and stern, "there is not an allusion made in that undutiful harangue—for so I must call it—that does not determine me to accomplish my purpose in effecting this union. If your mother was unhappy, the fault lay in her own weak and morbid temper. As for me, I now tell you, once for all, that your destiny is either beggary or a coronet; on that I am resolved!"

She stood before him like one who had drawn strength from the full knowledge of her fate. Her face, it is true, had become pale, but it was the paleness of a calm but lofty spirit, and she replied, with a full and clear voice:

"I said, sir—for I had her own sacred assurance for it—that my mother, when she married you, had no previous engagement; it is not so with your daughter—my affections are fixed upon another."

There are some natures so essentially tyrannical, and to whom resistance is a matter of such extraordinary novelty, that its manifestation absolutely surprises them *out of* their natural character. In this manner Sir Thomas Gourlay was affected. Instead of flying into a fresh hurricane of rage, he felt so completely astounded, that he was only capable of turning round to her, and asking, in a voice unusually calm:

"Pray name him, Miss Gourlay."

"In that, sir, you will excuse me—for the present. The day may come, and I trust soon will, when I can do so with honor. And now, sir, having considered it my duty not to conceal this fact from your knowledge, I will, with your permission, withdraw to my own apartment."

She paid him, with her own peculiar grace, the usual obeisance, and left the room. The stern and overbearing Sir Thomas Gourlay now felt himself so completely taken aback by her extraordinary candor and firmness, that he was only able to stand and look after her in silent amazement.

"Well!" he exclaimed, "I have reason to thank her for this important piece of information. She has herself admitted a previous attachment. So far my doubts are cleared up, and I feel perfectly certain that the anonymous information is correct. It now remains for me to find out who the object of this attachment is. I have no doubt that he is in the neighborhood; and, if so, I shall know how to manage him."

He then mounted his horse, and rode into Ballytrain, with what purpose it is now unnecessary, we trust, to trouble the reader at further length.

CHAPTER V.

Sir Thomas Gourlay fails in Unmasking the Stranger—Mysterious Conduct of Fenton.

When Sir Thomas Gourlay, after the delay of better than an hour in town, entered the coffee-room of the "Mitre," he was immediately attended by the landlord himself.

"Who is this new guest you have got, landlord?" inquired the baronet. "They tell me he is a very mysterious gentleman, and that no one can discover his name. Do you know anything about him?"

"De'il a syllable, Sir Tammas," replied the landlord, who was a northern. "How ir you, Counsellor Crackenfudge?" he added, speaking to a person who passed upstairs. "There he goes," proceeded Jack the landlord—"a nice boy. But do you know, Sir Tammas, why he changed his name to Crackenfudge?"

Sir Thomas's face at this moment had grown frightful. While the landlord was speaking, the baronet, attracted by the noise of a carriage passing, turned to observe it, just at the moment when his daughter was bowing so significantly to the stranger in the window over them, as we have before stated. Here was a new light thrown upon the mystery or mysteries by which he felt himself surrounded on all hands. The strange guest in the Mitre inn, was then, beyond question, the very individual alluded to in the anonymous letter. The baronet's face had, in the scowl of wrath, got black, as mine host was speaking. This expression, however, gradually diminished in the darkness of that wrathful shadow which lay over it. After a severe internal struggle with his tremendous passions, he at length seemed to cool down. His face became totally changed; and in a few minutes of silence and struggle, it passed from the blackness of almost ungovernable rage to a pallid hue, that might not unaptly be compared to the summit of a volcano covered with snow, when about to project its most awful and formidable eruptions.

The landlord, while putting the question to the baronet, turned his sharp, piercing eyes upon him, and, at a single glance, perceived that something had unusually moved him.

"Sir Tammas," said he, "there is no use in denyin' it, now—the blood's disturbed in you."

"Give your guest my compliments—Sir Thomas Gourlay's compliments—and I should feel obliged by a short interview."

On going up, Jack found the stranger and Fenton as we have already described them.

"Sir," said he, addressing the former,

"there's a gentleman below who wishes to know who you ir."

"Who I am!" returned the other, quite unmoved; "and, pray who may *he* be?"

"Sir Tammas Gourlay; an' a'll tell you what, if you don't wish to see him, why don't see him. A'll take him the message, an' if there's anything about you that you don't wish to be known or heard, make him keep his distance. He's this minute in a de'il of a passion about something, an' was comin' up as if he'd ait you without salt, but a' would n't allow it; so, if you don't wish to see him, a'm the boy won't be afeard to say so. He's not coming as a friend, a' can tell you."

"Sir Thomas Gourlay's in the house, then?" said the stranger, with a good deal of surprise. He then paused for some time, and, during this pause, he very naturally concluded that the baronet had witnessed his daughter's bow, so cautiously and significantly made to himself as she passed. Whilst he turned over these matters in his mind, the landlord addressed Fenton as follows:

"*You* can go to another room, Fenton. A'm glad to see you in a decent suit of clothes, any way—a' hope you'll take yourself up, and avoid drink and low company; for de'il a haet good ever the same two brought anybody; but, before you go, a'll give you a gless o' grog to drink the Glorious Memory. Come, now, tramp, like a good fellow."

"I have a particular wish," said the stranger, "that Mr. Fenton should remain; and say to Sir Thomas Gourlay that I am ready to see him."

"A' say, then," said Jack, in a friendly whisper, "be on your edge with him, for, if he finds you saft, the very de'il won't stand him."

"The gentleman, Sir Tammas," said Jack, on going down stairs, "will be glad to see you. He's overhead."

Fenton, himself, on hearing that Sir Thomas was about to come up, prepared to depart; but the other besought him so earnestly to stay, that he consented, although with evident reluctance. He brought his chair over to a corner of the room, as if he wished to be as much out of the way as possible, or, it may be, as far from Sir Thomas's eye, as the size of the apartment would permit. Be this as it may, Sir Thomas entered, and brought his ungainly person nearly to the centre of the room before he spoke. At length he did so, but took care not to accompany his words with that courtesy of manner, or those rules of good-breeding, which ever prevail among gentlemen, whether as friends or foes. After standing for a moment, he glanced from the one to the other, his face still hideously pale; and ultimately, fixing his eye upon the stranger, he viewed him from head to foot, and again from foot to head, with a look of such contemptuous curiosity, as certainly was strongly calculated to excite the stranger's indignation. Finding the baronet spoke not, the other did.

"To what am I to attribute the honor of this visit, sir?"

Sir Thomas even then did not speak, but still kept looking at him with the expression we have described. At length he *did* speak:

"You have been residing for some time in our neighborhood, sir?" The stranger simply bowed.

"May I ask how long?"

"I have the honor, I believe, of addressing Sir Thomas Gourlay?"

"Yes, you *have* that honor."

"And may I beg to know his object in paying me this unceremonious visit, in which he does not condescend either to announce himself, or to observe the usual rules of good-breeding?"

"From my rank and known position in this part of the country, and in my capacity also as a magistrate, sir," replied the baronet, "I'm entitled to make such inquiries as I may deem necessary from those who appear here under suspicious circumstances."

"Perhaps you may think so, but I am of opinion, sir, that you would consult the honor of the rank and position you allude to much more effectually, by letting such inquiries fall within the proper province of the executive officers of law, whenever you think there is a necessity for it."

"Excuse me, but, in that manner, I shall follow my own judgment, not yours."

"And under what circumstances of suspicion do you deem me to stand at present?"

"Very strong circumstances. You have been now living here nearly a week, in a privacy which no gentleman would ever think of observing. You have hemmed yourself in by a mystery, sir; you have studiously concealed your name—your connections—and defaced every mark by which you could be known or traced. This, sir, is not the conduct of a gentleman; and argues either actual or premeditated guilt."

"You seem heated, sir, and you also reason in resentment, whatever may have occasioned it. And so a gentleman is not to make an excursion to a country town in a quiet way—perhaps to recruit his health, perhaps to relax his mind, perhaps to gratify a whim—but he must be pounced upon by some outrageous dispenser of magisterial justice, who thinks, that, because he wishes to live quietly and unknown, he must be some

cutthroat or raw-head-and-bloody-bones coming to eat half the country?"

"I dare say, sir, that is all very fine, and very humorous; but when these mysterious vagabonds—"

The eye of the stranger blazed; lightning itself, in fact, was not quicker than the fire which gleamed from it, as the baronet uttered the last words. He walked over deliberately, but with a step replete with energy and determination:

"How, sir," said he, "do you dare to apply such an expression to me?"

The baronet's eye quailed. He paused a moment, during which he could perceive that the stranger had a spirit not to be tampered with.

"No, sir," he replied, "not exactly to you, but when persons such as you come in this skulking way, probably for the purpose of insinuating themselves into families of rank—"

"Have I, sir, attempted to insinuate myself into yours?" asked the stranger, interrupting him.

"When such persons come under circumstances of strong suspicion," said the other, without replying to him, "it is the business of every gentleman in the country to keep a vigilant eye upon them."

"I shall hold myself accountable to no such gentleman," replied the stranger; "but will consider every man, no matter what his rank or character may be, as unwarrantably impertinent, who arrogantly attempts to intrude himself in affairs that don't—" he was about to add, "that don't concern him," when he paused, and added, "into any man's affairs. Every man has a right to travel incognito, and to live incognito, if he chooses; and, on that account, sir, so long as I wish to maintain mine, I shall allow no man to assume the right of penetrating it. If this has been the object of your visit, you will much oblige me by relinquishing the one, and putting an end to the other, as soon as may be."

"As a magistrate, sir, I demand to know your name," said the baronet, who thought that, in the stranger's momentary hesitation, he had observed symptoms of yielding.

"As an independent man, sir, and a gentleman, I shall not answer such a question."

"You brave me, sir—you defy me?" continued the other, his face still pale, but baleful in its expression.

"Yes, sir," replied the other, "I brave you—I defy you."

"Very well, sir," returned the baronet—"remember these words."

"I am not in the habit of forgetting anything that a man of spirit ought to remember," said the other. "I have the honor of wishing you a good-morning."

The baronet withdrew in a passion that had risen to red heat, and was proceeding to mount his horse at the door, when Counsellor Crackenfudge, who had followed him downstairs, thus addressed him:

"I beg your pardon, Sir Thomas; I happened to be sitting in the back-room while you were speaking to that strange fellow above; I pledge you my honor I did not listen; but I could not help overhearing, you know. Well, Sir Thomas, I can tell you something about him."

"How!" said the baronet, whose eye gleamed with delight. "Can you, in truth, tell me anything about him, Mr. Crackenfudge? You will oblige me very much if you do."

"I will tell you all I know about him, Sir Thomas," replied the worthy counsellor; "and that is, that I know he has paid many secret visits to Mr. Birney the attorney."

"To Birney!" exclaimed the other; and, as he spoke, he seemed actually to stagger back a step or two, whilst the paleness of his complexion increased to a hue that was ghastly—"to Birney!—to my blackest and bitterest enemy—to the man who, I suspect, has important family documents of mine in his possession. Thanks, even for this, Crackenfudge—you are looking to become of the peace. Hearken now; aid me in ferreting out this lurking scoundrel, and I shall not forget your wishes." He then rode homewards.

The stranger, during this stormy dialogue with Sir Thomas Gourlay, turned his eye, from time to time, toward Fenton, who appeared to have lost consciousness itself so long as the baronet was in the room. On the departure, however, of that gentleman, he went over to him, and said:

"Why, Fenton, what's the matter?"

Fenton looked at him with a face of great distress, from which the perspiration was pouring, but seemed utterly unable to speak.

CHAPTER VI.

Extraordinary Scene between Fenton and the Stranger.

The character of Fenton was one that presented an extraordinary variety of phases. With the exception of the firmness and pertinacity with which he kept the mysterious secret of his origin and identity—that is, if he himself knew them, he was never known to maintain the same moral temperament for

a week together. Never did there exist a being so capricious and unstable. At one time, you found him all ingenuousness and candor; at another, no earthly power could extort a syllable of truth from his lips. For whole days, if not for weeks together, he dealt in nothing but the wildest fiction, and the most extraordinary and grotesque rodomontade. The consequence was, that no reliance could be placed on anything he said or asserted. And yet—which appeared to be rather unaccountable in such a character—it could be frequently observed that he was subject to occasional periods of the deepest dejection. During those painful and gloomy visitations, he avoided all intercourse with his fellow-men, took to wandering through the country—rarely spoke to anybody, whether stranger or acquaintance, but maintained the strictest and most extraordinary silence. If he passed a house at meal-time he entered, and, without either preface or apology, quietly sat down and joined them. To this freedom on his part, in a country so hospitable as Ireland in the days of her prosperity was, and could afford to be, no one ever thought of objecting.

"It was," observed the people, "only the poor young gentleman who is not right in the head."

So that the very malady which they imputed to him was only a passport to their kindness and compassion. Fenton had no fixed residence, nor any available means of support, save the compassionate and generous interest which the inhabitants of Ballytrain took in him, in consequence of those gentlemanly manners which he could assume whenever he wished, and the desolate position in which some unknown train of circumstances had unfortunately placed him.

When laboring under these depressing moods to which we have alluded, his memory seemed filled with recollections that, so far as appearances went, absolutely stupefied his heart by the heaviness of the suffering they occasioned it; and, when that heart, therefore, sank as far as its powers of endurance could withstand this depression, he uniformly had recourse to the dangerous relief afforded by indulgence in the fiery stimulant of liquor, to which he was at all times addicted.

Such is a slightly detailed sketch of an individual whose fate is deeply involved in the incidents and progress of our narrative.

The horror which we have described as having fallen upon this unfortunate young man, during Sir Thomas Gourlay's stormy interview with the stranger, so far from subsiding, as might be supposed, after his departure, assumed the shape of something bordering on insanity. On looking at his companion, the wild but deep expression of his eyes began to change into one of absolute frenzy, a circumstance which could not escape the stranger's observation, and which, placed as he was in the pursuit of an important secret, awoke a still deeper interest, whilst at the same time it occasioned him much pain.

"Mr. Fenton," said he, "I certainly have no wish, by any proceeding incompatible with an ungentlemanly feeling of impertinent curiosity, to become acquainted with the cause of this unusual excitement, which the appearance of Miss Gourlay and her father seems to produce upon you, unless in so far as its disclosure, in honorable confidence, might enable me, as a person sincerely your friend, to allay or remove it."

"Suppose, sir, you are mistaken?" replied the other. "Do you not know that there are memories arising from association, that are touched and kindled into great pain, by objects that are by no means the direct cause of them, or the cause of them in any sense?"

"I admit the truth of what you say, Mr. Fenton; but we can only draw our first inferences from appearances. It is not from any idle or prurient desire to become acquainted with the cause of your emotion that I speak, but simply from a wish to serve you, if you will permit me. It is distressing to witness what you suffer."

"I have experienced," said Fenton, whose excitement seemed not only to rise as he proceeded, but in a considerable degree to give that fervor and elevation to his language, which excitement often gives; "yes, sir," he proceeded, his eyes kindling almost into fury, "I have experienced much treacherous and malignant sympathy, under the guise of pretended friendship—sympathy! why do I say sympathy? Persecution—vengeance. Yes, sir, till I have become mad—or—or nearly so. No," he added, "I am not *mad*—I *never* was mad—but I understand your object—avaunt, sir—begone—or I shall throw you out of the window."

"Be calm, Mr. Fenton—be calm," replied the stranger, "and collect yourself. I am, indeed, sincerely your friend."

"Who told you, sir, that I was mad?"

"I never said so, Mr. Fenton."

"It matters not, sir—you are a traitor—and as such I denounce you. This room is mine, sir, and I shall forthwith expel you from it—" and, as he spoke, he started up, and sprung at the stranger, who, on seeing him rise for the purpose, instantly rang the bell. The waiter immediately entered, and found the latter holding poor Fenton by the two wrists, and with such a tremendous grasp as made him feel like an infant, in point of strength, in his hands.

"This is unmeaning violence, sir," exclaimed the latter, calmly but firmly, "unless you explain yourself, and give a reason for it. If you are moved by any peculiar cause of horror, or apprehension, or danger, why not enable me to understand it, in order that you may feel assured of my anxious disposition to assist you?"

"Gintlemen," exclaimed Paudeen, "what in the name of Pether White and Billy Neelins is the reason of this? But I needn't ax—it's one of Mr. Fenton's tantrams—an' the occasion of it was, lying snug and warm this mornin', in one of Andy Trimble's whiskey barrels. For shame, Mr. Fenton, you they say a gintleman born, and to thrate one of your own rank—a gintleman that befriended you as he did, and put a daicint shoot of clo'es on your miserable carcase; when you know that before he did it, if the wind was blowing from the thirty-two points of the compass, you had an openin' for every point, if they wor double the number. Troth, now, you're ongrateful, an' if God hasn't said it, you'll thravel from an onpenitent death-bed yet. Be quiet, will you, or my sinful sowl to glory, but I'll bundle you downstairs?"

"He will be quiet, Pat," said the stranger. "In truth, after all, this is a mere physical malady, Mr. Fenton, and will pass away immediately, if you will only sit down and collect yourself a little."

Fenton, however, made another unavailable attempt at struggle, and found that he was only exhausting himself to no purpose. All at once, or rather following up his previous suspicions, he seemed to look upon the powerful individual who held him, as a person who had become suddenly invested with a new character that increased his terrors; and yet, if we may say so, almost forced him into an anxiety to suppress their manifestation. His limbs, however, began to tremble excessively; his eyes absolutely dilated, and became filled by a sense of terror, nearly as wild as despair itself. The transitions of his temper, however, like those of his general conduct, supervened upon each other with remarkable rapidity, and, as it were, the result of quick, warm, and inconsiderate impulses.

"Well," he exclaimed at length, "I will be quiet, I am, I assure you, perfectly harmless; but, at the same time," he added, sitting down, "I know that the whole dialogue between you and that awful-looking man, was a plot laid for me. Why else did you insist on my being present at it? This accounts for your giving me a paltry sum of money, too—it does, sir—and for your spurious and dishonest humanity in wishing to see me well clothed. Yes, I perceive it all; but, let what may happen, I will not wear these clothes any longer. They are not the offering of a generous heart, but the fraudulent pretext for insinuating yourself into my confidence, in order to—to—yes, but I shall not say it—it is enough that I know you, sir—that I see through, and penetrate your designs."

He was about to put his threat with respect to the clothes into instant execution, when the stranger, once more seizing him, exclaimed: "You must promise, Mr. Fenton, before you leave my grasp, that you will make no further attempt to tear off your dress. I insist on this;" and as he spoke he fixed his eye sternly and commandingly on that of Fenton.

"I will not attempt it," replied the latter; "I promise it, on the word of a gentleman."

"There, then," said the stranger. "Keep yourself quiet, and, mark me, I shall expect that you will not violate that word, nor yield to these weak and silly paroxysms."

Fenton merely nodded submissively, and the other proceeded, still with a view of sounding him: "You say you know me; if so, who and what am I?"

"Do not ask me to speak at further length," replied Fenton; "I am quite exhausted, and I know not what I said."

He appeared now somewhat calmer, or, at least, affected to be so. By his manner, however, it would appear that some peculiar opinion or apprehension, with reference either to the baronet or the stranger, seemed as if confirmed, whilst, at the same time, acting under one of his rapid transitions, he spoke and looked like a man who was influenced by new motives. He then withdrew in a mood somewhat between sullenness and regret.

When the stranger was left to himself, he paced the room some time in a state of much anxiety, if not distress. At length he sat down, and, leaning his head upon his hand, exclaimed unconsciously aloud:

"Alas! I fear this search is vain. The faint traces of imaginary resemblance, which I thought I had discovered in this young man's features, are visible no longer. It is true, this portrait," looking once more at the miniature, "was taken when the original was only a child of five years; but still it was remarked that the family resemblances were, from childhood up, both strong and striking. Then, this unfortunate person is perfectly inscrutable, and not to be managed by any ordinary procedure at present intelligible to me. Yet, after all, as far as I have been able to conjecture, there is a

strong similarity in the cases. The feeling among the people here is, that he is a gentleman by birth: but this may proceed from the air and manners which he can assume when he pleases. I would mention my whole design and object at hazard, but this would be running an unnecessary risk by intrusting my secret to him: and, although it is evident that he can preserve his own, it does not necessarily follow that he would keep mine. However, I must only persevere and bide my time, as the Scotch say."

He again rose, and, pacing the apartment once more, his features assumed a still deeper expression of inward agitation.

"And, again," he exclaimed, "that unfortunate rencounter! Great Heavens, what if I stand here a murderer, with the blood of a fellow-creature, hurried, I fear, in the very midst of his profligacy, into eternity! The thought is insupportable; and I know not, unless I can strictly preserve my incognito, whether I am at this moment liable, if apprehended, to pay the penalty which the law exacts. The only consolation that remains for me is, that the act was not of my seeking, but arrogantly and imperiously forced upon me."

CHAPTER VII.

The Baronet attempts by Falsehood to urge his Daughter into an Avowal of her Lover's Name.

Sir Thomas Gourlay, after his unpleasant interview with the stranger, rode easily home, meditating upon some feasible plan by which he hoped to succeed in entrapping his daughter into the avowal of her lover's name, for he had no doubt whatsoever that the gentleman at the inn and he were one and the same individual. For this purpose, he determined to put on a cheerful face, and assume, as far as in him lay, an air of uncommon satisfaction. Now this was a task of no ordinary difficulty for Sir Thomas to encounter. The expression of all the fiercer and darker passions was natural to such a countenance as his; but even to imagine such a one lit up with mirth, was to conceive an image so grotesque and ridiculous, that the firmest gravity must give way before it. His frown was a thing perfectly intelligible, but to witness his smile, or rather his effort at one, was to witness an unnatural phenomenon of the most awful kind, and little short of a prodigy. If one could suppose the sun giving a melancholy and lugubrious grin through the darkness of a total eclipse, they might form some conception of the jocular solemnity which threw its deep but comic shadow over his visage. One might expect the whole machinery of the face, with as much probability as that of a mill, to change its habitual motions, and turn in an opposite direction. It seemed, in fact, as if a general breaking up of the countenance was about to take place, and that the several features, like a crew of thieves and vagabonds flying from the officers of justice, were all determined to provide for themselves.

Lucy saw at a glance that her father was about to get into one of those tender and complacent moods which were few and far between, and, made wise by experience, she very properly conjectured, from his appearance, that some deep design was concealed under it. Anxious, therefore, to avoid a prolonged dialogue, and feeling, besides, her natural candor and invincible love of truth to a certain extent outraged by this treacherous assumption of cordiality, she resolved to commence the conversation.

"Has anything agreeable happened, papa?"

"Agreeable, Lucy, ahem!—why, yes—something agreeable *has* happened. Now, Lucy, poor foolish girl, would it not have been better to have placed confidence in me with respect to this lover of yours? Who can feel the same interest in your happiness that I do?"

"None, certainly, sir; unless some one whose happiness may probably depend on mine."

"Yes, your lover—well, that now is a natural enough distinction; but still, you foolish, naughty girl, don't you know that you are to inherit my wealth and property, and that they will make you happy? You silly thing, there's a truth for you."

"Were you yourself happy, papa, when we separated this morning? Are you happy this moment? Are you generally happy? Is there no rankling anxiety—no project of ambition—no bitter recollection corroding your heart? Does the untimely loss of my young brother, who would have represented and sustained your name, never press heavily upon it? I ask again, papa, are you generally happy? Yet you are in possession of all the wealth and property you speak of."

"Tut, nonsense, silly child! Nothing is more ridiculous than to hear a girl like you, that ought to have no will but mine, reasoning like a philosopher."

"But, dear papa," proceeded Lucy, "if you should persist in marrying me to a profligate, merely because he is a nobleman—oh, how often is that honorable name prostituted!—and could give me a title, don't

you see how wretched I should be, and how completely your wealth and property would fail to secure my happiness?"

"Very well argued, Lucy, only that you go upon wrong principles. To be sure, I know that young ladies—that is, *very* young and inexperienced ladies, somewhat like yourself, Lucy—have, or pretend to have—poor fools—a horror of marrying those they don't love; and I am aware, besides, that a man might as well attempt to make a stream run up hill as combat them upon this topic. As for me, in spite of all my wealth and property—I say this in deference to you—I am really very happy this moment."

"I am delighted to hear it, papa. May I ask, what has contributed to make you so?"

"I shall mention that presently; but, in the mean time, my theory on this subject is, that, instead of marrying for love, I would recommend only such persons to contract matrimony as entertain a kind of lurking aversion for each other. Let the parties commence with, say, a tolerably strong stock of honest hatred on both sides. Very well; they are united. At first, there is a great deal of heroic grief, and much exquisite martyrdom on the part of the lady, whilst the gentleman is at once, if I may say so, indifferent and indignant. By and by, however, they become tired of this. The husband, who, as well as the wife, we shall suppose, has a strong spice of the devil in him, begins to entertain a kind of diabolical sympathy for the fire and temper she displays; while she, on the other hand, comes by degrees to admire in him that which she is conscious of possessing herself, that is to say, a sharp tongue and an energetic temperament. In this way, Lucy, they go on, until habit has become a second nature to them. The appetite for strife has been happily created. At length, they find themselves so completely captivated by it that it becomes the charm of their existence. Thenceforth a bewitching and discordant harmony prevails between them, and they entertain a kind of hostile affection for each other that is desperately delightful."

"Why, you are quite a painter, papa; your picture is admirable; all it wants is truth and nature."

"Thank you, Lucy; you are quite complimentary, and have made an artist of me, as artists now go. But is not this much more agreeable and animated than the sweet dalliance of a sugar-plum life, or the dull, monotonous existence resembling a Dutch canal, which we term connubial happiness?"

"Well, now, papa, suppose you were to hear me through?"

"Very well," he replied; "I will."

"I do not believe, sir, that life can present us with anything more beautiful and delightful than the union of two hearts, two minds, two souls, in pure and mutual affection, when that affection is founded upon something more durable than mere beauty or personal attraction—that is, when it is based upon esteem, and a thorough knowledge of the object we love."

"Yes, Lucy; but remember there are such things as deceit, dissimulation, and hypocrisy in the world."

"Yes, and goodness, and candor, and honor, and truth, and fidelity, papa; do *you* remember *that?* When two beings, conscious, I say, of each other's virtues—each other's failings, if you will—are united in the bonds of true and pure affection, how could it happen that marriage, which is only the baptism of love upon the altar of the heart, should take away any of the tenderness of this attachment, especially when we reflect that its very emotions are happiness? Granting that love, in its romantic and ideal sense, may disappear after marriage, I have heard, and I believe, that it assumes a holier and still more tender spirit, and reappears under the sweeter and more beautiful form of domestic affection. The very consciousness, I should suppose, that our destinies, our hopes, our objects, our cares—in short, our joys and sorrows, are identical and mutual, to be shared with and by each other, and that all those delightful interchanges of a thousand nameless offices of tenderness that spring up from the on-going business of our own peculiar life—these alone, I can very well imagine, would constitute an enjoyment far higher, purer, holier, than mere romantic love. Then, papa, surely we are not to live solely for ourselves. There are the miseries and wants of others to be lessened or relieved, calamity to be mitigated, the pale and throbbing brow of sickness to be cooled, the heart of the poor and neglected to be sustained and cheered, and the limbs of the weary to be clothed and rested. Why, papa," she proceeded, her dark eye kindling at the noble picture of human duty she had drawn, "when we take into contemplation the delightful impression of two persons going thus, hand in hand, through life, joining in the discharge of their necessary duties, assisting their fellow-creatures, and diffusing good wherever they go—each strengthening and reflecting the virtues of the other, may we not well ask how they could look upon each other without feeling the highest and noblest spirit of tenderness, affection, and esteem?"

"O yes, I was right, Lucy; all romance,

all imagination, all honeypot, with a streak of treacle here and there for the shading," and, as he spoke, he committed another felony in the disguise of a horse-laugh, which, however, came only from the jaws out.

"But, papa," she proceeded, anxious to change the subject and curtail the interview, "as I said, I trust something agreeable has happened; you seem in unusually good spirits."

"Why, yes, Lucy," he replied, setting his eyes upon her with an expression of good-humor that made her tremble—"yes, I was in Ballytrain, and had an interview with a friend of yours, who is stopping in the 'Mitre.' But, my dear, surely that is no reason why you should all at once grow so pale! I almost think that you have contracted a habit of becoming pale. I observed it this morning—I observe it now; but, after all, perhaps it is only a new method of blushing—the blush reversed—that is to say, blushing backwards. Come, you foolish girl, don't be alarmed; your lover had more sense than you have, and knew when and where to place confidence."

He rose up now, and having taken a turn or two across the room, approached her, and in deep, earnest, and what he intended to be, and was, an impressive and startling voice, added:

"Yes, Miss Gourlay, he has told me all."

Lucy looked at him, unmoved as to the information, for she knew it was false; but she left him nothing to complain of with regard to her paleness now. In fact, she blushed deeply at the falsehood he attempted to impose upon her. The whole tenor and spirit of the conversation was instantly changed, and assumed for a moment a painful and disagreeable formality.

"To whom do you allude, sir?" she asked.

"To the gentleman, madam, to whom you bowed so graciously, and, let me add, significantly, to-day."

"And may I beg to know, sir, what he has told you?"

"Have I not already said that he has told me *all?* Yes, madam, I have said so, I think. But come, Lucy," he added, affecting to relax, "be a good girl; as you said, yourself, it should not be sir and madam between you and me. You are all I have in the world—my only child, and if I appear harsh to you, it is only because I love and am anxious to make you happy. Come, my dear child, put confidence in me, and rely upon my affection and generosity."

Lucy was staggered for a moment, but only for a moment, for she thoroughly understood him.

"But, papa, if the gentleman you allude to *has told you all*, what is there left for me to confide to you?"

"Why, the truth is, Lucy, I was anxious to test his sincerity, and to have your version as well as his. He appears, certainly, to be a gentleman and a man of honor."

"And if he be a man of honor, papa, how can you require such a test?"

"I said, observe, that he *appears* to be such; but, you know, a man may be mistaken in the estimate he forms of another in a first interview. Come, Lucy, do something to make me your friend."

"My friend!" she replied, whilst the tears rose to her eyes. "Alas, papa, must I hear such language as this from a father's lips? Should anything be necessary to make that father the friend of his only child? I know not how to reply to you, sir; you have placed me in a position of almost unexampled distress and pain. I cannot, without an apparent want of respect and duty, give expression to what I know and feel."

"Why not, you foolish girl, especially when you see me in such good-humor? Take courage. You will find me more indulgent than you imagine. Imitate your lover yonder."

She looked at him, and her eyes sparkled through her tears with shame, but not merely with shame, for her heart was filled with such an indignant and oppressive sense of his falsehood as caused her to weep and sob aloud for two or three minutes.

"Come, my dear child, I repeat—imitate your lover yonder. Confess; but don't weep thus. Surely I am not harsh to you now?"

"Papa," she replied wiping her eyes, "the confidence which you solicit, it is not in my power to bestow. Do not, therefore, press me on this subject. It is enough that I have already confessed to you that my affections are engaged. I will now add what perhaps I ought to have added before, that this was with the sanction of my dear mamma. Indeed, I would have said so, but that I was reluctant to occasion reflections from you incompatible with my affection for her memory."

"Your mother, madam," he added, his face blackening into the hue of his natural temper, "was always a poor, weak-minded woman. She was foolish, madam, and indiscreet, and has made you wicked—trained you up to hypocrisy, falsehood, and disobedience. Yes, madam, and in every instance where you go contrary to *my* will, you act upon *her* principles. Why do you not respect truth, Miss Gourlay?"

"Alas, sir!" she replied, stung and shocked by his unmanly reflections upon the

memory of her mother, whilst her tears burst out afresh, "I am this moment weeping for my father's disregard of it."

"How, madam! I am a liar, am I? Oh, dutiful daughter!"

"Mamma, sir, was all truth, all goodness, all affection. She was at once an angel and a martyr, and I will not hear her blessed memory insulted by the very man who, above all others, ought to protect and revere it. I am not, papa, to be intimidated by looks. If it be our duty to defend the absent, is it not ten thousand times more so to defend the dead? Shall a daughter hear with acquiescence the memory of a mother, who would have died for her, loaded with obloquy and falsehood? No, sir! Menace and abuse myself as much as you wish, but I tell you, that while I have life and the power of speech, I will fling back, even into a father's face, the falsehoods—the gross and unmanly falsehoods—with which he insults her tomb, and calumniates her memory and her virtues. Do not blame me, sir, for this language; I would be glad to honor you if I could; I beseech you, my father, enable me to do so."

"I see you take a peculiar—a wanton pleasure in calling me a liar."

"No, sir, I do not call you a liar; but I know you regard truth no farther than it serves your own purposes. Have you not told me just now, that the gentleman in the Mitre Inn has made certain disclosures to you concerning himself and me? And now, father, I ask you, is there one word of truth in this assertion? You know there is not. Have you not sought my confidence by a series of false pretences, and a relation of circumstances that were utterly without foundation? All this, however, though inexpressibly painful to me as your daughter, I could overlook without one word of reply; but I never will allow you to cast foul and cowardly reproach upon the memory of the best of mothers—upon the memory of a wife of whom, father, you were unworthy, and whom, to my own knowledge, your harshness and severity hurried into a premature grave. Oh, never did woman pay so dreadful a penalty for suffering herself to be forced into marriage with a man she could not love, and who was unworthy of her affection! That, sir, was the only action of her life in which her daughter cannot, *will not*, imitate her."

She rose to retire, but her father, now having relapsed into all his dark vehemence of temper, exclaimed—

"Now mark me, madam, before you go. I say you shall sleep under lock and key this night. I tell you that I shall use the most rigorous measures with you, the severest, the harshest, that I can devise, or I shall break that stubborn will of yours. Do not imagine for one moment that you shall overcome *me*, or triumph in your disobedience. No, sooner than you should, I would break your spirit—I would break your heart."

"Be it so, sir. I am ready to suffer anything, provided only you will forbear to insult the memory of my mother."

With these words she sought her own room, where she indulged in a long fit of bitter grief.

Sir Thomas Gourlay, in these painful contests of temper with his candid and high-minded daughter, was by no means so cool and able as when engaged in similar exercitations with strangers. The disadvantage against him in his broils with Lucy, arose from the fact that he had nothing in this respect to conceal from her. He felt that his natural temper and disposition were known, and that the assumption of any and every false aspect of character, must necessarily be seen through by her, and his hypocrisy detected and understood. Not so, however, with strangers. When manœuvring with them, he could play, if not a deeper, at least a safer game; and of this he himself was perfectly conscious. Had his heart been capable of any noble or dignified emotion, he must necessarily have admired the greatness of his daughter's mind, her indomitable love of truth, and the beautiful and undying tenderness with which her affection brooded over the memory of her mother. Selfishness, however, and that low ambition which places human happiness in the enjoyment of wealth, and honors, and empty titles, had so completely blinded him to the virtues of his daughter, and to the sacred character of his own duties as a father, bound by the first principles of nature to promote her happiness, without corrupting her virtues, or weakening her moral impressions—we say these things had so blinded him, and hardened his heart against all the purer duties and responsibilities of life, that he looked upon his daughter as a hardened, disobedient girl, dead to the influence of his own good—the ambition of the world—and insensible to the dignified position which awaited her among the votaries of rank and fashion. But, alas, poor man! how little did he know of the healthy and substantial virtues which confer upon those whose station lies in middle and in humble life, a benevolent and hearty consciousness of pure enjoyment, immeasurably superior to the hollow forms of life and conduct in aristocratic circles, which, like the tempting fruit of the Dead Sea, seem beautiful to the eye,

but are nothing more, when tested by the common process of humanity, than ashes and bitterness to the taste. We do not now speak of a whole class, for wherever human nature is, it will have its virtues as well as its vices; but we talk of the system, which cannot be one of much happiness or generous feeling, so long as it separates itself from the general sympathies of mankind.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Fortune-Teller—An Equivocal Prediction.

The stranger's appearance at the "Mitre," and the incident which occurred there, were in a peculiar degree mortifying to the Black Baronet, for so he was generally called. At this precise period he had projected the close of the negotiation with respect to the contemplated marriage between Lucy and Lord Dunroe. Lord Cullamore, whose residence was only a few miles from Red Hall, had been for some time in delicate health, but he was now sufficiently recovered to enter upon the negotiation proposed, to which, were it not for certain reasons that will subsequently appear, he had, in truth, no great relish; and this, principally on Lucy Gourlay's account, and with a view to her future happiness, which he did not think had any great chance of being promoted by a matrimonial alliance with his son.

Not many minutes after the interview between Lucy and her father, a liveried servant arrived, bearing a letter in reply to one from Sir Thomas, to the following effect:

"My Dear Gourlay,—I have got much stronger within the last fortnight; that is, so far as my mere bodily health is concerned. As I shall proceed to London in a day or two, it is perhaps better that I should see you upon the subject of this union, between your daughter and my son, especially as you seem to wish it so anxiously. To tell you the truth, I fear very much that you are, contrary to remonstrance, and with your eyes open to the consequences, precipitating your charming and admirable Lucy upon wretchedness and disconsolation for the remainder of her life; and I can tell her, and would if I were allowed, that the coronet of a countess, however highly either she or you may appreciate it, will be found but a poor substitute for the want of that affection and esteem, upon which only can be founded domestic happiness and contentment.

"Ever, my dear Gourlay, faithfully yours,

"Cullamore."

The baronet's face, after having perused this epistle, brightened up as much as any face of such sombre and repulsive expression could be supposed to do; but, again, upon taking into consideration what he looked upon as the unjustifiable obstinacy of his daughter, it became once more stern and overshadowed. He ground his teeth with vexation as he paced to and fro the room, as was his custom when in a state of agitation or anger. After some minutes, during which his passion seemed only to increase, he went to her apartment, and, thrusting in his head to ascertain that she was safe, he deliberately locked the door, and, putting the key in his pocket, once more ordered his horse, and proceeded to Glenshee Castle, the princely residence of his friend, Lord Cullamore.

None of our readers, we presume, would feel disposed to charge our hardened baronet with any tendency to superstition. That he felt its influence, however, was a fact; for it may have been observed that there is a class of minds which, whilst they reject all moral control when any legitimate barrier stands between them and the gratification of their evil passions or designs, are yet susceptible of the effects which are said to proceed from such slight and trivial incidents as are supposed to be invested with a mysterious and significant influence upon the actions of individuals. It is not, however, those who possess the strongest passions that are endowed with the strongest principles, unless when it happens that these passions are kept in subjection by religion or reason. In fact, the very reverse of the proposition in general holds true; and, indeed, Sir Thomas Gourlay was a strong and startling proof of this. In his case, however, it might be accounted for by the influence over his mind, when young, of a superstitious nurse named Jennie Corbet, who was a stout believer in all the superstitious lore which at that time constituted a kind of social and popular creed throughout the country. It was not that the reason of Sir Thomas was at all convinced by, or yielded any assent to, such legends, but a habit of belief in them, which he was never able properly to throw off, had been created, which left behind it a lingering impression resulting from their exhibition, which, in spite of all his efforts, clung to him through life.

Another peculiarity of his we may as well mention here, which related to his bearing while on horseback. It had been shrewdly observed by the people, that, whilst in the act of concocting any plan, or projecting any scheme, he uniformly rode at an easy, slow,

and thoughtful pace ; but, when under the influence of his angry passions, he dashed along with a fury and vehemence of speed that startled those whom he met, and caused them to pause and look after him with wonder.

The distance between Red Hall and Glenshee Castle was not more than four miles ; the estates of both proprietors lying, in fact, together. The day was calm, mild, and breathed of the fragrant and opening odors of spring. Sir Thomas had nearly measured half the distance at a very slow pace, for, in truth, he was then silently rehearsing his part in the interview which was about to take place between him and his noble friend. The day, though calm, as we said, was nevertheless without sunshine, and, consequently, that joyous and exhilarating spirit of warmth and light which the vernal sun floods down upon all nature, rendering earth and air choral with music, was not felt so powerfully. On the contrary, the silence and gloom were somewhat unusual, considering the mildness which prevailed. Every one, however, has experienced the influence of such days—an influence which, notwithstanding the calm and genial character of the day itself, is felt to be depressing, and at variance with cheerfulness and good spirits.

Be this as it may, Sir Thomas was proceeding leisurely along, when a turn of the road brought him at once upon the brow of the small valley from which the residence of the Cullamore family had its name—Glenshee, or, in English, the Glen of the Fairies. Its sides were wild, abrupt, and precipitous, and partially covered with copse-wood, as was the little brawling stream which ran through it, and of which the eye of the spectator could only catch occasional glimpses from among the hazel, dogberry, and white thorn, with which it was here and there covered. In the bottom, there was a small, but beautiful green carpet, nearly, if not altogether circular, about a hundred yards in diameter, in the centre of which stood one of those fairy rings that gave its name and character to the glen. The place was, at all times, wild, and so solitary that, after dusk, few persons in the neighborhood wished to pass it alone. On the day in question, its appearance was still and impressive, and, owing to the gloom which prevailed, it presented a lonely and desolate aspect, calculated, certainly, in some degree, to inspire a weak mind with something of that superstitious feeling which was occasioned by its supernatural reputation. We said that the baronet came to a winding part of the road which brought this wild and startling spot before him, and just at the same moment he was confronted by an object quite as wild and as startling. This was no other than a celebrated fortune-teller of that day, named Ginty Cooper, a middle-aged sibyl, who enjoyed a very wide reputation for her extraordinary insight into futurity, as well as for performing a variety of cures upon both men and cattle, by her acquaintance, it was supposed, with fairy lore, the influence of charms, and the secret properties of certain herbs with which, if you believed her, she had been made acquainted by the *Dainhe Shee*, or good people themselves.

The baronet's first feeling was one of annoyance and vexation, and for what cause, the reader will soon understand.

"Curse this ill-looking wretch," he exclaimed mentally ; she is the first individual I have met since I left home. It is not that I regard the matter a feather, but, somehow, I don't wish that a woman—especially such a blasted looking sibyl as this—should be the first person I meet when going on any business of importance." Indeed, it is to be observed here, that some of Ginty's predictions and cures were such as, among an ignorant and credulous people, strongly impressed by the superstitions of the day, and who placed implicit reliance upon her prophetic and curative faculties, were certainly calculated to add very much to her peculiar influence over them, originating, as they believed, in her communion with supernatural powers. Her appearance, too, was strikingly calculated to sustain the extraordinary reputation which she bore, yet it was such as we feel it to be almost impossible to describe. Her face was thin, and supernaturally pale, and her features had a death-like composure, an almost awful rigidity, that induced the spectator to imagine that she had just risen from the grave. Her thin lips were repulsively white, and her teeth so much whiter that they almost filled you with fear ; but it was in her eye that the symbol of her prophetic power might be said to lie. It was wild, gray, and almost transparent, and whenever she was, or appeared to be, in a thoughtful mood, or engaged in the contemplation of futurity, it kept perpetually scintillating, or shifting, as it were, between two proximate objects, to which she seemed to look as if they had been in the far distance of space—that is, it turned from one to another with a quivering rapidity which the eye of the spectator was unable to follow. And yet it was evident on reflection, that in her youth she must have been not only good-looking, but handsome. This quick and unnatural motion of the eye was extremely wild and startling, and when contrasted with the white and death-like character of her teeth, and the moveless expression of her countenance, was in admira-

ble keeping with the supernatural qualities attributed to her. She wore no bonnet, but her white death-bed like cap was tied round her head by a band of clean linen, and came under her chin, as in the case of a corpse, thus making her appear as if she purposely assumed the startling habiliments of the grave. As for the outlines of her general person, they afforded evident proof—thin and emaciated as she then was—that her figure in early life must have been remarkable for great neatness and symmetry. She inhabited a solitary cottage in the glen, a fact which, in the opinion of the people, completed the wild *prestige* of her character.

"You accursed hag," said the baronet, whose vexation at meeting her was for the moment beyond any superstitious impression which he felt, "what brought you here? What devil sent you across my path now? Who are you, or what are you, for you look like a libel on humanity?"

"If I don't," she replied, bitterly, "I know who does. There is not much beauty between us, Thomas Gourlay."

"What do you mean by Thomas Gourlay, you sorceress?"

"You'll come to know that some day before you die, Thomas; perhaps sooner than you can think or dream of."

"How can you tell that, you irreverent old viper?"

"I could tell you much more than that, Thomas," she replied showing her corpse-like teeth with a ghastly smile of mocking bitterness that was fearful.

The Black Baronet, in spite of himself, began to feel somewhat uneasy, for, in fact, there appeared such a wild but confident significance in her manner and language that he deemed it wiser to change his tactics with the woman, and soothe her a little if he could. In truth, her words agitated him so much that he unconsciously pulled out of his waistcoat pocket the key of Lucy's room, and began to dangle with it as he contemplated her with something like alarm.

"My poor woman, you must be raving," he replied. "What could a destitute creature like you know about *my* affairs? I don't remember that I ever saw you before."

"That's not the question, Thomas Gourlay, but the question is, what have you done with the child of your eldest brother, the lawful heir of the property and title that you now bear, and bear unjustly."

He was much startled by this allusion, for although aware that the disappearance of the child in question had been for many long years well known, yet, involved, as it was, in unaccountable mystery, still the circumstance had never been forgotten.

"That's an old story, my good woman," he replied. "You don't charge me, I hope, as some have done, with making away with him? You might as well charge me with kidnapping my own son, you foolish woman, who, you know, I suppose, disappeared very soon after the other."

"I know he did," she replied; "but neither I nor any one else ever charged you with *that* act; and I know there are a great many of opinion that both acts were committed by some common enemy to your house, who wished, for some unknown cause of hatred, to extinguish your whole family. That is, indeed, the best defence you have for the disappearance of your *brother's* son; but, mark me, Thomas Gourlay—that defence will not pass with God, with me, *nor* with your own heart. I have my own opinion upon that subject, as well as upon many others. You may ask your own conscience, Thomas Gourlay, but he'll be a close friend of yours that will ever hear its answer."

"And is this all you had to say to me, you ill-thinking old vermin?" he replied, again losing his temper.

"No," she answered, "I wish to tell your fortune; and you will do well to listen to me."

"Well," said he, in a milder tone, putting at the same time the key of Lucy's door again into his pocket, without being in the slightest degree conscious of it, "if you are, I suppose I must cross your hand with silver as usual; take this."

"No," she replied, drawing back with another ghastly smile, the meaning of which was to him utterly undefinable, "from *your* hand nothing in the shape of money will ever pass into *mine*; but listen"—she looked at him for some moments, during which she paused, and then added—"I will not do it, I am not able to render good for evil, yet; I will suffer you to run your course. I am well aware that neither warning nor truth would have any effect upon you, unless to enable you to prepare and sharpen your plans with more ingenious villany. But you have a daughter; I will speak to you about *her*."

"Do," said the baronet; "but why not take the silver?"

"You will know that one day before you die, too," said she, "and I don't think it will smooth your death-bed pillow."

"Why, you are a very mysterious old lady."

"I'll now give you a proof of that. You locked in your daughter before you left home."

Sir Thomas could not for his life prevent himself from starting so visibly that she observed it at once.

"No such thing," he replied, affecting a composure which he certainly did not feel; "you are an impostor, and I now see that you know nothing."

"What I say is true," she replied, solemnly, "and you have stated, Thomas Gourlay, what you know to be a falsehood; I would be glad to discover you uttering truth unless with some evil intention. But now for your daughter; you wish to hear her fate?"

"Certainly I do; but then you know nothing. You charge me with falsehood, but it is yourself that are the liar."

She waved her hand indignantly.

"Will my daughter's husband be a man of title?" he asked, his mind passing to the great and engrossing object of his ambition.

"He *will* be a man of title," she replied, "and he will make her a countess."

"You must take money," said he, thrusting his hand into his pocket, and once more pulling out his purse—"that is worth something, surely."

She waved her hand again, with a gesture of repulse still more indignant and frightful than before, and the bitter smile she gave while doing it again displayed her corpse-like teeth in a manner that was calculated to excite horror itself.

"Very well," replied the baronet; "I will not press you, only don't make such cursed frightful grimaces. But with respect to my daughter, will the marriage be with her own consent?"

"With her own consent—it will be the dearest wish of her heart."

"Could you name her husband?"

"I could and will. Lord Dunroe will be the man, and he will make her Countess of Cullamore."

"Well, now," replied the other, "I believe you can speak truth, and are somewhat acquainted with the future. The girl certainly is attached to him, and I have no doubt the union will be, as you say, a happy one."

"You know in your soul," she replied, "that she detests him; and you know she would sacrifice her life this moment sooner than marry him."

"What, then, do you mean?" he asked, "and why do you thus contradict yourself?"

"Good-by, Thomas Gourlay," she replied. "So far as regards either the past or the future, you will hear nothing further from me to-day; but, mark me, we shall meet again—and we have met before."

"That, certainly, is not true," he said, "unless it might be accidentally on the highway; but, until this moment, my good woman, I don't remember to have seen your face in my life."

She looked toward the sky, and pointing her long, skinny finger upwards, said, "How will you be prepared to render an account of all your deeds and iniquities before Him who will judge you *there!*"

There was a terrible calmness, a dreadful solemnity on her white, ghastly features as she spoke, and pointed to the sky, after which she passed on in silence and took no further notice of the Black Baronet.

It is very difficult to describe the singular variety of sensations which her conversation, extraordinary, wild, and mysterious as it was, caused this remarkable man to experience. He knew not what to make of it. One thing was certain, however, and he could not help admitting it to himself, that, during their short and singular dialogue, she had, he knew not how, obtained and exercised an extraordinary ascendency over him. He looked after her, but she was proceeding calmly along, precisely as if they had not spoken.

"She is certainly the greatest mystery in the shape of woman," he said to himself, as he proceeded, "that I have ever yet met—that is, if she be a thing of flesh and blood—for to me she seems to belong more to death and its awful accessories, than to life and its natural reality. How in the devil's name could she have known that I locked that obstinate and undutiful girl up?" This is altogether inexplicable, upon principles affecting only the ordinary powers of common humanity. Then she affirmed, prophesied, or what you will, that Lucy and Dunroe will be married—willingly and happily! That certainly is strange, and as agreeable as strange; but I will doubt nothing after the incident of the locking up, so strangely revealed to me too, at a moment when, perhaps, no human being knew it but Lucy and myself. And, what is stranger still, she knows the state of the girl's affections, and that she at present detests Dunroe. Yet, stay, have I not seen her somewhere before? She said so herself. There is a faint impression on me that her face is not altogether unfamiliar to me, but I cannot recall either time or place, and perhaps the impression is a wrong one."

CHAPTER IX.

Candor and Dissimulation.

Glenshee Castle was built by the father of the then Lord Cullamore, at a cost of upwards of one hundred thousand pounds. Its general effect and situation were beautiful, imposing, and picturesque in the

extreme. Its north and east sides, being the principal fronts, contained the state apartments, while the other sides, for the building was a parallelogram, contained the offices, and were overshadowed, or nearly altogether concealed, by trees of a most luxuriant growth. In the east front stood a magnificent circular tower, in fine proportion with it; whilst an octagon one, of proportions somewhat inferior, terminated the northern angle. The front, again, on the north, extending from the last mentioned tower, was connected with a fine Gothic chapel, remarkable for the beauty of its stained windows, supervening buttresses, and a belfry at its western extremity. On the north front, which was the entrance, rose a porch leading into a vestibule, and from thence into the magnificent hall. From this sprung a noble stone staircase, with two inferior flights that led to a corridor, which communicated with a gorgeous suit of bedchambers. The grand hall communicated on the western side with those rooms that were appropriated to the servants, and those on the opposite, with the state apartments, which were of magnificent size and proportions, having all the wood-work of Irish oak, exquisitely polished. The gardens were in equal taste, and admirably kept. The pleasure grounds were ornamented with some of the rarest exotics. On each side of the avenue, as you approached the castle, stood a range of noble elms, beeches, and oaks intermingled; and, as you reached the grand entrance, you caught a view of the demesne and deer-park, which were, and are, among the finest in the kingdom. There was also visible, from the steps of the hall and front window, the bends of a sweet, and winding river near the centre of the demesne, spanned by three or four light and elegant arches, that connected the latter and the deer-park with each other. Nothing, however, was so striking in the whole landscape as the gigantic size and venerable appearance of the wood, which covered a large portion of the demesne, and the patriarchal majesty of those immense trees, which stood separated from the mass of forest, singly or in groups, in different parts of it. The evening summer's deep light, something between gold and purple, as it poured its mellow radiance upon the green openings between these noble trees, or the evening smoke, as it arose at the same hour from the chimneys of the keepers' houses among their branches, were sights worth a whole gallery of modern art.

As the baronet approached the castle, he thought again of the woman and her prophecies, and yielded to their influence, in so far as they assured him that his daughter was destined to become the proud mistress of all the magnificence by which he was surrounded. The sun had now shone forth, and as its clear light fell upon the house, its beautiful pleasure-grounds, its ornamented lawns, and its stately avenues, he felt that there was something worth making a struggle for, even at the expense of conscience, when he contemplated, with the cravings of an ambitious heart, the spirit of rich and deep repose in which the whole gorgeous spectacle lay.

On reaching the hall he rang, and in a few minutes was admitted to his friend, Lord Cullamore.

Lord Cullamore was remarkable for that venerable dignity and graceful ease, which, after all, can only result from early and constant intercourse with polished and aristocratic society. This person was somewhat above the middle size, his eye clear and significant, his features expressive, and singularly indicative of what he felt or said. In fact, he appeared to be an intelligent, candid man, who, in addition to that air bestowed upon him by his rank and position, and which could never for a moment be mistaken, was altogether one of the best specimens of his class. He had neither those assumptions of hateful condescension, nor that eternal consciousness of his high birth, which too frequently degrade and disgrace the commonplace and vulgar nobleman; especially when he makes the privileges of his class an offence and an oppression to his inferiors, or considers it a crime to feel or express those noble sympathies, which, as a first principle, ought to bind him to that class by whom he lives, and who constitute the great mass of humanity, from whose toil and labor originate the happiness of his order. When in conversation, the natural animation of his lordship's countenance was checked, not only by a polite and complacent sense of what was due to those with whom he spoke, and a sincere anxiety to put them at their ease, but evidently by an expression that seemed the exponent of some undivulged and corroding sorrow. We may add, that he was affectionate, generous, indolent; not difficult to be managed when he had no strong purpose to stimulate him; keen of observation, but not prone to suspicion; consequently often credulous, and easily imposed upon; but, having once detected fraud or want of candor, the discovery was certain forever to deprive the offending party of his esteem—no matter what their rank or condition in life might be.

We need scarcely say, therefore, that this amiable nobleman, possessing as he did all the high honor and integrity by which his

whole life was regulated, (with one solitary exception, for which his heart paid a severe penalty,) carried along with him, in his old age, that respect, reverence, and affection, to which the dignified simplicity of his life entitled him. He was, indeed, one of those few noblemen whose virtues gave to the aristocratic spirit, true grace and appropriate dignity, instead of degrading it, as too many of his *caste* do, by pride, arrogance, and selfishness.

Sir Thomas Gourlay, on entering the magnificent library to which he was conducted, found his lordship in the act of attaching his signature to some papers. The latter received him kindly and graciously, and shook hands with him, but without rising, for which he apologized.

"I am not at all strong, Sir Thomas," he added; "for although this last attack has left me, yet I feel that it has taken a considerable portion of my strength along with it. I am, however, free from pain and complaint, and my health is gradually improving."

"But, my lord, do you think you will be able to encounter the fatigue and difficulties of a journey to London?" replied the other. "Will you have strength for it?"

"I hope so; travelling by sea always agreed with and invigorated my constitution. The weather, too, is fine, and I will take the long voyage. Besides, it is indispensable that I should go. This wild son of mine has had a duel with some one in a shooting gallery—has been severely hit—and is very ill; but, at the same time, out of danger."

"A duel! Good heavens! My lord, how did it happen?" asked the baronet.

"I am not exactly aware of all the particulars; but I think they cannot be creditable to the parties, or to Dunroe, at least; for one of his friends has so far overshot the mark as to write to me, for my satisfaction, that they have succeeded in keeping the affair out of the papers. Now, there must be something wrong when my son's friends are anxious to avoid publicity in the matter. The conduct of that young man, my dear Sir Thomas, is a source of great affliction to me; and I tremble for the happiness of your daughter, should they be united."

"You are too severe on Dunroe, my lord," replied the baronet. "It is better for a man to sow his wild oats *in* season than *out* of season. Besides, you know the proverb, 'A reformed rake,' etc."

"The popularity of a proverb, my good friend, is no proof of its truth; and, besides, I should wish to place a hope of my son's reformation upon something firmer and more solid than the strength of an old adage."

"But you know, my lord," replied the other, "that the instances of post-matrimonial reformation, if I may use the word, from youthful folly, are sufficient to justify the proverb. I am quite certain, that, if Lord Dunroe were united to a virtuous and sensible wife, he would settle down into the character of a steady, honorable, and independent man. I could prove this by many instances, even within your knowledge and mine. Why, then, exclude his lordship from the benefit of a contingency, to speak the least, which we know falls out happily in so many instances?"

"You mean you could prove the probability of it, my dear baronet; for, at present, the case is not susceptible of proof. What you say may be true; but, on the other hand, it may *not;* and, in the event of his marrying without the post-matrimonial reformation you speak of, what becomes of your daughter's happiness?"

"Nay, I know generous Dunroe so well, my lord, that I would not, even as Lucy's father, hesitate a moment to run the risk."

"But what says Lucy herself? And how does she stand affected toward him? For that is the main point. This matter, you know, was spoken over some few years ago, and conditionally approved of by us both; but my son was then very young, and had not plunged into that course of unjustifiable extravagance and profligacy which, to my cost, has disgraced his latter years. I scorn to veil his conduct, baronet, for it would be dishonorable under the circumstances between us, and I trust you will be equally candid in detailing to me the sentiments of your daughter on the subject."

"My lord, I shall unquestionably do so; but Lucy, you must know, is a girl of a very peculiar disposition. She possesses, in fact, a good deal of her unworthy father's determination and obstinacy. Urge her with too much vehemence, and she will resist; try to accelerate her pace, and she will stand still; but leave her to herself, to the natural and reasonable suggestions of her excellent sense, and you will get her to do anything."

"That is but a very indifferent character you bestow upon your daughter, Sir Thomas," replied his lordship. "I trust she deserves a better one at your hands."

"Why, my lord," replied the baronet, smiling after his own peculiar fashion, that is to say, with a kind of bitter sarcasm, "I have as good a right, I think, to exaggerate the failings of my daughter as you have to magnify those of your son. But a truce to this, and to be serious: I know the girl; you know, besides, something about women yourself, my lord, and I need not say that

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SHE LOOKED TOWARDS THE SKY, AND POINTING HER LONG, SKINNY FINGER UPWARDS, SAID, "HOW WILL YOU BE PREPARED TO RENDER AN ACCOUNT OF ALL YOUR DEEDS AND INIQUITIES BEFORE HIM WHO WILL JUDGE YOU *there*?—p. 350.

it is unwise to rely upon the moods and meditations of a young lady before marriage. Upon the prospect of such an important change in their position, the best of them will assume a great deal. The period constitutes the last limited portion of their freedom; and, of course, all the caprices of the heart, and all the giddy ebullitions of gratified vanity, manifest themselves so strangely, that it is extremely difficult to understand them, or know their wishes. Under such circumstances, my lord, they will, in the very levity of delight, frequently say 'no,' when they mean 'yes,' and *vice versa*."

"Sir Thomas," replied his lordship, gravely, "marriage, instead of being the close, should be the commencement, of their happiness. No woman, however, of sense, whether before marriage or after it, is difficult to be understood. Upon a subject of such importance—one that involves the happiness of her future life—no female possessing truth and principle would, for one moment, suffer a misconception to exist. Now your daughter, my favorite Lucy, is a girl of fine sense and high feeling, and I am at a loss, Sir Thomas, I assure you, to reconcile either one or the other with your metaphysics. If Miss Gourlay sat for the disagreeable picture you have just drawn, she must be a great hypocrite, or you have grossly misrepresented her, which I conceive it is not now your interest or your wish to do."

"But, my lord, I was speaking of the sex in general."

"But, sir," replied his lordship with dignity, "we are here to speak of your daughter."

Our readers may perceive that the wily baronet was beating about the bush, and attempting to impose upon his lordship by vague disquisitions. He was perfectly aware of Lord Cullamore's indomitable love of truth, and he consequently feared to treat him with a direct imposition, taking it for granted that, if he had, an interview of ten minutes between Lucy and his lordship might lead to an exposure of his duplicity and falsehood. He felt himself in a painful and distressing dilemma. Aware that, if the excellent peer had the slightest knowledge of Lucy's loathing horror of his son, he would never lend his sanction to the marriage, the baronet knew not whether to turn to the right or to the left, or, in other words, whether to rely on truth or falsehood. At length, he began to calculate upon the possibility of his daughter's ultimate acquiescence, upon the force of his own unbending character, her isolated position, without any one to encourage or abet her in what he looked upon as her disobedience, consequently his complete control over her; having summoned up all those points together, he resolved to beat about a little longer, but, at all events, to keep the peer in the dark, and, if pressed, to hazard the falsehood. He replied, however, to his lordship's last observation:

"I assure you, my lord, I thought not of my daughter while I drew the picture."

"Well, then," replied his lordship, smiling, "all I have to say is, that you are very eloquent in generalities—generalities, too, my friend, that do not bear upon the question. In one word, is Miss Gourlay inclined to this marriage? and I beseech you, my dear baronet, no more of these generalities."

"She is as much so, my lord," replied the other, "as nineteen women out of every twenty are in general. But it is not to be expected, I repeat, that a delicately-minded and modest young creature will at once step forward unabashed and exclaim, 'Yes, papa, I will marry him.' I protest, my lord, it would require the desperate heroism of an old maid on the last legs of hope, or the hardihood of a widow of three husbands, to go through such an ordeal. We consequently must make allowance for those delicate and blushing evasions which, after all, only mask compliance."

By this reply the baronet hoped to be able to satisfy his friend, without plunging into the open falsehood. The old nobleman, however, looked keenly at him, and asked a question which penetrated like a dagger into the lying soul within him.

"She consents, then, in the ordinary way?"

"She does, my lord."

"Well," replied the peer, "that, as the world goes, is, perhaps, as much as can be expected at present, You have not, I dare say, attempted to force her very much on the subject, and the poor girl has no mother. Under such circumstances, the delicacy of a young lady is certainly entitled to a manly forbearance. Have you alluded to Dunroe's want of morals?"

"Your opinion of his lordship and mine differ on this point considerably, my lord," replied the baronet. "You judge him with the severity of a father, I with the moderation of a friend. I have certainly made no allusion to his morals."

"Of course, then, you are aware, that it is your duty to do so; as a father, that it is a most solemn and indispensable duty?"

The soul of Sir Thomas Gourlay writhed within him like a wounded serpent, at the

calm but noble truth contained in this apophthegm. He was not, however, to be caught; the subtlety of his invention enabled him to escape on that occasion at least.

"It has this moment occurred to me, my lord, with reference to this very point, that it may be possible, and by no means improbable—at least I for one anxiously hope it—that the recent illness of my Lord Dunroe may have given him time to reflect upon his escapades and follies, and that he will rejoin society a wiser and a better man. Under these expectations, I appeal to your own good sense, my lord, whether it would be wise or prudent by at present alluding—especially if it be rendered unnecessary by his reformation—to his want of morals, in any conversation I may hold with my daughter, and thereby deprive him of her personal respect and esteem, the only basis upon which true affection and domestic happiness can safely rest. Let us therefore wait, my lord. Perhaps the loss of some of his hot blood may have cooled him. Perhaps, after all," he added, smiling, "we may have reason to thank his phlebotomist."

The peer saw Sir Thomas's play, and, giving him another keen glance, replied:

"I never depended much upon a dramatic repentance, my dear baronet. Many a resolution of amendment has been made on the sick bed; but we know in general how they are kept, especially by the young. Be this as it may, our discussion has been long enough, and sufficiently ineffectual. My impression is, that Miss Gourlay is disinclined to the alliance. In truth, I dare say she is as well acquainted with his moral reputation as we are—perhaps better. Dunroe's conduct has been too often discussed in fashionable life to be a secret to her, or any one else who has access to it. If she reject him from a principle of virtuous delicacy and honor, she deserves a better fate than ever to call him husband. But perhaps she may have some other attachment?"

"My lord," replied Sir Thomas, rising, "I think I can perceive on which side the disinclination lies. You have—and pray excuse me for saying so—studiously thrown, during the present conference, every possible obstruction in the way of an arrangement on this subject. If your lordship is determined that the alliance between our families shall *not* take place, I pray you to say so. Upon your own showing, my daughter will have little that she ought to regret in escaping Dunroe."

"And Dunroe would have much to be thankful to God for in securing your daughter. But, Sir Thomas Gourlay, I will be candid and open with you. Pray observe, sir, that, during this whole discussion, conference, or what you will, I did not get out of you a single direct answer, and that upon a subject involving the life-long happiness of your only child. I tell you, baronet, that your indirectness of purpose, and—you will excuse me, too, for what I am about to say, the importance of the subject justifies me—your evasions have excited my suspicions, and my present impression is, that Miss Gourlay is averse to a matrimonial union with my son; that she has heard reports of his character which have justly alarmed her high-minded sense of delicacy and honor; and that you, her parent, are forcing her into a marriage which she detests. Look into your own heart, Sir Thomas, and see whether you are not willing to risk her peace of mind for the miserable ambition of seeing her one day a countess. Alas! my friend," he continued, "there is no talisman in the coronet of a countess to stay the progress of sorrow, or check the decline of a breaking heart. If Miss Gourlay be, as I fear she is, averse to this union, do not sacrifice her to ambition and a profligate. She is too precious a treasure to be thrown away upon two objects so utterly worthless. Her soul is too pure to be allied to contamination—her heart too noble, too good, too generous, to be broken by unavailing grief and a repentance that will probably come too late."

"If I assure you, my lord, that she is not averse to the match—nay"—and here this false man consoled his conscience by falling back upon the prophecy of Ginty Cooper—"if I assure you that she *will* marry Dunroe willingly—nay, with delight, will your lordship then rest satisfied?"

"I must depend upon your word, Sir Thomas; am I not in conversation with a gentleman?"

"Well, then, my lord, I assure you that it is so. Your lordship will find, when the time comes, that my daughter is not only not indisposed to this union, but absolutely anxious to become your daughter-in-law"—bad as he was, he could not force himself to say, in so many plain words, "the wife of your son." "But, my lord," he proceeded, "if you will permit me to make a single observation, I will thank you, and I trust you will excuse me besides."

"Unquestionably, Sir Thomas."

"Well, then, my lord, what I have observed during our conversation, with great pain, is, that you seem to entertain—pardon me, I speak in good feeling, I assure your lordship—that you seem, I say, to entertain a very unkind and anything but a parental feeling for your son. What, after all, do his wild eccentricities amount to more than the

freedom and indulgence in those easy habits of life which his wealth and station hold out to him with greater temptation than they do to others? I cannot, my lord, in fact, see anything so monstrous in the conduct of a young nobleman like him, to justify, on the part of your lordship, language so severe, and, pardon me, so prejudicial to his character. Excuse me, my lord, if I have taken a liberty to which I am in nowise entitled."

Socrates himself could scarcely have assumed a tone more moral, or a look of greater sincerity, or more anxious interest, than did the Black Baronet whilst he uttered these words.

The peer rose up, and his eye and whole person were marked by an expression and an air of the highest dignity, not unmingled with deep and obvious feeling.

"Sir Thomas Gourlay," said he, "you seem to forget the object of our conference, and our respective positions."

"My Lord," exclaimed the other, in a deprecating tone, "I meant no offence, upon my honor."

"I have taken none," replied his lordship; "but I must teach you to understand me. Whatever my son's conduct may be, one thing is evident, that you are his apologist; now, as a moral man, anxious for the happiness of your child, I tell you that you ought to have exchanged positions with me; it is you who, when about to intrust your daughter to him for life, ought to have investigated his moral character and habits, and manifested an anxiety to satisfy yourself whether they were such as would reflect honor upon her, and secure her peace of mind and tranquillity in the married state. You say, too, that I do not speak of my son in a kind or parental feeling; but do you imagine, sir, that, engaged as I am here, in a confidential and important conference, the result of which may involve the happiness or misery of two persons so dear to us both, I would be justified in withholding the truth, or lending myself to a course of dishonorable deception?"

He sat down again, and seemed deeply affected.

"God knows," he said, "that I love that wild and unthinking young man, perhaps more than I ought; but do you imagine, sir, that, because I have spoken of him with the freedom necessary and due to the importance and solemnity of our object in meeting, I could or would utter such sentiments to the world at large? I pray you, sir, then, to make and observe the distinction; and, instead of assailing me for want of affection as a parent, to thank me for the candor with which I have spoken."

The baronet felt subdued; it is evident that his mind was too coarse and selfish to understand the delicacy, the truth, and high, conscientious feeling with which Lord Cullamore conducted his part of this negotiation.

"My lord," said the baronet, who thought of another point on which to fall back, "there is one circumstance, one important fact, which we have both unaccountably overlooked, and which, after all, holds out a greater promise of domestic happiness between these young persons than anything we have thought of. His lordship is attached to my daughter. Now, where there is love, my lord, there is every chance and prospect of happiness in the married life."

"Yes, if it be mutual, Sir Thomas; everything depends on that. I am glad, however, you mentioned it. There is some hope left still; but alas, alas! what is even love when opposed to selfishness and ambition? I could —I myself could——" he seemed deeply moved, and paused for some time, as if unwilling to trust himself with speech. "Yes, I am glad you mentioned it, and I thank you, Sir Thomas, I thank you. I should wish to see these two young people happy. I believe he is attached to your daughter, and I will now mention a fact which certainly proves it. The gentleman with whom he fought that unfortunate duel was forced into it by Dunroe, in consequence of his having paid some marked attentions to Miss Gourlay, when she and her mother were in Paris, some few months before Lady Gourlay's decease. I did not wish to mention this before, out of respect for your daughter; but I do so now, confidentially, of course, in consequence of the turn our conversation has taken."

Something on the moment seemed to strike the baronet, who started, for he was unquestionably an able hand at putting scattered facts and circumstances together, and weaving a significant conclusion from them.

"That, my lord, at all events," said the coarse-minded man, after having recovered himself, "that is gratifying."

"What!" exclaimed Lord Cullamore, "to make your daughter the cause and subject of a duel, an intemperate brawl in a shooting gallery. The only hope I have is, that I trust she was not named."

"But, my lord, it is, after all, a proof of his affection for her."

His lordship smiled sarcastically, and looked at him with something like amazement, if not with contempt; but did not deign to reply.

"And now, my lord," continued the baronet, "what is to be the result of our conference? My daughter will have all my landed property at my death, and a large marriage-

portion besides, now in the funds. I am apparently the last of my race. The disappearance and death—I take it for granted, as they have never since been heard of—of my brother Sir Edward's heir, and very soon after of my own, have left me without a hope of perpetuating my name; I shall settle my estates upon Lucy."

His lordship appeared abstracted for a few moments. "Your brother and you," he observed, "were on terms of bitter hostility, in consequence of what you considered an unequal marriage on his part, and I candidly assure you, Sir Thomas, that, were it not for the mysterious disappearance of your own son, so soon after the disappearance of his, it would have been difficult to relieve you from dark and terrible suspicions on the subject. As it is, the people, I believe, criminate you still; but that is nothing; my opinion is, that the same enemy perpetrated the double crime. Alas! the worst and bitterest of all private feuds are the domestic. There is my own brother; in a moment of passion and jealousy he challenged me to single combat; I had sense to resist his impetuosity. He got a foreign appointment, and there has been a gulf like that of the grave between him and his, and me and mine, ever since."

"Nothing, my lord," replied Sir Thomas, his countenance, as he spoke, becoming black with suppressed rage, "will ever remove the impression from my mind, that the disappearance or murder of my son was not a diabolical act of retaliation committed under the suspicion that I was privy to the removal or death, as the case may be, of my brother's heir; and while I have life I will persist in charging Lady Gourlay, as I must call her so, with the crime."

"In that impression," replied his lordship, "you stand alone. Lady Gourlay, that amiable, mild, affectionate, and heart-broken woman, is utterly incapable of that, or any act of cruelty whatsoever. A woman who is the source of happiness, kindness, relief, and support, to so many of her humble and distressed fellow-creatures, is not likely to commit or become accessory in any way to such a detestable and unnatural crime. Her whole life and conduct render such a supposition monstrous and incredible."

Both, after he had closed his observations, mused for some time, when the baronet, rising and pacing to and fro, as was his custom, at length asked—"Well, my lord, what say you? Are we never to come to a conclusion?"

"My determination is simply this, my dear baronet,—that, if you and Miss Gourlay are satisfied to take Lord Dunroe, with all his imperfections on his head, I shall give no opposition. She will, unless he amends and reforms, take him, I grant you, at her peril; but be it so. If the union, as you say, will be the result of *mutual* attachment, in God's name let them marry. It is possible, we are assured, that the 'unbelieving husband may be saved by the believing wife.'"

"I am quite satisfied, my lord, with this arrangement; it is fair, and just, and honorable, and I am perfectly willing to abide by it. When does your lordship propose to return to us?"

"I am tired of public life, my dear baronet. My daughter, Lady Emily, who, you know, has chiefly resided with her maiden aunt, hopes to succeed in prevailing on her to accompany us to Glenshee Castle, to spend the summer and autumn, and visit some of the beautiful scenery of this unknown land of ours. Something, as to time, depends upon Dunroe's convalescence. My stay in England, however, will be as short as I can make it. I am getting too old for the exhausting din and bustle of society; and what I want now, is quiet repose, time to reflect upon my past life, and to prepare myself, as well as I can, for a new change. Of course, we will be both qualified to resume the subject of this marriage after my return, and, until then, farewell, my dear baronet. But mark me—no force, no violence."

Sir Thomas, as he shook hands with him, laughed—"None will be necessary, my lord, I assure you—I pledge you my honor for that."

The worthy baronet, on mounting his horse, paced him slowly out of the grounds, as was his custom when in deep meditation.

"If I don't mistake," thought he, "I have a clew to this same mysterious gentleman in the inn. He has seen and become acquainted with Lucy in Paris, under sanction of her weak-minded and foolish mother. The girl herself admitted that her engagement to him was with her consent. Dunroe, already aware of his attentions to her, becomes jealous, and on meeting him in London quarrels with him, that is to say, forces him, I should think, into one;—not that the fellow seems at all to be a coward either,—but why the devil did not the hot-headed young scoundrel take steadier aim, and send the bullet through his heart or brain? Had he pinked him, it would have saved me much vexation and trouble."

He then passed to another train of thought. "Thomas Gourlay,—plain Thomas Gourlay—what the devil could the corpse-like hag mean by that? Is it possible that this in-

sane scoundrel will come to light in spite of me? Would to Heaven that I could ascertain his whereabouts, and get him into my power once more. I would take care to put him in a place of safety." He then touched his horse with the spurs, and proceeded to Red Hall at a quicker pace.

CHAPTER X.

A Family Dialogue—and a Secret nearly Discovered.

Our scene must necessarily change to a kind of inn or low tavern, or, as they are usually denominated, eating-houses, in Little Mary street, on the north side of the good city of Dublin. These eating-houses were remarkable for the extreme neatness and cleanliness with which they were kept, and the wonderful order and regularity with which they were conducted. For instance, a lap of beef is hung from an iron hook on the door-post, which, if it be in the glorious heat of summer, is half black with flies, but that will not prevent it from leaving upon your coat a deep and healthy streak of something between grease and tallow as you necessarily brush against it—first, on your going in, and secondly, on your coming out.

The evening was tolerably advanced, and the hour of dinner long past; but, notwithstanding this, there were several persons engaged in dispatching the beef and cabbage we have described. Two or three large county Meath farmers, clad in immense frieze jackets, corduroy knee-breeches, thick woollen stockings, and heavy soled shoes, were not so much eating as devouring the viands that were before them; whilst in another part of the rooms sat two or three meagre-looking scriveners' clerks, rather out at elbows, and remarkable for an appearance of something that might, without much difficulty, be interpreted into habits that could not be reconciled with sobriety.

As there is not much, however, that is either picturesque or agreeable in the description of such an establishment, we shall pass into an inner room, where those who wished for privacy and additional comfort might be entertained on terms somewhat more expensive. We accordingly beg our readers to accompany us up a creaking pair of stairs to a small backroom on the first floor, furnished with an old, round oak table, with turned legs, four or five old-fashioned chairs, a few wood-cuts, daubed with green and yellow, representing the four seasons, a Christmas carol, together with that miracle of ingenuity, a reed in a bottle, which stood on the chimney-piece.

In this room, with liquor before them, which was procured from a neighboring public house—for, in establishments of this kind, they are not permitted to keep liquor for sale—sat three persons, two men and a woman. One of the men seemed, at first glance, rather good-looking, was near or about fifty, stout, big-boned, and apparently very powerful as regarded personal strength. He was respectably enough dressed, and, as we said, unless when it happened that he fell into a mood of thoughtfulness, which he did repeatedly, had an appearance of frankness and simplicity which at once secured instant and unhesitating good will. When, however, after putting the tumbler to his lips, and gulping down a portion of it, and then replacing the liquor on the table, he folded his arms and knitted his brows, in an instant the expression of openness and good humor changed into one of deep and deadly malignity.

The features of the elder person exhibited a comic contrast between nature and habit—between an expression of good humor, broad and legible, which no one could mistake for a moment, and an affectation of consequence, self-importance, and mock heroic dignity that were irresistible. He was a pedagogue.

The woman who accompanied them we need not describe, having already made the reader acquainted with her in the person of the female fortune-teller, who held the mysterious dialogue with Sir Thomas Gourlay on his way to Lord Cullamore's.

"This liquor," said the schoolmaster, "would be nothing the worse of a little daicent mellowness and flavor; but, at the same time, we must admit that, though sadly deficient in a spirit of exhilaration, it bears a harmonious reference to the beautiful beef and cabbage which we got for dinner. The whole of them are what I designate as sorry specimens of metropolitan luxury. May I never translate a classic, but I fear I shall soon wax ægrotat—I feel something like a telegraphic despatch commencing between my head and my stomach; and how the communication may terminate, whether peaceably or otherwise, would require, O divine Jacinta! your tripodial powers of prophecy to predict. The whiskey, in whatever shape or under whatever disguise you take it, is richly worthy of all condemnation."

"I will drink no more of it, uncle," replied the other man; "it would soon sicken me, too. This shan't pass; it's gross imposition—and that is a bad thing to practise

in this world. Ginty, touch the bell, will you?—we will make them get us better."

A smile of a peculiar nature passed over the woman's ghastly features as she looked with significant caution at her brother, for such he was.

"Yes, do get better whiskey," she said; "it's too bad that we should make my uncle sick from mere kindness."

"I cannot exactly say that I am much out of order as yet," replied the schoolmaster, "but, as they say, if the weather has not broken, the sky is getting troubled; I hope it is only a false alarm, and may pass away without infliction. If there is any of the minor miseries of life more trying than another, it is to drink liquor that fires the blood, splits the head, but basely declines to elevate and rejoice the heart. O, divine poteen! immortal essence of the *hordeum beatum!*—which is translated holy barley—what drink, liquor, or refreshment can be placed, without the commission of something like small sacrilege, in parallel with thee! When I think of thy soothing and gradually exhilarating influence, of the genial spirit of love and friendship which, owing to thee, warms the heart of man, and not unfrequently of the softer sex also; when I reflect upon the cheerful light which thou diffusest by gentle degrees throughout the soul, filling it with generosity, kindness, and courage, enabling it to forget care and calamity, and all the various ills that flesh is heir to; when I remember too that thou dost so frequently aid the inspiration of the bard, the eloquence of the orator, and changest the modesty of the diffident lover into that easy and becoming assurance which is so grateful to women, is it any wonder I should feel how utterly incapable I am, without thy own assistance, to expound thy eulogium as I ought! Hand that tumbler here, Charley,—bad as it is, there is no use, as the proverb says, in laving one's liquor behind them. We will presently correct it with better drink."

Charley Corbet, for such was the name of the worthy schoolmaster's nephew, laughed heartily at the eloquence of his uncle, who, he could perceive, had been tampering a little with something stronger than water in the course of the evening.

"What can keep this boy?" exclaimed Ginty; "he knew we were waiting for him, and he ought to be here now."

"The youth *will* come," said the schoolmaster, "and a hospitable youth he is—*me ipso teste*, as I myself can bear witness. I was in his apartments in the *Collegium Sanctæ Trinitatis*, as they say, which means the blessed union of dulness, laziness, and wealth, for which the same divine establishment has gained an appropriate and just celebrity—I say I was in his apartments, where I found himself and a few of his brother students engaged in the agreeable relaxation of taking a hair of the same dog that bit them, after a liberal compotation on the preceding night. Third place, as a scholar! Well! who may he thank for that, I interrogate. Not one Denis O'Donegan!—O no; the said Denis is an ignoramus, and knows nothing of the classics. Well, be it so. All I say is, that I wish I had one classical lick at their provost, I would let him know what the master of a *plantation seminary** could do when brought to the larned scratch?"

"How does Tom look, uncle?" asked Corbet; "we can't say that he has shown much affection for his friends since he went to college."

"How could you expect it, Charley, my worthy *nepos?*" said the schoolmaster. "These sprigs of classicality, when once they get under the wing of the *collegium* aforesaid, which, like a comfortable, well-feathered old bird of the stubble, warms them into what is ten times better than celebrity—videlicet, snug and independent dulness—these sprigs, I say, especially, when their parents or instructors happen to be poor, fight shy of the frieze and caubeen at home, and avoid the risk of resuscitating old associations. Tom, Charley looks—at least he did when I saw him to-day—very like a lad who is more studious of the bottle than the book; but I will not prejudge the youth, for I remember what he was while under my tuition. If he be as cunning now and assiduous in the prosecution of letters as I found him—if he be as cunning, as ripe at fiction, and of as unembarrassed brow as he was in his schoolboy career, he will either hang, on the one side, or rise to become lord chancellor or a bishop on the other."

"He will be neither the one nor the other then," said the prophetess, "but something better both for himself and his friends."

"Is this by way of the oracular, Ginty?"

"You may take it so if you like," replied the female.

"And does the learned page of futurity present nothing in the shape of a certain wooden engine, to which is attached a dangling rope, in association with the youth? for in my mind his merits are as likely to elevate him to the one as to the other. However, don't look like the pythoness in her fury, Ginty; a joke is a joke; and here's that to

* Plantation seminary—a periphrasis for hedge-school.

may be whatever you wish him! Ay, by the bones of Maro, this liquor is pleasant discussion!" We may observe here that they had been already furnished with a better description of drink. "But with regard to the youth in question, there is one thing puzzles me, oh, most prophetical niece, and that is, that you should take it into your head to effect an impossibility, in other words, to make a gentleman of him; *ex quovis ligno non fit Mercurius*, is a good ould proverb."

"That is but natural in her, uncle," replied Corbet, "if you knew everything; but for the present you can't; nobody knows who he is, and that is a secret that must be kept."

"Why," replied the pedagogue, "is he not a slip from the Black Baronet, and are not you, Ginty——?"

"Whether the child *you* speak of," she replied, "is living or dead is what nobody knows."

"There is one thing I know," said Corbet, "and that is, that I could scald the heart and soul in the Black Baronet's body by one word's speaking, if I wished; only the time is not yet come; but it will come, and that soon, I hope."

"Take care, Charley," replied the master; "no violation of sacred ties. Is not the said Baronet your foster-brother?"

"He remembered no such ties when he brought shame and disgrace on our family," replied Corbet, with a look of such hatred and malignity as could rarely be seen on a human countenance.

"Then why did you live with him, and remain in his confidence so long?" asked his uncle.

"I had my own reasons for that—may be they will be known soon, and may be they will never be known," replied his nephew. "Whisht! there's a foot on the stairs," he added; "it's this youth, I'm thinking."

Almost immediately a young man, in a college-gown and cap, entered the room, apparently the worse for liquor, and approaching the schoolmaster, who sat next him, slapped his shoulder, exclaiming:

"Well, my jolly old pedagogue, I hope you have enjoyed yourself since I saw you last? Mr. Corbet, how do you do? And Cassandra, my darling death-like old prophetess, what have you to predict for Ambrose Gray?" for such was the name by which he went.

"Sit down, Mr. Gray," said Corbet, "and join us in one glass of punch."

"I will, in half-a-dozen," replied the student; "for I am always glad to see my friends."

"But not to come to see them," said Mrs. Cooper. "However, it doesn't matter; we are glad to see you, Mr. Ambrose. I hope you are getting on well at college?"

"Third place, eh, my old grinder: are you not proud of me?" said Ambrose, addressing the schoolmaster.

"I think, Mr. Gray, the pride ought to be on the other side," replied O'Donegan, with an affectation of dignity: "but it was well, and I trust you are not insensible of the early indoctrination you received at—whose hands I will not say; but I think it might be guessed notwithstanding."

During this conversation, the eyes of the prophetess were fixed upon the student, with an expression of the deepest and most intense interest. His personal appearance was indeed peculiar and remarkable. He was about the middle size, somewhat straggling and bony in his figure; his forehead was neither good nor bad, but the general contour of his face contained not within it a single feature with the expression of which the heart of the spectator could harmonize. He was beetle-browed, his mouth diabolically sensual, and his eyes, which were scarcely an inch asunder, were sharp and piercing, and reminded one that the deep-seated cunning which lurked in them was a thing to be guarded against and avoided. His hands and feet were large and coarse, his whole figure disagreeable and ungainly, and his voice harsh and deep.

The fortune-teller, as we have said, kept her eyes fixed upon his features, with a look which seemed to betray no individual feeling beyond that of some extraordinary and profound interest. She appeared like one who was studying his character, and attempting to read his natural disposition in his countenance, manner, and conversation. Sometimes her eye brightened a little, and again her death-like face became overshadowed with gloom, reminding one of that strange darkness which, when the earth is covered with snow, falls with such dismal effect before an approaching storm.

"I grant you, my worthy old grinder, that you did indoctrinate me, as you say, to some purpose; but, my worthy old grinder, again I say to you, that, by all the gerunds, participles, and roots you ever ground in your life, it was my own grinding that got me the third place in the scholarship."

"Well, Mr. Ambrose," rejoined the pedagogue, who felt disposed to draw in his horns a little, "one thing is clear, that, between us both, we did it. What bait, what line, what calling, or profession in life, do you propose to yourself, Mr. Ambrose? Your course in college has been brilliant so far, thanks to—ahem—no matter—you have distinguished yourself."

"I have carried everything before me," replied Ambrose—"but what then? Suppose, my worthy old magister, that I miss a fellowship—why, what remains, but to sink down into a resident mastership, and grind blockheads for the remainder of my life? But what though I fail in science, still, most revered and learned O'Donegan, I have ambition—ambition—and, come how it may, I will surge up out of obscurity, my old buck. I forgot to tell you, that I got the first classical premium yesterday, and that I am consequently—no, I didn't forget to tell you, because I didn't know it myself when I saw you to-day. Hip, hip—hurra!"

His two male companions filled their glasses, and joined him heartily. O'Donegan shook him by the hand, so did Corbet, and they now could understand the cause of his very natural elevation of spirits.

"So you have all got legacies," proceeded Mr. Ambrose; "fifty pounds apiece, I hear, by the death of your brother, Mr. Corbet, who was steward to Lady Gourlay—I am delighted to hear it—hip, hip, hurra, again."

"It's true enough," observed the prophetess, "a good, kind-hearted man was my poor brother Edward."

"How is that old scoundrel of a Black Baronet in your neighborhood—Sir Thomas—he who murdered his brother's heir?"

"For God's sake, Mr. Ambrose, don't say so. Don't you know that he got heavy damages against Captain Furlong for using the same words?"

"He be hanged," said the tipsy student; "he murdered him as sure as I sit at this table; and God bless the worthy, be the same man or woman, who left himself, as he left his brother's widow, without an heir to his ill-gotten title and property."

The fortune-teller rose up, and entreated him not to speak harshly against Sir Thomas Gourlay, adding, "That, perhaps, he was not so bad as the people supposed; but," she added, "as they—that is, she and her brother—happened to be in town, they were anxious to see him (the student); and, indeed, they would feel obliged if he came with them into the front room for ten minutes or so, as they wished to have a little private conversation with him."

The change in his features at this intimation was indeed surprising. A keen, sharp sense of self-possession, an instant recollection of his position and circumstances, banished from them, almost in an instant, the somewhat careless and tipsy expression which they possessed on his entrance.

"Certainly," said he. "Mr. O'Donegan, will you take care of yourself until we return?"

"No doubt of it," replied the pedagogue, as they left the room, "I shall not forget myself, no more than that the image and superscription of Sir Thomas Gourlay, the Black Baronet, is upon your diabolical visage."

Instead of ten minutes, the conference between the parties in the next room lasted for more than an hour, during which period O'Donegan did not omit to take care of himself, as he said. The worthy pedagogue was one of those men, who, from long habit, can never become tipsy beyond a certain degree of elevation, after which, no matter what may be the extent of their indulgence, nothing in the shape of liquor can affect them. When Gray and his two friends returned, they found consequently nothing but empty bottles before them, whilst the schoolmaster viewed them with a kind of indescribable steadiness of countenance, which could not be exactly classed with either drunkenness or sobriety, but was something between both. More liquor, however, was ordered in, but, in the meantime, O'Donegan's eyes were fastened upon Mr. Gray with a degree of surprise, which, considering the change in the young man's appearance, was by no means extraordinary. Whatever the topic of their conversation may have been, it is not our purpose at present to disclose; but one thing is certain, that the transition which took place in Gray's features, as well as in his whole manner, was remarkable almost beyond belief. This, as we have said, manifested itself in some degree, on hearing that Corbet and his sister had something to say to him in the next room. Now, however, the change was decided and striking. All symptoms of tipsy triumph, arising from his success in college, had completely disappeared, and were replaced by an expression of seriousness and mingled cunning, which could not possibly escape observation. There was a coolness, a force of reflection, a keen, calm, but agitated lustre in his small eyes, that was felt by the schoolmaster to be exceedingly disagreeable to contemplate. In fact, the face of the young man was, in a surprising degree, calculating and sinister. A great portion of its vulgarity was gone, and there remained something behind that seemed to partake of a capacity for little else than intrigue, dishonesty, and villany. It was one of those countenances on which, when moved by the meditations of the mind within, nature frequently expresses herself as clearly as if she had written on it, in legible characters, "Beware of this man."

After a little time, now that the object of this mysterious meeting had been accomplished, the party separated.

We mentioned that Corbet and Sir Thomas

Gourlay were foster-brothers—a relation which, in Ireland and the Highlands of Scotland, formed the basis of an attachment, on the part of the latter, stronger, in many instances, than that of nature itself. Corbet's brother stood also to him in the same relation as he did to the late Sir Edward Gourlay, under whom, and subsequently under his widow, he held the situation of house-steward until his death. Edward Corbet, for his Christian name had been given him after that of his master—his mother having nursed both brothers—was apparently a mild, honest, affectionate man, trustworthy and respectful, as far, at least, as ever could be discovered to the contrary, and, consequently, never very deep in the confidence of his brother Charles, who was a great favorite with Sir Thomas, was supposed to be very deeply in his secrets, and held a similar situation in his establishment. It was known, or at least supposed, that his brother Edward, having lived since his youth up with a liberal and affectionate master, must have saved a good deal of money; and, as he had never married, of course his brother, and also his sister—the fortune-teller—took it for granted that, being his nearest relations, whatever savings he had put together, must, after his death, necessarily pass into their hands. He was many years older than either, and as they maintained a constant and deferential intercourse with him—studied all his habits and peculiarities—and sent him, from time to time, such little presents as they thought might be agreeable to him, the consequence was, that they maintained their place in his good opinion, so far at least as to prevent him from leaving the fruits of his honest and industrious life to absolute strangers. Not that they inherited by any means his whole property, such as it was, several others of his relatives received more or less, but his brother, sister, and maternal uncle—the schoolmaster—were the largest inheritors.

The illness of Edward Corbet was long and tedious; but Lady Gourlay allowed nothing to be wanting that could render his bed of sickness or death easy and tranquil, so far as kindness, attention, and the ministry of mere human comforts could effect it. During his illness, his brother Charles visited him several times, and had many private conversations with him. And it may be necessary to state here, that, although these two relatives had never lived upon cold or unfriendly terms, yet the fact was that Edward felt it impossible to love Charles with the fulness of a brother's affection. The natural disposition of the latter, under the guise of an apparently good-humored and frank demeanor, was in reality inscrutable. Though capable, as we said, of assuming a very different character whenever it suited his purpose, he was nevertheless a man whose full confidence was scarcely ever bestowed upon a human being. Such an individual neither is nor can be relished in society; but it is precisely persons of his stamp who are calculated to win their way with men of higher and more influential position in life, who, when moved by ambition, avarice, or any other of the darker and more dangerous passions of our nature, feel an inclination, almost instinctive, to take such men into their intrigues and deliberations. The tyrant and oppressor discovers the disposition and character of his slave and instrument with as much sagacity as is displayed by the highly bred dog that scents out the game of which the sportsman is in pursuit. In this respect, however, it not unfrequently happens, that even those who are most confident in the penetration with which they make such selections, are woefully mistaken in the result.

We allude particularly to the death of Edward Corbet, at this stage of our narrative, because, from that event, the train of circumstances which principally constitute the body of our narrative originated.

His brother had been with him in the early part of the day on which he breathed his last. On arriving at the mansion in Merrion square, he met Lady Gourlay on the steps of the hall door, about to enter her carriage.

"I am glad you are come, Corbet," she said. "Your poor brother has been calling for you—see him instantly—for his sands are numbered. The doctor thinks he cannot pass the turn of the day."

"God bless your ladyship," replied Corbet, "for your uncommon kindness and attention to him during his long and severe illness. All that could be done for a person in his circumstances, your ladyship did; and I know he is deeply sensible of it, my lady."

"It was only my duty, Corbet," she replied, "to a true-hearted and faithful servant, for such he was to our family. I could not forget the esteem in which his master, my dear husband, held him, nor the confidence which he never failed, and justly, to repose in him. Go immediately to him, for he has expressed much anxiety to see you."

His brother, indeed, found him hovering on the very brink of the grave. What their conversation was, we know not, unless in so far as a portion of it at least may be inferred from the subsequent circumstances of our story. After having spent about an hour with him, his brother, who, it seems, had

some pressing commissions to execute for Sir Thomas, was obliged to leave him for a time, but promised to return as soon as he could get them discharged. In the meantime, poor Corbet sank rapidly after Charles's departure, and begged, with a degree of anguish that was pitiable, to see Lady Gourlay, as he had something, he said, of the utmost importance to communicate to her. Lady Gourlay, however, had gone out, and none of the family could give any opinion as to the period of her return; whilst the dying man seemed to experience a feeling that amounted almost to agony at her absence. In this state he remained for about three hours, when at length she returned, and found him with the mild and ghastly impress of immediate death visible in his languid, dying eyes, and hollow countenance.

"They tell me you wish to see me, Corbet," she said. "If there is anything that can be done to soothe your mind, or afford you ease and comfort in your departing hour, mention it, and, if it be within our power, it *shall* be done."

He made an effort to speak, but his voice was all but gone. At length, after several efforts, he was able to make her understand that he wished her to bend down her head to him; she did so; and in accents that were barely, and not without one or two repetitions, intelligible, he was able to say, "Your son is living, and Sir Thomas knows ——"

Lady Gourlay was of a feminine, gentle, and quiet disposition, in fact, a woman from whose character one might expect, upon receiving such a communication, rather an exhibition of that wild and hysteric excitement which might be most likely to end in a scream or a fainting fit. Here, however, the instincts of the defrauded heart of the bereaved and sorrowing mother were called into instant and energetic life. The physical system, instead of becoming relaxed or feeble, grew firm and vigorous, and her mind collected and active. She saw, from the death-throes of the man, that a single moment was not to be lost, and instantly, for her mouth was still at his ear, asked, in a distinct and eager voice, "Where, Corbet, where? for God's mercy, where? and what does Sir Thomas know?"

The light and animation of life were fast fading from his face; he attempted to speak again, but voice and tongue refused to discharge their office—he had become speechless. Feeling conscious, however, that he could not any longer make himself understood by words, he raised his feeble hand, and attempted to point as if in a certain direction, but the arm fell powerlessly down —he gave a deep sigh and expired.

Thus far only can we proceed at present. How and why the stranger makes his appearance at Ballytrain, and whether in connection with this incident or not, are circumstances which we will know in due time.

CHAPTER XI.

The Stranger's Visit to Father MacMahon.

The stranger, after Fenton had gone, began to feel that it was impossible either to wheedle or extort any information whatsoever, whether of importance or otherwise, from that extraordinary and not very sane individual. That, however, there was a deep mystery about him, be it what it might, he could not, for a moment, doubt; and, for this reason, he resolved by no means to relax his exertions, or suffer Fenton, if he could fairly prevent it, to slip through his fingers. His unaccountable conduct and terror, during, as well as after, his own angry altercation with the baronet, went, in his opinion, strongly to connect him, in some manner, with that unscrupulous man. But how to develop the nature of this connection constituted the very difficulty which not only disappointed but mortified him.

"I will call upon Birney," thought he; "he is acute and sensible, and probably, from his greater experience of life, will be able to throw out some hint that may be valuable, and enable me to proceed with more effect."

We have already said, that it was somewhat difficult to commonplace observers to determine his (the stranger's) exact position in society by a first glance at his dress. This ambiguity of appearance, if, after all, it could properly be called so, was assumed for the express purpose of avoiding observation as much as possible. The fact, however, of finding that his desire to remain unnoticed had been not merely observed and commented on, but imputed to him almost as a crime, determined him no longer to lie *perdu* in his inn, but to go abroad, and appear in public like another; whilst, at the same time, his resolution remained fixed as ever, for various reasons, to conceal his name. The moment, therefore, he had made up his mind to this course, that assumed restraint of manner and consciousness of not being what we appear to be were completely thrown aside, and the transition which ensued was indeed extraordinary. His general deportment became at once that of a perfect gentleman,

easy, elegant, if not absolutely aristocratic; but without the slightest evidence of anything that could be considered supercilious or offensive. His dress was tastefully within the fashion, but not in its extreme, and his admirable figure thus displayed to the best advantage; whilst his whole person was utterly free from every symptom of affectation or foppery. Nor was the change in the tone of his features less striking. Their style of beauty was at once manly and intellectual, combining, as they did, an expression of great sweetness, obvious good sense, and remarkable determination. He bore, in fact, the aspect of a man who could play with a child on the green, or beard a lion in his lair.

The sagacity of the Irish people, in the estimate they form of personal appearance and character, is, indeed, very extraordinary. Our friend, the stranger, when casting his eye over the town of Ballytrain, on his way to have an interview with Birney, who, we may as well observe, was in his confidence, perceived that it was market-day. As he went out upon the street, a crowd of persons were standing opposite the inn door, where an extensive yarn market, in these good old times, was always held; and we need scarcely say that his gentlemanly and noble figure, and the striking elegance of his manner, at once attracted their attention.

"Well," said one of them, "there goes a *real* gintleman, begad, at any rate."

"Divil a lie in that," added another; "there's no mistakin' the true blood."

"Who is he?" asked a third. "Does nobody know him?"

"Troth," said the other, "it doesn't signify a traneen who or what he is; whether he's gentle or simple, I say that the whole country ought to put their heads under his feet."

"Why so, Jemmy Trailcudgel?" asked a fourth; "what did he do for the country?"

"I'll tell you that, Micky," replied the other. "The Black Baronet, bad luck to him, came to the inn where he stops, and insisted, right or wrong, on knowing who and what he was."

"I wouldn't put it past him, the turk o' blazes! Well, an' what happened?"

"Why, the gintleman got up, and tuck a hoult o' the black villain by the nose, led him to the head of the stairs, then turned him down before him, and made his feet right and left play against the barrow knight, like the tucks of a cloth mill, until he thrundled him *clane*—I'm not so sure of *that*, though—out o' the hall door."

"An' for that same, God prosper him! Begad, he's a bully gentleman," observed a stout, frieze-coated fellow, with a large bunch of green linen yarn on his lusty arm, "he is, and it's in him, and upon him, as every one that has eyes to see may know."

The object of their praise, on entering the office of his friend Birney, found him at his desk, with professional papers and documents before him. After the ordinary greetings of the day, and an accurate account of the baronet's interview with him, the stranger introduced the topic in which he felt so deep an interest.

"I am unfortunate, Mr. Birney," said he; "Fenton, notwithstanding his eccentricity, insanity, or whatever it may be termed, seems to suspect my design, and evades, with singular address, every attempt, on my part, to get anything out of him. Is he absolutely deranged, think you? For, I assure you, I have just now had a scene with him, in which his conduct and language could proceed from nothing short of actual insanity. A little affected with liquor he unquestionably was, when he came in first. The appearance, however, of Sir Thomas not only reduced him to a state of sobriety, but seemed to strike him with a degree of terror altogether inexplicable."

"How was that?" asked Birney.

The stranger accordingly described the scene between himself and Fenton, with which the reader is acquainted.

"He is not a madman, certainly, in the ordinary sense of the word," replied Birney, after a pause; "but, I think, he may be called a kind of lunatic, certainly. My own opinion is, that, whatever insanity he may be occasionally afflicted with results more from an excessive indulgence in liquor than from any other cause. Be that, however, as it may, there is no question but that he is occasionally seized with fits of mental aberration. From what you tell me, and his exaggerated suspicions of a plot between you and Sir Thomas Gourlay, I think it most probable that he is your man still."

"I, too, think it probable," replied the stranger; "but, alas, I think it possible he may not. On comparing his features with the miniature, I confess I cannot now trace the resemblance which my sanguine imagination—and that only, I fear—first discovered."

"But, consider, sir, that that miniature was taken when the original of it was only five or six years of age; and you will also recollect that growth, age, education, and peculiar habits of life, effect the most extraordinary changes in the features of the same individual. No, sir, I would not advise you to feel disheartened by this."

"But, can you fall upon no hint or principle, Mr. Birney, by which I might succeed in unlocking the secret which this young man evidently possesses?"

"All I can recommend to you, sir, is comprised within one word—*patience*. Mark him well; ingratiate yourself with him; treat him with kindness; supply his wants; and I have no doubt but you may ultimately win upon his confidence."

"Is there no sagacious old person in the neighborhood, no *senachie* or genealogist, to whom you could refer me, and from whose memory of past events in this part of the country I might be able to gain something to guide me?"

"There is one woman," replied Birney, "who, were she tractable as to the past as she is communicative of the future, could furnish you more details of family history and hereditary scandal than any one else I can think of just now. Some of her predictions—for she is a fortune-teller—have certainly been amazing."

"The result, I have no doubt," replied the other, "of personal acquaintance with private occurrences, rendered incredible under ordinary circumstances, in consequence of her rapid transitions from place to place. I shall certainly not put myself under the guidance of an impostor, Mr. Birney."

"In this case, sir, I think you are right; for it has been generally observed that, in no instance, has she ever been known to make any reference to the past in her character of fortune-teller. She affects to hold intercourse with the fairies, or good people, as we term them, and insists that it is from them that she derives the faculty of a prophetess. She also works extraordinary cures by similar aid, as she asserts. The common impression is, that her mind is burdened with some secret guilt, and that it relieves her to contemplate the future, as it regards temporal fate, but that she dares not look back into the past. I know there is nothing more certain than that, when asked to do so, in peculiar moods of mind, she manifests quite as much of the maniac as poor Fenton."

"Away with the old impostress!" exclaimed the stranger; "I will have none of her! Can you think of no one else?"

"Of course, you have not had time to become acquainted with our parish priest?" replied Birney. "Since 'Aroint thee, witch,' is your creed, I think you had better try him."

"Not an unnatural transition," replied the stranger, smiling; "but what is he like? Give me an outline."

"He is named the Rev. Peter M'Mahon, and I forewarn you, that you are as likely, if he be not in the mood, to get such a reception as you may not relish. He is somewhat eccentric and original, but, at the same time, his secret piety and stolen benevolence are beyond all question. With his limited means, the good he does is incalculable. He is, in fact, simple, kind-hearted, and truly religious. In addition to all, he is a considerable bit of a humorist; when the good man's mind is easy, his humor is kindly, rich, and mellow; but, when any way in dudgeon, it is comically sarcastic."

"I must see this man," said the stranger; "you have excited my curiosity. By all accounts he is worth a visit."

"He is more likely to serve you in this matter than any one I know," said the attorney; "or, if he can't himself, perhaps he may find out those that can. Very little has happened in the parish within the last thirty-five years with which he is not acquainted."

"I like the man," replied the other, "from your description of him."

"At all events, you would if you knew him," replied Birney. "He is both a good priest and a good man."

He then directed him to the worthy clergyman's residence, which was not more than a mile and a half from the town, and the stranger lost little time in reaching it.

On approaching the house, he was much struck with the extraordinary air of neatness, cleanliness, and comfort, which characterized not only the house itself, but everything about it. A beautiful garden facing the south, stretched down to the left, as you approached the elegant little whitewashed dwelling, which, placed on a green knoll, literally shone for miles over the beautiful and serene country by which it was surrounded. Below it, to the south, between firm green banks and meadows, wound a beautiful river, and to the north rose one of the most picturesque hills, probably, in the kingdom; at the hip of which was a gloomy, precipitous glen, which, for wildness and solitary grandeur, is unrivalled by anything of the kind we have seen. On the top of the hill is a cave, supposed to be Druidical, over which an antiquarian would dream half a life; and, indeed, this is not to be wondered at, inasmuch as he would find there some of the most distinctly traced Ogham characters to be met with in any part of the kingdom.

On entering the house, our nameless friend found the good priest in what a stranger might be apt to consider a towering passion.

"You lazy bosthoon," said he, to a large, in fact to a huge young fellow, a servant, "was it to allow the pigs, the destructive

vagabonds, to turn up my beautiful bit of lawn that I undertook to give you house-room, wages, and feeding—eh? and a bit-ther business to me the same feeding is. If you were a fellow that knew when he had enough, I could bear the calamity of keeping you at all. But that's a subject. God help you, and God help me too that has to suffer for it, on which your ignorance is wonderful. To know when to stop so long as the blessed victuals is before you is a point of polite knowledge you will never reach, you immaculate savage. Not a limb about you but you'd give six holidays to out of the seven, barrin' your walrus teeth, and, if God or man would allow you the fodder, you'd give us an elucidation of the perpetual motion. Be off, and get the strongest set of rings that Jemmy M'Quade can make for those dirty, grubbing bastes of pigs. The Lord knows I don't wondher that the Jews hated the thieves, for sure they are the only blackguard animals that ever committed suicide, and set the other bastes of the earth such an unchristian example. Not that a slice of ham is so bad a thing in itself, especially when it is followed by a single tumbler of poteen punch."

"Troth, masther, I didn't see the pigs, or they'd not have my sanction to go into the lawn."

"Not a thing ever you see, or wish to see, barring your dirty victuals."

"I hope, sir," said the stranger, much amused in the meantime, but with every courtesy of manner, "that my request for a short interview does not come at an unseasonable hour?"

"And, do you hear me, you bosthoon," proceeded his reverence—this, however, he uttered *sotto voce*, from an apprehension lest the stranger should hear his benevolent purposes—"did you give the half crown to Widow Magowran, whose children, poor creatures, are lying ill of fever?"

Not a word to the stranger, who, however, overheard him.

"I did, plaise your reverence," replied the huge servant.

"What did she say," asked the other, "when you slipped it to her?"

"She said nothing, sir, for a minute or so, but dropped on her knees, and the tears came from her eyes in such a way that I couldn't help letting down one or two myself. 'God spare him,' she then said, 'for his piety and charity makes him a blessin' to the parish.' Throth, I couldn't help lettin' down a tear or two myself."

"You couldn't now?" exclaimed the simple-hearted priest; "why, then, I forgive you the pigs, you great, good-natured bosthoon."

The stranger now thought that he might claim some notice from his reverence.

"I fear, sir," said he——

"And whisper, Mat," proceeded the priest—paying not the slightest attention to him, "did you bring the creel of turf to poor Barney Farrell and his family, as I desired you?"

"I did, your reverence, and put a good heap on it for the creatures."

"Well, I forgive you the pigs!" exclaimed the benevolent priest, satisfied that his pious injunctions had been duly observed, and extending a portion of his good feeling to the instrument; "and as for the appetite I spoke of, sure, you good-natured giant you, haven't you health, exercise, and a most destructive set of grinders? and, indeed, the wonder would be if you didn't make the sorrow's havoc at a square of bacon; so for heaping the creel I forgive you the digestion and the pigs both."

"Will you permit me?" interposed the stranger, a third time.

"But listen again," proceeded his reverence, "did you bring the bread and broth to the poor Caseys, the creatures?"

"No, sir," replied Mat, licking his lips, as the stranger thought, "it was Kitty Kavanagh brought that; you know you never trust me wid the vittles—ever since——"

"Yes, I ought to have remembered that notorious fact. There's where your weakness is strongest, but, indeed, it is only one of them; for he that would trust you with the carriage of a bottle of whiskey might be said to commit a great oversight of judgment. With regard to the victuals, I once put my trust in God, and dispatched you, after a full meal, with some small relief to a poor family, in the shape of corned beef and greens, and you know the sequel, that's enough. Be off now, and get the rings made as I desired you."

He then turned to the stranger, whom he scanned closely; and we need hardly assure our reader that the other, in his turn, marked the worthy priest's bearing, manner, and conversation with more than usual curiosity. The harmless passion in which he found him—his simple but touching benevolence, added to the genuine benignity with which he relaxed his anger against Mat Ruly, the gigantic servant, because he told him that he had put a heap upon the creel of turf which he brought to poor Barney Farrell and his family, not omitting the tears he represented himself to have shed from Christian sympathy with Widow Magowran, both of which acts were inventions of the purest water, resorted to in order to soften the kind-hearted priest, all this, we

say, added to what he had heard from Birney, deeply interested the stranger in the character of Father Peter. Nor was he less struck by his appearance. Father MacMahon was a round, tight, rosy-faced little man, with laughing eyes, full of good nature, and a countenance which altogether might be termed a title-page to benevolence. His lips were finely cut, and his well-formed mouth, though full of sweetness, was utterly free from every indication of sensuality or passion. Indeed, it was at all times highly expressive of a disposition the most kind and placable, and not unfrequently of a comical spirit, that blended with his benevolence to a degree that rendered the whole cast of his features, as they varied with and responded to the kindly and natural impulses of his heart, a perfect treat to look upon. That his heart and soul were genuinely Irish, might easily be perceived by the light of humor which beamed with such significant contagion from every feature of his face, as well as by the tear which misery and destitution and sorrow never failed to bring to his cheek, thus overshadowing for a time, if we may say so, the whole sunny horizon of his countenance. But this was not all; you might read there a spirit of kindly sarcasm that was in complete keeping with a disposition always generous and affectionate, mostly blunt and occasionally caustic. Nothing could exceed the extreme neatness with which he attended to his dress and person. In this point he was scrupulously exact and careful; but this attention to the minor morals was the result of anything but personal pride, for we are bound to say, that, with all his amiable eccentricities, more unaffected humility never dwelt in the heart of a Christian minister.

He had, in fact, paid little or no attention to the stranger until Mat Ruly went out; when, on glancing at him with more attention, he perceived at once that he was evidently a person of no ordinary condition in life.

"I have to ask your pardon, sir," said he, "for seeming to neglect you as I did, but the truth is, I was in a white heat of passion with that great good-natured colossus of mine, Mat Ruly, for, indeed, he *is* good-natured, and that I can tell you makes me overlook many a thing in him that I would not otherwise pass by. Ah, then, sir, did you observe," he added, "how he confessed to heaping the creel of turf for the Farrells, and crying with poor Widow Magowran?"

The stranger could have told him that, if he had seen the comical wink which the aforesaid Mat had given to one of the servant-maids, as he reported his own sympathy and benevolence to his master, he might probably have somewhat restricted his encomium upon him.

"I can't say, sir," he replied, "that I paid particular attention to the dialogue between you."

"Bless me," exclaimed Father Peter, "what am I about? Walk into the parlor, sir. Why should I have kept you standing here so long? Pray, take a seat, sir. You must think me very rude and forgetful of the attention due to a gentleman of your appearance."

"Not at all, sir," replied the other, seating himself. "I rather think you were better engaged and in higher duties than any that are likely to arise from my communication with you."

"Well, sir," replied the priest, smiling, "that you know is yet to be determined on; but in the mane time I'll be happy to hear your business, whatever it is; and, indeed, from your looks, although the Lord knows they're often treacherous, I tell you that if I can stretch a point to sarve you I will; provided always that I can do so with a good conscience, and provided also that I find your character and conduct entitle you to it. So, then, I say, let us have at the business you spake of, and to follow up this proposition with suitable energy, what's your name and occupation? for there's nothing like knowing the ground a man stands on. I know you're a stranger in this neighborhood, for I assure you there is not a face in the parish but I am as well acquainted with as my own, and indeed a great deal betther, in regard that I never shave with a looking-glass. I tried it once or twice and was near committing suicide in the attempt."

There was something so kind, frank, yet withal so eccentric, and, as it would seem, so unconsciously humorous in the worthy father's manner, that the stranger, whilst he felt embarrassed by the good-natured bluntness of his interrogations, could not help experiencing a sensation that was equally novel and delightful, arising as it did from the candor and honesty of purpose that were so evident in all the worthy man did and said.

"I should never have supposed, from the remarkable taste of your dress and your general appearance," he replied, "that you make your toilet without a looking-glass."

"It's a fact, though; neither I nor my worthy father before me ever troubled one; we left them to the *girshas* and the women; habit is everything, and for that reason I could shave as well at midnight as at the hour of noon. However, let us pass that by,

thank God I can go out with as clane a face, and I trust with as clear a conscience, always barring the passions that Mat Ruly puts me into, as some of my neighbors; yet, God forgive me, why should I boast? for I know and feel that I fall far short of my duty in every sense, especially when I reflect how much of poverty and destitution are scattered through this apparently wealthy parish. God forgive me, then, for the boast I made, for it was both wrong and sinful!"

A touch of feeling which it would be difficult to describe, but which raised him still more highly in the estimation of the stranger, here passed over his handsome and benevolent features, but after it had passed away he returned at once to the object of the stranger's visit.

"Well," said he, "to pass now from my omissions and deficiencies, let us return to the point we were talking of; you haven't told me your name, or occupation, or profession, or business of any kind—that is, if you have any?"

"I assure you, reverend sir," replied the other, "that I am at the present moment placed in such a position, that I fear it is out of my power to satisfy you in any of these points. Whilst, at the same time, I confess that, nameless and stranger as I am, I feel anxious to receive your advice and assistance upon a matter of considerable—indeed of the deepest—importance to an unfortunate and heart-broken lady, whose only son, when but six years of age, and then heir to a large property, disappeared many years ago in a manner so mysterious, that no trace, until very recently, has ever been found of him. Nor, indeed, has she found any clew to him yet, beyond a single intimation given to her by her house-steward—a man named Corbet—who, on his death-bed, had merely breath to say that 'your son lives, and that Sir Thomas—' These, sir, were the man's last words; for, alas! unhappy for the peace of mind of this excellent lady, he expired before he could complete the sentence, or give her the information for which her heart yearned. Now, reverend sir," he added, "I told you that it is out of my power, for more than one reason, to disclose my name; but, I assure you, that the fact of making this communication to you, which you perceive I do frankly and without hesitation, is placing a confidence in you, though a personal stranger to me, which I am certain you will respect."

"Me a stranger!" exclaimed the priest, "in my own parish where I have lived curate and parish priest for close upon forty years; but tut! this is a good joke. Why, I tell you, sir, that there is not a dog in the parish but knows me, with the exception of a vile cur belonging to Jemmy M'Gurth, that I have striven to coax and conciliate a hundred ways, and yet I never pass but he's out at me. Indeed, he's an ungrateful creature, and a mane sconce besides; for I tell you, that when leaving home, I have often put bread in my pocket, and on going past his owner's house, I would throw it to him—now not a lie in this—and what do you think the nasty vermin would do? He'd ait the bread, and after he had made short work of it—for he's aquil to Mat Ruly in appetite—he'd attack me as fresh, and indeed a great dale fresher in regard of what he had got; ay, and with more bitterness, if possible, than ever. Now, sir, I remember that greedy and ungrateful scrub of an animal about three years ago; for indeed the ill feeling is going on between us for nearly seven—I say I remember him in the dear year, when he wasn't able to bark at me until he staggered over and put himself against the ditch on the roadside, and then, heaven knows, worse execution of the kind was never heard. However, there's little else than ingratitude in this world, and eaten bread, like hunger, is soon forgotten, though far seldomer by dogs, I am sorry to say, than by man—a circumstance which makes the case I am repeating to you of this cur still worse. But, indeed, he served me right; for bribery, even to a dog, does not deserve to prosper. But I beg your pardon, sir, for obtruding my own little grievances upon a stranger. What is it you expect me to do for you in this business? You allude, I think, to Lady Gourlay; and, in truth, if it was in my power to restore her son to her, that good and charitable lady would not be long without him."

"I do," replied the other. "She is under a strong impression, in consequence of the dying man's allusion to the boy's uncle, Sir Thomas, 'who,' he said, 'knows,' that he is cognizant of the position—whatever it may be—in which her unfortunate son is placed."

"Not unlikely, but still what can I do in this?"

"I am scarcely aware of that myself," replied the other; "but I may say that it was Mr. Birney, who, under the circumstances of peculiar difficulty in which I am placed, suggested to me to see you, and who justified me besides in reposing this important confidence in you."

"I thank Mr. Birney," said Father Peter, "and you may rest assured, that your confidence will not be abused, and that upon a higher principle, I trust, than my friendship for that worthy and estimable gentleman I wish all in his dirty roguish profession were like him. By the way," he added, as

if struck by a sudden thought, "perhaps you are the worthy gentleman who kicked the Black Baronet downstairs in the Mitre inn?"

"No," he replied; "some warm words we had, which indeed for *one* reason I regret; but that was all. Sir Thomas, sir, I believe, is not popular in the neighborhood?"

"I make it a point, my friend," replied the priest, "never to spake ill of the absent; but perhaps you are aware that his only son disappeared as mysteriously as the other, and that he charges his sister-in-law as the cause of it; so that, in point of fact, their suspicions are mutual."

"I believe so," said the other; "but I wish to direct your attention to another fact, or, rather, to another individual, who seems to me to be involved in considerable mystery."

"And pray, who is that?" replied the priest. "Not yourself, I hope; for in truth, by all accounts, you're as mysterious as e'er a one of them."

"My mystery will soon disappear, I trust," said the stranger, smiling. "The young man's name to whom I allude is Fenton; but I appeal to yourself, reverend sir, whether, if Sir Thomas Gourlay were to become aware of the dying man's words, with which I have just made you acquainted, he might not be apt, if it be a fact that he has in safe and secret durance his brother's son, and the heir to the property which he himself now enjoys, whether, I say, he might not take such steps as would probably render fruitless every search that could be made for him?"

"You needn't fear me, sir," replied his reverence; "if you can keep your own secret as well as I will, it won't travel far, I can tell you. But what about this unfortunate young man, Fenton? I think I certainly heard the people say from time to time that nobody knows anything about him, either as to where he came from or who he is. How is he involved in this affair, though?"

"I cannot speak with any certainty," replied the other; "but, to tell you the truth, I often feel myself impressed with strong suspicions, that he is the very individual we are seeking."

"But upon what reasons do you ground those suspicions?" asked his reverence.

The stranger then related to him the circumstances in connection with Fenton's mysterious terror of Sir Thomas Gourlay, precisely as the reader is already acquainted with them.

"But," said the priest, "can you believe now, if Sir Thomas was the kidnapper in this instance, that he would allow unfortunate Fenton, supposing he is his brother's heir, and who, they say, is often *non compos*, to remain twenty-four hours at large?"

"Probably not; but you know he may be unaware of his residence so near him. Sir Thomas, like too many of his countrymen, has been an absentee for years, and is only a short time in this country, and still a shorter at Red Hall. The young man probably is at large, because he may have escaped. There is evidently some mysterious relation between Fenton and the baronet, but what it is or can be I am utterly unable to trace. Fenton, with all his wild eccentricity or insanity, is cautious, and on his guard against me; and I find it impossible to get anything out of him."

The worthy priest fell into a mood of apparently deep but agreeable reflection, and the stranger felt a hope that he had fallen upon some plan, or, at all events, that he had thought of or recalled to memory some old recollection that might probably be of service to him.

"The poor fellow, sir," said he, addressing the other with singular benignity, "is an orphan; his mother is dead more than twelve years, and his father, the idle and unfortunate man, never has been of the slightest use to him, poor creature."

"What," exclaimed the stranger, with animation, "you, then, know his father!"

"Know him! to be sure I do. He is, or rather he was, a horse-jockey, and I took the poor neglected young lad in because he had no one to look after him. But wasn't it kind-hearted of the creature to heap the creel of turf though, and shed tears for poor Widow Magowran? In truth, I won't forget either of these two acts to him."

"You speak, sir, of your servant, I believe?" observed the other, with something like chagrin.

"In truth, there's not a kind-hearted young giant alive this day. Many a little bounty that I, through the piety and liberality of the charitable, am enabled to distribute among my poor, and often send to them with Mat; and I believe there's scarcely an instance of the kind in which he is the bearer of it, that he doesn't shed tears just as he did with Widow Magowran. Sure I have it from his own lips."

"I have little doubt of it," replied the stranger.

"And one day," proceeded the credulous, easy man, "that I was going along the Race-road, I overtook him with a creel of turf, the same way, on his back, and when I looked down from my horse into the creel, I saw with astonishment that it wasn't more than half full. 'Mat,' said I, 'what's the

raison of this? Didn't I desire you to fill the creel to the top, and above it?'

"'Troth,' said poor Mat, 'I never carried such a creelful in my life as it was when I left home.'

"'But what has become of the turf, then?' I asked.

"He gave me a look and almost began to cry—'Arra now, your reverence,' he replied, 'how could you expict me to have the heart to refuse a few sods to the great number of poor creatures that axed me for them, to boil their pratees, as I came along? I hope, your reverence, I am not so hard-hearted as all that comes to.'"

"I know," proceeded the priest, "that it was wrong not to bring the turf to its destination; but, you see, sir, it was only an error of judgment—although the head was wrong, the heart was right—and that's a great point."

It was not in human nature, however, to feel annoyed at this characteristic ebullition. The stranger's chagrin at once disappeared, and as he was in no particular hurry, and wished to see as much of the priest as possible, he resolved to give him his own way.

He had not long to wait, however. After about a minute's deep thought, he expressed himself as follows—and it may be observed here, once for all, that on appropriate occasions his conversation could rise and adapt itself to the dignity of the subject, with a great deal of easy power, if not of eloquence:

"Now, sir," said he, "you will plaise to pay attention to what I am about to say: Beware of Sir Thomas Gourlay—as a Christian man, it is my duty to put you on your guard; but consider that you ask me to involve myself in a matter of deep family interest and importance, and yet, as I said, you keep yourself wrapped up in a veil of impenetrable mystery. Pray, allow me to ask, is Mr. Birney acquainted with your name and secret?"

"He is," replied the other, "with both."

"Then, in that case," said the worthy priest, with very commendable prudence, "I will walk over with you to his house, and if he assures me personally that you are a gentleman in whose objects I may and ought to feel an interest, I then say, that I shall do what I can for you, although that may not be much. Perhaps I may put you in a proper train to succeed. I will, with these conditions, give you a letter to an old man in Dublin, who may give you, on this very subject, more information than any other person I know, with one exception."

"My dear sir," replied the stranger, getting on his legs, "I am quite satisfied with that proposal, and I feel that it is very kind of you to make it."

"Yes, but you won't go," said the priest, "till you take some refreshment. It's now past two o'clock."

"I am much obliged to you," replied the other, "but I never lunch."

"Not a foot you'll stir then till you take something—I don't want you to lunch—a bit and a sup just—come, don't refuse now, for I say you must."

The other smiled, and replied: "But, I assure you, my dear sir, I couldn't—I breakfasted late."

"Not a matter for that, you must have something, I say—a drop of dram then—pure poteen—or maybe you'd prefer a glass of wine? say which, for you must taste either the one or the other"—and as he spoke, with a good-humored laugh, he deliberately locked the door, and put the key in his pocket. "It's an old proverb," he added, "that those who won't take are never ready to give, and I'll think you after all but a poor-hearted creature if you refuse it. At any rate, consider yourself a prisoner until you comply."

"Well, then," replied our strange friend, still smiling, "since your hospitality will force me, at the expense of my liberty, I think I must—a glass of sherry then, since you are so kind."

"Ah," replied his reverence, "I see you don't know what's good—that's the stuff," he added, pointing to the poteen, "that would send the radical heat to the very ends of your nails—I never take more than a single tumbler after my dinner, but that's my choice."

The stranger then joined him in a glass of sherry, and they proceeded to Mr. Birney's

CHAPTER XII.

Crackenfudge Outwitted by Fenton—The Baronet, Enraged at His Daughter's Firmness, strikes Her.

Crackenfudge, who was completely on the alert to ascertain if possible the name of the stranger, and the nature of his business in Ballytrain, learned that Fenton and he had had three or four private interviews, and he considered it very likely that if he could throw himself in that wild young fellow's way, without any appearance of design, he might be able to extract something concerning the other out of him. In the course, then, of three or four days after that detailed in our last chapter, and we mention this par-

ticularly, because Father M'Mahon was obliged to write to Dublin, in order to make inquiries touching the old man's residence to whom he had undertaken to give the stranger a letter—in the course, we say, of three or four days after that on which the worthy priest appears in our pages, it occurred that Crackenfudge met the redoubtable Fenton in his usual maudlin state, that is to say, one in which he could be termed neither drunk nor sober. We have said that Fenton's mind was changeful and unstable; sometimes evincing extraordinary quietness and civility, and sometimes full of rant and swagger, to which we may add, a good deal of adroitness and tact. In his most degraded state he was always known to claim a certain amount of respect, and would scarcely hold conversation with any one who would not call him *Mr.* Fenton.

On meeting Fenton, the worthy candidate for the magistracy, observing the condition he was in, which indeed was his usual one, took it for granted that his chance was good. He accordingly addressed him as follows:

"Fenton," said he, "what's the news in town?"

"To whom do you speak, sirra?" replied Fenton, indignantly. "Take off your hat, sir, whenever you address a gentleman."

"Every one knows you're a gentleman, Mr. Fenton," replied Crackenfudge; "and as for me, a'd be sorry to address you as anything else."

"I'm sorry I can't return the compliment, then," said Fenton; "every one knows you're anything *but* a gentleman, and that's the difference between us. What piece of knavery have you on the anvil now, my worthy embryo magistrate?"

"You're severe this morning, Mr. Fenton; a' don't think a' ever deserved that at your hands. But come, Mr. Fenton, let us be on good terms. A' acknowledge you are a gentleman, Mr. Fenton."

"Take care," replied Fenton, "and don't overdo the thing neither. Whether is it the knave or fool predominates in you to-day, Mr. Crackenfudge?"

"A' hope a'm neither the one nor the other," replied the embryo magistrate. "A' hope a'm not, Mr. Fenton."

"I believe, however, you happen to be both," said Fenton; "that's a fact as well known, my good fellow, as the public stocks there below; and if Madam Fame reports aright, it's a pity you should be long out of them. Avaunt, you upstart! Before the close of your life, you will die with as many *aliases* as e'er a thief that ever swung from a gallows, and will deserve the swing, too, better than the thief."

"A' had a right to change my name," replied the other, "when a' got into property. A' was ashamed of my friends, because there's a great many of them poor."

"Invert the tables, you misbegotten son of an elve," replied Fenton; "'tis they that are ashamed of you; there is not one among the humblest of them but would blush to name you. So you did not uncover, as I desired you; but be it so. You wish to let me, sir, who am a gentleman, know, and to force me to say, that there is a knave under your hat. But come, Mr. Crackenfudge," he continued, at once, and by some unaccountable impulse, changing his manner, "come, my friend Crackenfudge, you must overlook my satire. Thersites' mood has past, and now for benevolence and friendship. Give us your honest hand, and bear not malice against your friend and neighbor."

"You must have your own way, Mr. Fenton," said Crackenfudge, smiling, or assuming a smile, and still steady as a sleuthhound to his purpose.

"Where now are you bound for, oh, benevolent and humane Crackenfudge?"

"A' was jist thinking of asking this strange fellow——"

"Right, O Crackenfudgius! that impostor is a fellow; or if you prefer the reverse of the proposition, that fellow is an impostor. I have found him out."

"A' hard," replied Crackenfudge, "that he and you were on rather intimate terms, and——"

"And so as being *my* companion, you considered him a *fellow!* Proceed, Crackenfudgius."

"No, not at all; a' was thinkin' of makin' his acquaintance, and paying some attention to him; that is, if a' could know who and what he is."

"And thou shalt know, my worthy mock magistrate. I am in a communicative humor to-day, and know thou shalt."

"And what may his name be, pray, *Mr.* Fenton?" with a peculiar emphasis on the Mr.

"Caution," said Fenton; "don't overdo the thing, I say, otherwise I am silent as the grave. Heigh-ho! what put that in my head? Well, sir, you shall know all you wish to know. In the first place, as to his name—it is Harry Hedles. He was clerk to a toothbrush-maker in London, but it seems he made a little too free with a portion of the brush money: he accordingly brushed off to our celebrated Irish metropolis, ycleped Dublin, where, owing to a tolerably good manner, a smooth English accent, and a tremendous stock of assurance, he insinuated himself into several respectable families as a

man of some importance. Among others, it is said that he has engaged the affections of a beautiful creature, daughter and heiress to an Irish baronet, and that they are betrothed to each other. But as to the name or residence of the baronet, O Crackenfudgius, I am not in a condition to inform you—for this good reason, that I don't know either myself."

"But is it a fair question, Mr. Fenton, to ask how you became acquainted with all this?"

"How?" exclaimed Fenton, with a doughty but confident swagger; "incredulous varlet, do you doubt the authenticity of my information? He disclosed to me every word of it himself, and sought me out here for the purpose of getting me to influence my friends, who, you distrustful caitiff, are persons of rank and consequence, for the purpose of bringing about a reconciliation between him and old Grinwell, the toothbrush man, and having the prosecution stopped. Avaunt! now, begone! This is all the information I can afford upon the subject of that stout but gentlemanly impostor."

Crackenfudge, we should have said, was on horseback during the previous dialogue, and no sooner had Fenton passed on, with a look of the most dignified self-consequence on his thin and wasted, though rather handsome features, than the candidate magistrate set spurs to his horse, and with a singularly awkward wabbling motion of his feet and legs about the animal's sides, his right hand flourishing his whip at the same time into circles in the air, he approached Red Hall, as if he brought tidings of some great national victory.

He found the baronet perusing a letter, who, after having given him a nod, and pointing to a chair, without speaking, read on, with an expression of countenance which almost alarmed poor Crackenfudge. Whatever intelligence the letter may have contained, one thing seemed obvious—that it was gall and wormwood to his heart. His countenance, naturally more than ordinarily dark, literally blackened with rage and mortification, or perhaps with both; his eyes flashed fire, and seemed as about to project themselves out of his head, and poor Crackenfudge could hear most distinctly the grinding of his teeth. At length he rose up, and strode, as was his custom, through the room, moved by such a state of feeling as it was awful to look upon. During all this time he never seemed to notice Crackenfudge, whose face, on the other hand, formed a very ludicrous contrast with that of the baronet. There was at any time very little meaning, to an ordinary observer, in the countenance of this anxious candidate for the magisterial bench, but it was not without cunning; just as in the case of a certain class of fools, any one may recollect that anomalous combination of the latter with features whose blankness betokens the natural idiot at a first glance. Crackenfudge, who, on this occasion, felt conscious of the valuable intelligence he was about to communicate, sat with a face in which might be read, as far at least as anything could, a full sense of the vast importance with which he was charged, and the agreeable surprise which he must necessarily give the raging baronet. Not that the expression, after all, could reach anything higher than that union of stupidity and assurance which may so frequently be read in the same countenance.

"A' see, Sir Thomas," he at length said, "that something has vexed you, and a'm sorry to see it."

The baronet gave him a look of such fury, as in a moment banished not only the full-blown consciousness of the important intelligence he was about to communicate, but its very expression from his face, which waxed meaningless and cowardly-looking as ever.

"A' hope," he added, in an apologetical tone, "that a' didn't offend you by my observation; at least, a' didn't intend it."

"Sir," replied the baronet, "your apology is as unseasonable as the offence for which you make it. You see in what a state of agitation I am, and yet, seeing this, you have the presumption to annoy me by your impertinence. I have already told you, that I would help you to this d——d magistracy; although it is a shame, before God and man, to put such a creature as you are upon the bench. Don't you see, sir, that I am not in a mood to be spoken to?"

Poor Crackenfudge was silent; and, upon remembering his previous dialogue with Fenton, he could not avoid thinking that he was treated rather roughly between them. The baronet, however, still moved backward and forward, like an enraged tiger in his cage, without any further notice of Crackenfudge; who, on his part, felt likely to explode, unless he should soon disburden himself of his intelligence. Indeed, so confident did he feel of the sedative effect it would and must have upon the disturbed spirit of this dark and terrible man, that he resolved to risk an experiment, at all hazards, after his own way. He accordingly puckered his face into a grin that was rendered melancholy by the terror which was still at his heart, and, in a voice that had one of the most comical quavers imaginable, he said: "Good news, Sir Thomas."

"Good devil, sir! what do you mean?"

"A' mean good news, Sir Thomas. The fellow in the inn—a' know everything about him."

"Eh! what is that? I beg your pardon, Crackenfudge; I have treated you discourteously and badly—but you will excuse me. I have had such cause for excitement as is sufficient to drive me almost mad. What is the good news you speak of, Crackenfudge?"

"Do you know who the fellow in the inn is, Sir Thomas?"

"Not I; but I wish I did."

"Well, then, a' can tell you."

Sir Thomas turned abruptly about, and, fastening his dark gleaming eyes upon him, surveyed him with an expression of which no language could give an adequate description.

"Crackenfudge," said he, in a voice condensed into tremendous power and interest, "keep me not a moment in suspense—don't tamper with me, sir—don't attempt to play upon me—don't sell your intelligence, nor make a bargain for it. Curse your magistracy—have I not already told you that I will help you to it? What is the intelligence—the good news you speak of?"

"Why, simply this, Sir Thomas," replied the other,—"that a' know who and what the fellow in the inn is; but, for God's sake, Sir Thomas, keep your temper within bounds, or if you don't, a' must only go home again, and keep my secret to myself. You have treated me very badly, Sir Thomas; you have insulted me, Sir Thomas; you have grossly offended me, Sir Thomas, in your own house, too, and without the slightest provocation. A' have told you that a' know everything about the fellow in the inn; and now, sir, you may thank the treatment a' received that a' simply tell you that, and have the honor of bidding you good day."

"Crackenfudge," replied Sir Thomas, who in an instant saw his error, and felt in all its importance the value of the intelligence with which the other was charged, "I beg your pardon; but you may easily see that I was not—that I am not myself."

"You pledge your honor, Sir Thomas, that you will get me the magistracy? A' know you can if you set about it. A' declare to God, Sir Thomas, a' will never have a happy day unless I'm able to write J. P. after my name. A' can think of nothing else. And, Sir Thomas, listen to me; my friends—a' mean my relations—poor, honest, contemptible creatures, are all angry with me, because a' changed my name to Crackenfudge."

"But what has this to do with the history of the fellow in the inn?" replied Sir Thomas. "With respect to the change of your name, I have been given to understand that your relations have been considerably relieved by it."

"How, Sir Thomas?"

"Because they say that they escape the disgrace of the connection; but, as for myself," added the baronet, with a peculiar sneer, "I don't pretend to know anything about the matter—one way or other. But let it pass, however; and now for your intelligence."

"But you didn't pledge your honor that you would get me the magistracy."

"If," said Sir Thomas, "the information you have to communicate be of the importance I expect, I pledge my honor, that whatever man can do to serve you in that matter, I will. You know I cannot make magistrates at my will—I am not the lord chancellor."

"Well, then, Sir Thomas, to make short work of it, the fellow's name is Harry Hedles. He was clerk to the firm of Grinwell and Co., the great tooth-brush manufacturers—absconded with some of their cash, came over here, and smuggled himself, in the shape of a gentleman, into respectable families; and a'm positively informed, that he has succeeded in seducing the affections, and becoming engaged to the daughter and heiress of a wealthy baronet."

The look which Sir Thomas turned upon Crackenfudge made the cowardly caitiff tremble.

"Harkee, Mr. Crackenfudge," said he; "did you hear the name of the baronet, or of his daughter?"

"A' did not, Sir Thomas; the person that told me was ignorant of this himself."

"May I ask who your informant was, Mr. Crackenfudge?"

"Why, Sir Thomas, a half mad fellow, named Fenton, who said that he saw this vagabond at an establishment in England conducted by a brother of this Grinwell's."

The baronet paused for a moment, but the expression which took possession of his features was one of the most intense interest that could be depicted on the human countenance; he fastened his eyes upon Crackenfudge, as if he would have read the very soul within him, and by an effort restrained himself so far as to say, with forced composure, "Pray, Mr. Crackenfudge, what kind of a person is this Fenton, whom you call half mad, and from whom you had this information?"

Crackenfudge described Fenton, and informed Sir Thomas that in the opinion of the people he was descended of a good family, though neglected and unfortunate. "But," he added, "as to who he really is, or of

what family, no one can get out of him. He's close and cunning."

"Is he occasionally unsettled in his reason?" asked the baronet, with assumed indifference.

"No doubt of it, Sir Thomas; he'll sometimes pass a whole week or fortnight and never open his lips."

The baronet appeared to be divided between two states of feeling so equally balanced as to leave him almost without the power of utterance. He walked, he paused, he looked at Crackenfudge as if he would speak, then resumed his step with a hasty and rapid stride that betokened the depth of what he felt.

"Well, Crackenfudge, he said, "your intelligence, after all, is but mere smoke. I thought the fellow in the inn was something beyond the rank of clerk to a tooth-brush maker; he is not worth our talk, neither is that madman Fenton. In the mean time, I am much obliged to you, and you may calculate upon my services wherever they can be made available to your interests. I would not now hurry you away nor request you to curtail your visit, were it not that I expect Lord Cullamore here in about half an hour, or perhaps less, and I wish to see Miss Gourlay previous to his arrival."

"But you won't forget the magistracy, Sir Thomas? A'm dreaming of it every night. A' think that a'm seated upon a bench with five or six other magistrates along with me, and you can't imagine the satisfaction I feel in sending those poor vermin that are going about in a state of disloyalty and starvation to the stocks or the jail. Oh, authority is a delightful thing, Sir Thomas, especially when a man can exercise it upon the vile rubbish that constitutes the pauper population of the country. You know, if a' were a magistrate, Sir Thomas, a' would fine every one—as well as my own tenants, whom I do fine—that did not take off their hat or make me a courtesy."

"And if you were to do so, Crackenfudge," replied the baronet, with a grim, sardonic smile, or rather a sneer, "I assure you, that such a measure would become a very general and heavy impost upon the country. But goodby, now; I shall remember your wishes as touching the magistracy. You shall have J. P. after your name, and be at liberty to fine, flog, put in the stocks, and send to prison as many of the rubbish you speak of as you wish."

"That will be delightful, Sir Thomas. A'll then make many a vagabond that despises and laughs at me suffer."

"In that case, the country at large will suffer heavily; for to tell you the truth, Crackenfudge, you are anything but a favorite. Goodby, now, I must see my daughter." And so he nodded the embryo magistrate out.

After the latter had taken his departure, Sir Thomas rubbed his hands, with a strong, turbid gleam of ferocious satisfaction, that evidently resulted from the communication that Crackenfudge had made to him.

"It can be no other," thought he; "his allusion to the establishment of Grinwell is a strong presumptive proof that it is; but he must be secured forthwith, and that with all secrecy and dispatch, taking it always for granted that he is the fugitive for whom we have been seeking so long. One point, however, in our favor is, that as he knows neither his real name nor origin, nor even the hand which guided his destiny, he can make no discovery of which I may feel apprehensive. Still it is dangerous that he should be at large, for it is impossible to say what contingency might happen—what chance would, or perhaps early recollection might, like a spark of light to a train, blow up in a moment the precaution of years. As to the fellow in the inn, the account of him may be true enough, for unquestionably Grinwell, who kept the asylum, had a brother in the tooth-brush business, and this fact gives the story something like probability, as does the mystery with which this man wraps himself so closely. In the meantime, if he *be* a clerk, he is certainly an impostor of the most consummate art, for assuredly so gentlemanly a scoundrel I have never yet come in contact with. But, good heavens! if such a report should have gone abroad concerning that stiff-necked and obstinate girl, her reputation and prospects in life are ruined forever. What would Dunroe say if he heard it? as it is certain he will. Then, again, here is the visit from this conscientious old blockhead, Lord Cullamore, who won't allow me to manage my daughter after my own manner. He must hear from her own lips, forsooth, how she relishes this union. He must see her, he says; but, if she betrays me now and continues restive, I shall make her feel what it is to provoke me. This interview will ruin me with old Cullamore; but in the meantime I must see the girl, and let her know what the consequences will be if she peaches against me."

All this, of course, passed through his mind briefly, as he walked to and fro, according to his usual habit. After a few minutes he rang, and with a lowering brow, and in a stern voice, ordered Miss Gourlay to be conducted to him. This was accordingly done, her maid having escorted her to the library

door, for it is necessary to say here, that she had been under confinement since the day of her father's visit to Lord Cullamore.

She appeared pale and dejected, but at the same time evidently sustained by serious composure and firmness. On entering the room, her father gazed at her with a long, searching look, that seemed as if he wished to ascertain, from her manner, whether imprisonment had in any degree tamed her down to his purposes. He saw, indeed, that she was somewhat paler than usual, but he perceived at once that not one jot of her resolution had abated. After an effort, he endeavored to imitate her composure, and in some remote degree the calm and serene dignity of her manner. Lucy, who considered herself a prisoner, stood after having entered the room, as if in obedience to her father's wishes.

"Lucy, be seated," said he; and whilst speaking, he placed himself in an arm-chair, near the fire, but turned toward her, and kept his eyes steadily fixed upon her countenance. "Lucy," he proceeded, "you are to receive a visit from Lord Cullamore, by and by, and it rests with you this day whether I shall stand in his estimation a dishonored man or not."

"I do not understand you, papa."

"You soon shall. I paid him a visit, as you are aware, at his own request, a few days ago. The object of that visit was to discuss the approaching union between you and his son. He said he would not have you pressed against your inclinations, and expressed an apprehension that the match was not exactly in accordance with your wishes. Now, mark me, Lucy, I undertook, upon my own responsibility, as well as upon yours, to assure him that it had your fullest concurrence, and I expect that you shall bear me out and sustain me in this assertion."

"I who am engaged to another?"

"Yes, but clandestinely, without your father's knowledge or approbation."

"I admit my error, papa; I fully and freely acknowledge it, and the only atonement I can make to you for it is, to assure you that although I am not likely ever to marry according to your wishes, yet I shall never marry against them."

"Ha!" thought the baronet, "I have brought her down a step already."

"Now, Lucy," said he, "it is time that this undutiful obstinacy on your part should cease. It is time you should look to and respect—yes, and obey your father's wishes. I have already told you that I have impressed Lord Cullamore with a belief that you are a free and consenting party to this marriage, and I trust you have too much delicacy and self-respect to make your father a liar, for that is the word. I admit I told him a falsehood, but I did so for the honor and exaltation of my child. You will not betray me, Lucy?"

"Father," said she, "I regret that you make these torturing communications to me. God knows I wish to love and respect you, but when, under solemn circumstances, you utter, by your own admission, a deliberate falsehood to a man of the purest truth and honor; when you knowingly and wilfully mislead him for selfish and ambitious purposes;—nay, I will retract these words, and suppose it is from an anxiety to secure me rank and happiness,—I say, father, when you thus forget all that constitutes the integrity and dignity of man, and stoop to the discreditable meanness of falsehood, I ask you, is it manly, or honorable, or affectionate, to involve me in proceedings so utterly shameful, and to ask me to abet you in such a wanton perversion of truth? Sir, there are fathers—indeed, I believe, most fathers living—who would rather see any child of theirs stretched and shrouded up in the grave than know them to be guilty of such a base and deliberate violation of all the sacred principles of truth as this."

"You will expose me then, and disgrace me forever with this cursed conscientious old blockhead? I tell you that he doubts my assertion as touching your consent, and is coming to hear the truth from your own lips. But hearken, girl, betray me to him, and by heavens you know not the extent to which my vengeance will carry me."

He rose up, and glared at her in a manner that made her apprehensive for her personal safety.

"Father," said she, growing pale, for the dialogue, brief as it was, had brought the color into her cheeks, "will you permit me to withdraw? I am quite unequal to these contests of temper and opinion; permit me, sir, to withdraw. I have already told you, that provided you do not attempt to force me into a marriage contrary to my wishes I shall never marry contrary to yours."

The baronet swore a deep and blasphemous oath that he would enter into no such stipulation. The thing, he said, was an evasion, an act of moral fraud and deceit upon her part, and she should not escape from him.

"You wish to gain time, madam, to work out your own treacherous purposes, and to defeat my intentions with respect to you; but it shall not be. You must see Lord Cullamore; you must corroborate my assertions to him; you must save me from shame and dishonor or dread the consequences. A

paltry sacrifice, indeed, to tell a fib to a doting old peer, who thinks no one in the world honest or honorable but himself!"

"Think of the danger of what you ask," she replied; "think of the deep iniquity—the horrible guilt, and the infamy of the crime into which you wish to plunge me. Reflect that you are breaking down the restraints of honor and conscience in my heart; that you are defiling my soul with falsehood; and that if I yield to you in this, every subsequent temptation will beset me with more success, until my faith, truth, honor, integrity, are gone forever—until I shall be lost. Is there no sense of religion, father? Is there no future life? Is there no God—no judgment? Father, in asking me to abet your falsehood, and sustain you in your deceit, you transgress the limits of parental authority, and the first principles of natural affection. You pervert them, you abuse them; and, I must say, once and for all, that be the weight of your vengeance what it may, I prefer bearing it to enduring the weight of a guilty conscience."

The baronet rose, and rushing at her, raised his open hand and struck her rather severely on the side of the head. She felt, as it were, stunned for a little, but at length she rose up, and said: "Father, this is the insanity of a bad ambition, or perhaps of affection, and you know not what you have done." She then approached him, and throwing her arms about his neck, exclaimed: "Papa, kiss me; and I shall never think of it, nor allude to it;" as she spoke the tears fell in showers from her eyes.

"No, madam," he replied, "I repulse you; I throw you off from me now and forever."

"Be calm, papa; compose yourself, my dear papa. I shall not see Lord Culhamore; it would be now impossible; I could not sustain an interview with him. You, consequently, can have nothing to fear; you can say I am ill, and that will be truth indeed."

"I shall never relax one moment," he replied, "until I either subdue you, or break your obstinate heart. Come, madam," said he, "I will conduct you to your apartment."

She submissively preceded him, until he committed her once more to the surveillance of the maid whom he had engaged and bribed to be her sentinel.

It is unnecessary to say that the visit of the honorable old nobleman ended in nothing. Lucy was not in a condition to see him; and as her father at all risks reiterated his assertions as to her free and hearty consent to the match, Lord Culhamore went away, now perfectly satisfied that if his son had any chance of being reclaimed by the influence of a virtuous wife, it must be by his union with Lucy. The noble qualities and amiable disposition of this excellent young lady were so well known that only one opinion prevailed with respect to her. Some wondered, indeed, how such a man could be father to such a daughter; but, on the other hand, the virtues of the mother were remembered, and the wonder was one no longer.

CHAPTER XIII.

The Stranger's Second Visit to Father M'Mahon—Something like an Elopement.

On the evening of the same day the stranger desired Paudeen Gair to take a place for him in the "Fly," which was to return to Dublin on that night. He had been furnished with a letter from Father M'Mahon, to whom he had, in Mr. Birney's, fully disclosed his name and objects. He felt anxious, however, to engage some trustworthy servant or attendant, on whose integrity he could fully rely, knowing, or at least apprehending, that he might be placed in circumstances where he could not himself act openly and freely without incurring suspicion or observation. Paudeen, however, or, as we shall call him in future, Pat Sharpe, had promised to procure a person of the strictest honesty, in whom every confidence could be placed. This man's name, or rather his nickname, was Dandy Dulcimer, an epithet bestowed upon him in consequence of the easy and strolling life he led, supporting himself, as he passed from place to place, by his performances upon that simple but pleasing instrument.

"Pat," said the stranger in the course of the evening, "have you succeeded in procuring me this cousin of yours?" for in that relation he stood to Pat.

"I expect him here every minute, sir," replied Pat; "and there's one thing I'll lay down my life on—you may trust him as you would any one of the twelve apostles—barring that blackguard Judas. Take St. Pether, or St. Paul, or any of the dacent apostles, and the divil a one of them honester than Dandy. Not that he's a saint like them either, or much overburdened with religion, poor fellow; as for honesty and truth—divil a greater liar ever walked in the mane time; but, by truth, I mane truth to you, and to any one that employs him—augh, by my soul, he's the flower of a boy."

"He won't bring his dulcimer with him, I hope."

"Won't he, indeed? Be me sowl, sir, you might as well separate sowl and body, as take Dandy from his dulcimer. Like the two sides of a scissors, the one's of no use widout the other. They must go together, or Dandy could never cut his way through the world by any chance. Hello! here he is. I hear his voice in the hall below."

"Bring him up, Pat," said the stranger; "I must see and speak to him; because if I feel that he won't suit me, I will have nothing to do with him."

Dandy immediately entered, with his dulcimer slung like a peddler's box at his side, and with a comic movement of respect, which no presence or position could check, he made a bow to the stranger, that forced him to smile in spite of himself.

"You seem a droll fellow," said the stranger. "Are you fond of truth?"

"Hem! Why, yes, sir. I spare it as much as I can. I don't treat it as an everyday concern. We had a neighbor once, a widow M'Cormick, who was rather penurious, and whenever she saw her servants buttering their bread too thickly, she used to whisper to them in a confidential way, 'Ahagur, the thinner you spread it the further it will go.' Hem! However, I must confess that once or twice a year I draw on it by way of novelty, that is, on set days or bonfire nights; and I hope, sir, you'll admit that that's treating it with respect."

"How did you happen to turn musician?" asked the other.

"Why, sir, I was always fond of a jingle; but, to tell you the truth, I would rather have the same jingle in my purse than in my instrument. Divil such an unmusical purse ever a man was cursed with than I have been doomed to carry during my whole life."

"Then it was a natural love of music that sent you abroad as a performer?"

"Partly only, sir; for there were three causes went to it. There is a certain man named Dandy Dulcimer, that I had a very loving regard for, and I thought it against his aise and comfort to ask him to strain his poor bones by hard work. I accordingly substituted pure idleness for it, which is a delightful thing in its way. There, sir, is two of the causes—love of melody and a strong but virtuous disinclination to work. The third——" but here he paused and his face darkened.

"Well," inquired the stranger, "the third? What about the third?"

Dandy significantly pointed back with his thumb over his shoulder, in the direction of Red Hall. "It was *him*," he said; "the Black Baronet—or rather the incarnate divil."

"That's truth, at all events," observed Pat, corroborating the incomplete assertion.

"It was he, sir," continued Dandy, "that thrust us out of our comfortable farm—he best knows why and wherefore—and like a true friend of liberty, he set us at large from our comfortable place, to enjoy it."

"Well," replied the stranger, "if that be true it was hard; but you know every story has two sides; or, as the proverb goes, one story is well until the other is told. Let us dismiss this. If I engage you to attend me, can you be faithful, honest, and cautious?"

"To an honest man, sir, I can; but to no other. I grant I have acted the knave very often, but it was always in self-defence, and toward far greater knaves than myself. An honest man *did* once ax me to serve him in an honest way; but as I was then in a roguish state of mind I tould him I couldn't conscientiously do it."

"If you were intrusted with a secret, for instance, could you undertake to keep it?"

"I was several times in Dublin, sir, and I saw over the door of some public office a big, brazen fellow, with the world on his back; and you know that from what he seemed to suffer I thought he looked very like a man that was keeping a secret. To tell God's truth, sir, I never like a burden of any kind; and whenever I can get a man that will carry a share of it, I——"

"Tut! your honor, never mind him," said Pat. "What the deuce are you at, Dandy? Do you want to prevent the gintleman from engagiu' you? Never mind him, sir; he's as honest as the sun."

"It matters not, Pat," said the stranger; "I like him. Are you willing to take service with me for a short time, my good fellow?"

"If you could get any one to give you a caracther, sir, perhaps I might," replied Dandy.

"How, sirrah! what do you mean?" said the stranger.

"Why, sir, that we humble folks haven't all the dishonesty to ourselves. I think our superiors come in now and then for the lion's share of it. There, now, is the Black Baronet."

"But you are not entering the service of the Black Baronet."

"No; but the ould scoundrel struck his daughter to-day, because she wouldn't consent to marry that young profligate, Lord Dunroe; and has her locked up besides."

The stranger had been standing with his back to the fire, when the Dandy mentioned these revolting circumstances; for the truth was, that Lucy's maid had taken upon her the office of that female virtue called curiosity, and by the aid of her eye, her ear, and

an open key-hole was able to communicate to one or two of the other servants, in the strictest confidence of course, all that had occurred during the interview between father and daughter. Now it so happened, that Dandy, who had been more than once, in the course of his visits, to the kitchen, promised, as he said, to *metamurphy* one of them into Mrs. Dulcimer, *alias* Murphy—that being his real name—was accidentally in the kitchen while the dialogue lasted, and for some time afterwards; and as the expectant Mrs. Dulcimer was one of the first to whom the secret was solemnly confided, we need scarcely say that it was instantly transferred to Dandy's keeping, who mentioned it more from honest indignation than from any other motive.

It would be difficult to describe the combination of feelings that might be read in the stranger's fine features—distress, anger, compassion, love, and sorrow, all struggled for mastery. He sat down, and there was an instant pause in the conversation; for both Dandy and his relative felt that he was not sufficiently collected to proceed with it. They consequently, after glancing with surprise at each other, remained silent, until the stranger should resume it. At length, after a struggle that was evidently a severe one, he said,

"Now, my good fellow, no more of this buffoonery. Will you take service with me for three months, since I am willing to accept you? Ay or no?"

"As willing as the flowers of May, your honor; and I trust you will never have cause to find fault with me, so far as truth, honesty, and discretion goes. I can see a thing and not see it. I can hear a thing and not hear it. I can do a thing and not do it—but it must be honest. In short, sir, if you have no objection, I'm your man. I like your face, sir; there's something honorable and manly in it."

"Perhaps you would wish to name the amount of the wages you expect. If so, speak."

"Divil a wage or wages I'll name, sir; that's a matter I'll lave to your own generosity."

"Very well, then; I start by the 'Fly' to-night, and you, observe, are to accompany me. The trunk which I shall bring with me is already packed, so that you will have very little trouble."

Dandy and his relative both left him, and he, with a view of allaying the agitation which he felt, walked toward the residence of Father M'Mahon, who had promised, if he could, to furnish him with further instructions ere he should start for the metropolis.

After they had left the room, our friend Crackenfudge peeped out of the back apartment, in order to satisfy himself that the coast was clear; and after stretching his neck over the stairs to ascertain that there was no one in the hall, he tripped down as if he were treading on razors, and with a face brimful of importance made his escape from the inn, for, in truth, the mode of his disappearing could be termed little else.

Now, in the days of which we write, it so happened that there was a vast portion of bitter rivalry between mail coaches and their proprietors. At this time an opposition coach, called "the Flash of Lightning"—to denominate, we presume, the speed at which it went—ran against the "Fly," to the manifest, and frequently to the actual, danger of the then reigning monarch's liege and loyal subjects. To the office of this coach, then, did Crackenfudge repair, with an honorable intention of watching the motions of our friend the stranger, prompted thereto by two motives—first, a curiosity that was naturally prurient and mean; secondly, by an anxious wish to serve Sir Thomas Gourlay, and, if possible, to involve himself in his affairs, thus rendering his interest touching the great object of his ambition—the magistracy—a matter not to be withheld. He instantly took his seat for Dublin—an inside seat—in order to conceal himself as much as possible from observation. Having arranged this affair, he rode home in high spirits, and made preparations for starting, in due time, by "the Flash of Lightning."

The stranger, on his way to Father M'Mahon's, called upon his friend Birney, with whom he had a long confidential conversation. They had already determined, if the unfortunate heir of Red Hall could be traced, and if his disappearance could be brought home to the baronet, to take such public or rather legal proceedings as they might be advised to by competent professional advice. Our readers may already guess, however, that the stranger was influenced by motives sufficiently strong and decisive to prevent him, above all men, from appearing, publicly or at all, in any proceedings that might be taken against the baronet.

On arriving at Father M'Mahon's, he found that excellent man at home; and it was upon this occasion that he observed with more attention than before the extraordinary neatness of his dwelling-house and premises. The cleanliness, the order, the whiteness, the striking taste displayed, the variety of culinary utensils, not in themselves expensive, but arranged with surprising regularity, constituting a little paradise of convenience and

comfort, were all perfectly delightful to contemplate. The hall-door was open, and when the stranger entered, he found no one in the kitchen, for it is necessary to say here that, in this neat but unassuming abode of benevolence and goodness, that which we have termed the hall-door led, in the first instance, to the beautiful little kitchen we have just described. The stranger, having heard voices in conversation with the priest, resolved to wait a little until his visitors should leave him, as he felt reluctant to intrude upon him while engaged with his parishioners. He could not prevent himself, however, from overhearing the following portion of their conversation.

"And it was yesterday he put in the distraint?"

"It was, your reverence."

"Oh, the dirty Turk; not a landlord at all is half so hard to ourselves as those of our own religion: they'll show some lenity to a Protestant, and I don't blame them for that, but they trample those belonging to their own creed under their inhuman hoofs."

"How much is it, Nogher?"

"Only nine pounds, your reverence."

"Well, then, bring me a stamp in the course of the day, and I'll pass my bill to him for the amount."

"Troth, sir, wid great respect, your reverence will do no such thing. However I may get it settled, I won't lug you in by the head and shoulders. You have done more of that kind of work than you could afford. No, sir; but if you will send Father James up to my poor wife and daughter that's so ill with this faver—that's all I want."

"To be sure he'll go, or rather I'll go myself, for he won't be home till after station. Did this middleman landlord of yours know that there was fever in your family when he sent in the bailiffs?"

"To do him justice, sir, he did not; but he knows it since the day before yesterday, and yet he won't take them off unless he gets either the rent or security."

"Indeed, and the hard-hearted Turk will have the security;—whisper,—call down to-morrow with a stamp, and I'll put my name on it; and let these men, these keepers, go about their business. My goodness! to think of having two strange fellows night and day in a sick and troubled family! Oh, dear me! one half the world doesn't know how the other lives. If many of the rich and wealthy, Michael, could witness the scenes that I witness, the sight might probably soften their hearts. Is this boy your son, Nogher?"

"He is, sir."

"I hope you are giving him a good education; and I hope, besides, that he is a good boy. Do you attend to your duty regularly, my good lad?"

"I do, plaise your reverence."

"And obey your parents?"

"I hope so, sir."

"Indeed," said his father, "poor Mick doesn't lave us much to complain of in that respect; he's a very good boy in general, your reverence."

"God bless you, my child," said the priest, solemnly, placing his hand upon the boy's head, who was sitting, "and guide your feet in the paths of religion and virtue!"

"Oh, sir," exclaimed the poor affectionate lad, bursting into tears, "I wish you would come to my mother! she is very ill, and so is my sister."

"I will go, my child, in half-an-hour. I see you *are* a good youth, and full of affection; I will go almost immediately. Here, Mat Ruly," he shouted, raising the parlor window, on seeing that neat boy pass;—"here, you colossus—you gigantic prototype of grace and beauty;—I say, go and saddle Freney the Robber immediately; I must attend a sick call without delay. What do you stare and gape for? shut that fathomless cleft in your face, and be off. Now, Nogher," he said, once more addressing the man, "slip down to-morrow with the stamp; or, stay, why should these fellows be there two hours, and the house and the family as they are? Sit down here for a few minutes, I'll go home with you; we can get the stamp in Ballytrain, on our way,—ay, and draw up the bill there too;—indeed we can and we will too; so not a syllable against it. You know I must have my will, and that I'm a raging lion when opposed."

"God bless your revereuce," replied the man, moved almost to tears by his goodness; "many an act of the kind your poor and struggling parishioners has to thank you for."

On looking into the kitchen, for the parlor door was open, he espied the stranger, whom he approached with every mark of the most profound respect, but still with perfect ease and independence.

After the first salutations were over—

"Well, sir," said the priest, "do you hold to your purpose of going to Dublin?"

"I go this night," replied the other; "and, except through the old man to whom you are so kind as to give me the letter, I must confess I have but slight expectations of success. Unless we secure this unfortunate young man, that is, always supposing that he is alive, and are able clearly and without question to identify his person, all

we may do must be in vain, and the baronet is firm in both title and estates."

"That is evident," replied the priest. "Could you find the heir alive, and identify his person, of course your battle is won. Well; if there be anything like a thread to guide you through the difficulties of this labyrinth, I have placed it in your hands."

"I am sensible of your good wishes, sir, and I thank you very much for the interest you have so kindly taken in the matter. By the way, I engaged a servant to accompany me—one Dulcimer, Dandy Dulcimer; pray, what kind of moral character does he bear?"

"Dandy Dulcimer!" exclaimed the priest; "why, the thief of the world! is it possible you have engaged *him?*"

"Why? is he not honest?" asked the other, with surprise.

"Honest!" replied the priest; "the vagabond's as honest a vagabond as ever lived. You may trust him in anything and everything. When I call him a vagabond, I only mean it in a kind and familiar sense; and, by the way, I must give you an explanation upon the subject of my pony. You must have heard me call him 'Freney the Robber' a few minutes ago. Now, not another sense did I give him that name in but in an ironical one, just like *lucus a non lucendo*, or, in other words, because the poor creature is strictly honest and well tempered. And, indeed, there are some animals much more moral in their disposition than others. Some are kind, affectionate, benevolent, and grateful; and some, on the other hand, are thieving robbers and murderers. No, sir, I admit that I was wrong, and, so to speak, I owe Freney an apology for having given him a bad name; but then again I have made it up to him in other respects. Now, you'll scarcely believe what I am going to tell you, although you may, for not a word of lie in it. When Freney sometimes is turned out into my fields, he never breaks bounds, nor covets, so to speak, his neighbor's property, but confines himself strictly and honestly to his own; and I can tell you it's not every horse would do that, or man either. He knows my voice, too, and, what is more, my very foot, for he will whinny when he hears it, and before he sees me at all."

"Pray," said the stranger, exceedingly amused at this narrative, "how does your huge servant get on?"

"Is it Mat Ruly?—why, sir, the poor boy's as kind-hearted and benevolent, and has as sharp an appetite as ever. He told me that he cried yesterday when bringing a little assistance to a poor family in the neighborhood. But, touching this matter on which you are engaged, will you be good enough to write to me from time to time? for I shall feel anxious to hear how you get on."

The stranger promised to do so, and after having received two letters from him they shook hands and separated.

We have stated before that Dandy Dulcimer had a sweetheart in the service of Sir Thomas Gourlay. Soon after the interview between the stranger and Dandy, and while the former had gone to get the letters from Father M'Mahon, this same sweetheart, by name Alley Mahon, came to have a word or two with Paudeen Gair, or Pat Sharpe. When Paudeen saw her, he imputed the cause of her visit to something connected with Dandy Dulcimer, his cousin; for, as the latter had disclosed to him the revelation which Alley had made, he took it for granted that the Dandy had communicated to her the fact of his being about to accept service with the stranger at the inn, and to proceed with him to Dublin. And such, indeed, was the actual truth. Paudeen had, on behalf of Dandy, all but arranged the matter with the stranger a couple of days before, Dandy being a consenting party, so that nothing was wanting but an interview between the latter and the stranger, in order to complete the negotiation.

"Pat," said Alley, after he had brought her up to a little back-room on the second story, "I know that your family ever and always has been an honest family, and that a stain of thraichery or disgrace was never upon one of their name."

"Thank God, and you, Alley; I am proud to know that what you say is right and true."

"Well, then," she replied, "it is, and every one knows it. Now, then, can you keep a secret, for the sake of truth and conscience, ay, and religion; and if all will not do, for the sake of her that paid back to your family, out of her own private purse, what her father robbed them of?"

"By all that's lovely," replied Pat, "if there's a livin' bein' I'd sacrifice my life for, it's her."

"Listen; I want you to secure two seats in the 'Fly,' for this night; inside seats, or if you can't get insides, then outsides will do."

"Stop where you are," replied Pat, about to start downstairs; "the thing will be done in five minutes."

"Are you mad, Pat?" said she; "take the money with you before you go."

"Begad," said Pat, "my heart was in my mouth—here, let us have it. And so the darling young lady is forced to fly from the tyrant?"

"Oh, Pat," said Alice, solemnly, "for the

sake of the living God, don't breathe that you know anything about it; we're lost if you do."

"If Dandy was here, Alley," he replied, "I'd make him swear it upon your lips; but, hand us the money, for there's little time to be lost; I hope all the seats arn't taken."

He was just in time, however; and in a few minutes returned, having secured for two the only inside seats that were left untaken at the moment, although there were many claimants for them in a few minutes afterwards.

"Now, Alley," said he, after he had returned from the coach-office, which, by the way, was connected with the inn, "what does all this mane? I think I could guess something about it. A runaway, eh?"

"What do you mean by a runaway?" she replied; "of course she is running away from her brute of a father, and I am goin' with her."

"But isn't she goin' wid somebody else?" he inquired.

"No," replied Alley; "I know where she is goin'; but she is goin' wid nobody but myself."

"Ah, Alley," replied Pat, shrewdly, "I see she has kept you in the dark; but I don't blame her. Only, if you can keep a secret, so can I."

"Pat," said she, "desire the coachman to stop at the white gate, where two faymales will be waitin' for it, and let the guard come down and open the door for us; so that we won't have occasion to spake. It's aisy to know one's voice, Pat."

"I'll manage it all," said Pat; "make your mind aisy—and what is more, I'll not breathe a syllable to mortual man, woman, or child about it. That would be an ungrateful return for her kindness to our family. May God bless her, and grant her happiness, and that's the worst I wish her."

The baronet, in the course of that evening, was sitting in his dining-room alone, a bottle of Madeira before him, for indeed it is necessary to say, that although unsocial and inhospitable, he nevertheless indulged pretty freely in wine. He appeared moody, and gulped down the Madeira as a man who wished either to sustain his mind against care, or absolutely to drown memory, and probably the force of conscience. At length, with a flushed face, and a voice made more deep and stern by his potations, and the reflections they excited, he rang the bell, and in a moment the butler appeared.

"Is Gillespie in the house, Gibson?"

"Yes, sir."

"Send him up."

In a few minutes Gillespie entered; and indeed it would be difficult to see a more ferocious-looking ruffian than this scoundrel who was groom to the baronet. Fame, or scandal, or truth, as the case may be, had settled the relations between Sir Thomas and him, not merely as those of master and servant, but as those of father and son. Be this as it may, however, the similarity of figure and feature was so extraordinary, that the inference could be considered by no means surprising.

"Tom," said the baronet, "I suppose there is a Bible in the house?"

"I can't say, sir," replied the ruffian. "I never saw any one in use. O, yes, Miss Gourlay has one."

"Yes," replied the other, with a gloomy reflection, "I forgot; she is, in addition to her other accomplishments, a Bible reader. Well, stay where you are; I shall get it myself."

He accordingly rose and proceeded to Lucy's chamber, where, after having been admitted, he found the book he sought, and such was the absence of mind, occasioned by the apprehensions he felt, that he brought away the book, and forgot to lock the door.

"Now, sir," said the baronet, sternly, when he returned, "do you respect this book? It is the Bible."

"Why, yes, sir. I respect every book that has readin' in it—printed readin'."

"But this is the Bible, on which the Christian religion is founded."

"Well, sir, I don't doubt that," replied the enlightened master of horse; "but I prefer the Seven Champions of Christendom, or the History of Valentine and Orson, or Fortunatus's Purse."

"You don't relish the Bible, then?"

"I don't know, sir; I never read a line of it—although I heard a great deal about it. Isn't that the book the parsons preach from?"

"It is," replied the baronet, in his deep voice. "This book is the source and origin and history of the revelation of God's will to man; this is the book on which oaths are taken, and when taken falsely, the falsehood is perjury, and the individual so perjuring himself is transported, either for life or a term of years, while living and when dead, Gillespie—mark me well, sir—when dead, his soul goes to eternal perdition in the flames of hell. Would you now, knowing this—that you would be transported in this world, and damned in the next—would you, I say, take an oath upon this book and break it?"

"No, sir, not after what you said."

"Well, then, I am a magistrate, and I wish to administer an oath to you."

"Very well, sir, I'll swear whatever you like."

"Then listen—take the book in your right hand—you shall swear the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you GOD! You swear to execute whatever duty I may happen to require at your hands, and to keep the performance of that duty a secret from every living mortal, and besides to keep secret the fact that I am in any way connected with it—you swear this?"

"I do, sir," replied the other, kissing the book.

The baronet paused a little.

"Very well," he added, "consider yourself solemnly sworn, and pray recollect that if you violate this oath—in other words, if you commit perjury, I shall have you transported as sure as your name is Gillespie."

"But your honor has sworn me to secrecy, and yet I don't know the secret."

"Neither shall you for twenty-four hours longer. I am not and shall not be in a condition to mention it to you sooner, but I put you under the obligation now, in order that you may have time to reflect upon its importance. You may go."

Gillespie felt exceedingly puzzled as to the nature of the services about to be required at his hands, but as every attempt to solve this difficulty was fruitless, he resolved to await the event in patience, aware that the period between his anxiety on the subject and a knowledge of it was but short.

We need not hesitate to assure our readers, that if Lucy Gourlay had been apprised, or even dreamt for a moment, that the stranger and she were on that night to be fellow-travellers in the same coach, she would unquestionably have deferred her journey to the metropolis, or, in other words, her escape from the senseless tyranny of her ambitious father. Fate, however, is fate, and it is precisely the occurrence of these seemingly incidental coincidences that in fact, as well as in fiction, constitutes the principal interest of those circumstances which give romance to the events of human life and develop its character.

The "Fly" started from Ballytrain at the usual hour, with only two inside passengers—to wit, our friend the stranger and a wealthy stock-farmer from the same parish. He was a large, big-boned, good-humored fellow, dressed in a strong frieze outside coat or jock, buckskin breeches, top-boots, and a heavy loaded whip, his inseparable companion wherever he went.

The coach, on arriving at the white gate, pulled up, and two females, deeply and closely veiled, took their seats inside. Of course, the natural politeness of the stranger prevented him from obtruding his conversation upon ladies with whom he was not acquainted. The honest farmer, however, felt no such scruples, nor, as it happened, did *one* at least of the ladies in question.

"This is a nice affair," he observed, "about the Black Baronet's daughter."

"What is a nice affair?" asked our friend Alley, for she it was, as the reader of course is already aware—"What is a nice affair?"

"Why, that Miss Gourlay, they say, fell in love with a buttonmaker's clerk from London, and is goin' to marry him in spite of all opposition."

"Who's your authority for that?" asked Alley; "but whoever is, is a liar, and the truth is not in him—that's what I say."

"Ay, but what do you know about it?" asked the grazier. "You're not in Miss Gourlay's saicrets—and a devilish handsome, gentlemanly lookin' fellow they say the button-maker is. Faith, I can tell you, I give tooth-an-egg-credit. The fellow will get a darlin' at all events—and he'll be very bad indeed, if he's not worth a ship-load of that profligate Lord Dunroe."

"Well," replied Alley, "I agree with you there, at all events; for God sees that the same Lord Dunroe will make the cream of a bad husband to whatsoever poor woman will suffer by him. A bad bargain he will be at best, and in that I agree with you."

"So far, then," replied the grazier, "we *do* agree; an', dang my buttons, but I'll lave it to this gentleman if it wouldn't be betther for Miss Gourlay to marry a daicent button-maker any day, than such a hurler as Dunroe. What do you say, sir?"

"But who is this button-maker," asked the stranger, "and where is he to be found?"

Lucy, on recognizing his voice, could scarcely prevent her emotion from becoming perceptible; but owing to the darkness of the night, and the folds of her thick veil, her fellow-travellers observed nothing.

"Why," replied the grazier, who had evidently, from a lapse of memory, substituted one species of manufacture for another thing, "they tell me he is stopping in the head inn in Ballytrain; an', dang my buttons, but he must be a fellow of mettle, for sure didn't he kick that tyrannical ould scoundrel, the Black Baronet, down-stairs, and out of the hall-door, when he came to bullyrag over him about his daughter—the darlin'?"

Lucy's distress was here incredible; and had not her self-command and firmness of character been indeed unusual, she would have felt it extremely difficult to keep her agitation within due bounds.

"You labor under a mistake there," replied

the stranger; "I happen to know that nothing of the kind occurred. Some warm words passed between them, but no blows. A young person named Fenton, whom I know, was present."

"Why," observed the grazier, "that's the young fellow that goes mad betimes, an' a quare chap he is, by all accounts. They say he went mad for love."

From this it was evident that rumor had, as usual, assigned several causes for Fenton's insanity.

"Yes, I believe so," replied the stranger.

Alley, who thought she had been overlooked in this partial dialogue, determined to sustain her part in the conversation with a dignity becoming her situation, now resolved to flourish in with something like effect.

"They know nothing about it," she said, "that calls Miss Gourlay's sweetheart a button-maker. Miss Gourlay's not the stuff to fall in love wid any button-maker, even if he made buttons of goold; an' sure they say that the king an queen, and the whole royal family wears golden buttons."

"I think, in spaiking of buttons," observed the grazier, with a grin, "that you might lave the queen out."

"And why should I lave the queen out?" asked Alley, indignantly, and with a towering resolution to defend the privileges of her sex. "Why ought I lave the queen out, I say?"

"Why," replied the grazier, with a still broader grin, "barring she wears the breeches, I don't know what occasion she could have for buttons."

"That only shows your ignorance," said Alley; "don't you know that all ladies wear habit-shirts, and that habit-shirts must have buttons?"

"I never heard of a shirt havin' buttons anywhere but at the neck," replied the grazier, who drew the inference in question from his own, which were made upon a very simple and primitive fashion.

"But you don't know either," responded Alley, launching nobly into the purest fiction, from an impression that the character of her mistress required it for her defence, "you don't know that nobody is allowed to make buttons for the queen but a knight o' the garther."

"Garther!" exclaimed the grazier, with astonishment. "Why what the dickens has garthers to do wid buttons?"

"More than you think," replied the redoubtable Alley. "The queen wears buttons to her garthers, and the knight o' the garther is always obliged to try them on; but always, of course, afore company."

The stranger was exceedingly amused at this bit of by-play between Alley and the honest grazier, and the more so as it drew the conversation from a point of the subject that was painful to him in the last degree, inasmuch as it directly involved the character of Miss Gourlay.

"How do you know, then," proceeded Alley, triumphantly, "but the button-maker that Miss Gourlay has fallen in love with may be a knight o' the garther?"

"Begad, there may be a great dale in that, too," replied the unsuspicious grazier, who never dreamt that Alley's knowledge of court etiquette might possibly be rather limited, and her accounts of it somewhat apocryphal; —"begad, there may. Well," he added, with an honest and earnest tone of sincerity, "for my part, and from all ever I heard of that darlin' of a beauty, she deserves a knight o' the shire, let alone a knight o' the garther. They say the good she does among the poor and destitute since they came home is untellable. God bless her! And that she may live long and die happy is the worst that I or anybody that knows her wishes her. It's well known that she had her goodness from her angel of a mother at all events, for they say that such another woman for charity and kindness to the poor never lived; and by all accounts she led an unhappy and miserable life wid her Turk of a husband, who, they say, broke her heart, and sent her to an early grave."

Alley was about to bear fiery and vehement testimony to the truth of all this; but Lucy, whose bosom heaved up strongly two or three times at these affecting allusions to her beloved mother, and who almost sobbed aloud, not merely from sorrow but distress, arising from the whole tenor of the conversation, whispered a few words into her ear, and she was instantly silent. The farmer seemed somewhat startled; for, in truth, as we have said, he was naturally one of those men who wish to hear themselves talk. In this instance, however, he found, after having made three or four colloquial attacks upon the stranger, but without success, that he must only have recourse either to soliloquy or silence. He accordingly commenced to hum over several old Irish airs, to which he ventured to join the words—at first in a very subdued undertone. Whenever the coach stopped, however, to change horses, which it generally did at some public house or inn, the stranger could observe that the grazier always went out, and on his return appeared to be affected with a still stronger relish for melody. By degrees he proceeded from a tolerably distinct undertone to raise his voice into a bolder key, when, at last,

throwing aside all reserve, he commenced the song of *Cruiskeen Lawn*, which he gave in admirable style and spirit, and with a rich mellow voice, that was calculated to render every justice to that fine old air. In this manner, he literally sang his way until within a few miles of the metropolis. He was not, however, without assistance, during, at least, a portion of the journey. Our friend Dandy, who was on the outside, finding that the coach came to a level space on the road, placed the dulcimer on his knees, and commenced an accompaniment on that instrument, which produced an effect equally comic and agreeable. And what added to the humor of this extraordinary duet—if we can call it so—was the delight with which each intimated his satisfaction at the performance of the other, as well as with the terms in which it was expressed.

"Well done, Dandy! dang my buttons, but you shine upon the wires. Ah, thin, it's you that is and ever was the wiry lad—and sure that was what made you take to the dulcimer of course. Dandy, achora, will you give us, 'Merrily kissed the Quaker?' and I ask it, Dandy, bekaise we are in a religious way, and have a quakers' meetin' in the coach."

"No," replied Dandy; "but I'll give you the 'Bonny brown Girl,' that's worth a thousand of it, you thief."

"Bravo, Dandy, and so it is; and, as far as I can see in the dark, dang my buttons, but I think we have one here, too."

"I thank you for the compliment, sir," said Alley, appropriating it without ceremony to herself. "I feel much obliged to you, sir; but I'm not worthy of it."

"My darling," replied the jolly farmer, "you had betther not take me up till I fall. How do you know it was for you it was intended? You're not the only *lady* in the coach, avourneen."

"And you're not the only gintleman in the coach, Jemmy Doran," replied Alley, indignantly. "I know you well, man alive—and you picked up your politeness from your cattle, I suppose."

"A better chance of getting it from them than from you," replied the hasty grazier. "But I tell you at once to take it aisy, achora; don't get on fire, or you'll burn the coach—the compliment was not intended for *you* at all events. Come, Dandy, give us the 'Bonny brown Girl,' and I'll help you, as well as I'm able."

In a moment the dulcimer was at work on the top of the coach, and the merry farmer, at the top of his lungs, lending his assistance inside.

When the performance had been concluded, Alley, who was brimful of indignation at the slight which had been put upon her, said, "Many thanks to you, Misther Doran, but if you plaise we'll dispense wid your music for the rest of the journey. Remember you're not among your own bullocks and swine—and that this roaring and grunting is and must be very disagreeable to polite company."

"Troth, whoever you are, you have the advantage of me," replied the good-natured farmer, "and besides I believe you're right—I'm afraid I've given offince; and as we have gone so far—but no, dang my buttons, I won't—I was going to try 'Kiss my Lady,' along wid Dandy, it goes beautiful on the dulcimer—but—but—ah, not half so well as on a purty pair of lips. Alley, darlin'," he proceeded now, evidently in a maudlin state, "I never have you, but I'm in a hurry home to you, for it's your lips that's——"

"It's false, Mr. Doran," exclaimed Alley; "how dare you, sir, bring my name, or my lips either, into comparishment wid yourself? You want to take away my character, Mr. Doran; but I have friends, and a strong faction at my back, that will make you suffer for this."

The farmer, however, who was elevated into the seventh heaven of domestic affection, paid no earthly attention to her, but turning to the stranger said:

"Sir, I've the best wife that ever faced the sun——"

"I," exclaimed Alley, "am not to be insulted and calumnied, ay, an' backbitten before my own face, Misther Doran, and take my word you'll hear of this to your cost—I've a faction."

"Sir—gintleman—miss, over the way there—for throth, for all so close as you're veiled, you haven't a married look—but as I was sayin', we fell in love wid one another by mistake—for there was an ould matchmaker, by name Biddlety Girtha, a daughter of ould Jemmy Trailendgel's—God be good to him—father of the present strugglin' poor man of that name—and as I had hard of a celebrated beauty that lived about twelve or fifteen miles down the country that I wished to coort—and she, on the other hand, having hard of a very fine, handsome young fellow in my own neighborhood—what does the ould thief do but brings us together, in the fair of Baltihorum, and palms her off on me as the celebrated beauty, and palms myself on her as the fine, handsome young fellow from the parish of Ballytrain, and, as I said, so we fell in love wid one another by mistake, and didn't discover the imposthure that the ould vagabond had put on us until afther the marriage

However, I'm not sorry for it—she turned out a good wife to me, at all events—for, besides bringin' me a stockin' of guineas, she has brought me twelve of as fine childre' as you'd see in the kingdom of Ireland, ay, or in the kingdom of heaven either. Barrin' that she's a little hasty in the temper—and sometimes—do you persave?—has the use of her—there's five of them on each hand at any rate—do you undherstand—I say, barrin' that, and that she often amuses herself—just when she has nothing else to do—and by way of keepin' her hand *in*—I say, sir, and you, miss, over the way—she now and then amuses herself by turnin' up the little finger of her right hand—but what matter for all that—there's no one widout their little weeny failin's. My own hair's a little sandy, or so—some people say it's red, but I think myself it's only a little sandy—as I said, sir—so out of love and affection for the best of wives, I'll give you her favorite, the 'Red-haired man's wife.' Dandy, you thief, will you help me to do the 'Red-haired man's wife?'"

"Wid pleasure, Misther Doran," replied Dandy, adjusting his dulcimer. "Come now, start, and I'm wid you."

The performance was scarcely finished, when a sob or two was heard from Alley, who, during this ebullition of the grazier's, had been nursing her wrath to keep it warm, as Burns says.

"I'm not without friends and protectors, Mr. Doran—that won't see me rantinized in a mail-coach, and mocked and made little of—whereof I have a strong back, as you'll soon find, and a faction that will make you sup sorrow yet."

All this virtuous indignation was lost, however, on the honest grazier, who had scarcely concluded the "Red-haired man's wife," ere he fell fast asleep, in which state he remained—having simply changed the style and character of his melody, the execution of the latter being equally masterly—until they reached the hotel at which the coach always stopped in the metropolis.

The weather, for the fortnight preceding, had been genial, mild, and beautiful. For some time before they reached the city, that gradual withdrawing of darkness began to take place, which resembles the disappearance of sorrow from a heavy heart, and harbinges to the world the return of cheerfulness and light. The dim, spectral paleness of the eastern sky by degrees received a clearer and healthier tinge, just as the wan cheek of an invalid assumes slowly, but certainly, the glow of returning health. Early as it was, an odd individual was visible here and there, and it may be observed, that at a very early hour every person visible in the streets is characterized by a chilly and careworn appearance, looking, with scarcely an exception, both solitary and sad, just as if they had not a single friend on earth, but, on the contrary, were striving to encounter struggles and difficulties which they were incompetent to meet.

As our travellers entered the city, that bygone class who, as guardians of the night, were appointed to preserve the public peace, every one of them a half felon and whole accomplice, were seen to pace slowly along, their poles under their left arm, their hands mutually thrust into the capacious cuffs of their watchcoats, and each with a frowzy woollen nightcap under his hat. Here and there a staggering toper might be seen on his way home from the tavern brawl or the midnight debauch, advancing, or attempting to advance, as if he wanted to trace Hogarth's line of beauty. From some quarters the wild and reckless shriek of female profligacy might be heard, the tongue, though loaded with blasphemies, nearly paralyzed by intoxication. Nor can we close here. The fashionable carriage made its appearance filled with beauty shorn of its charms by a more refined dissipation—beauty, no longer beautiful, returning with pale cheeks, languid eyes, and exhausted frame—after having breathed a thickened and suffocating atmosphere, calculated to sap the physical health, if not to disturb the pure elements of moral feeling, principle, and delicacy, without which woman becomes only an object of contempt.

Up until the arrival of the "Fly" at the hotel, the gray dusk of morning, together with the thick black veil to which we have alluded, added to that natural politeness which prevents a gentleman from staring at a lady who may wish to avoid observation—owing to these causes, we say, the stranger had neither inclination nor opportunity to recognize the features of Lucy Gourlay. When the coach drew up, however, with that courtesy and attention that are always due to the sex, and, we may add, that are very seldom omitted with a pretty travelling companion, the stranger stepped quickly out of it in order to offer her assistance, which was accepted silently, being acknowledged only by a graceful inclination of the head. When, however, on leaving the darkness of the vehicle he found her hand and arm tremble, and had sufficient light to recognize her through the veil, he uttered an exclamation expressive at once of delight, wonder, and curiosity.

"Good God, my dear Lucy," said he in a low whisper, so as not to let his words reach other ears, "how is this? In heaven's name,

how does it happen that you travel by a common night coach, and are here at such an hour?"

She blushed deeply, and as she spoke he observed that her voice was infirm and tremulous: "It is most unfortunate," she replied, "that we should both have travelled in the same conveyance. I request you will instantly leave me."

"What! leave you alone and unattended at this hour?"

"I am not unattended," she replied; "that faithful creature, though somewhat blunt and uncouth in her manners, is all truth and attachment, so far as I at least am concerned. But I beg you will immediately withdraw. If we are seen holding conversation, or for a moment in each other's society, I cannot tell what the consequences may be to my reputation."

"But, my dear Lucy," replied the stranger, "that risk may easily be avoided. This meeting seems providential—I entreat you, let us accept it as such and avail ourselves of it."

"That is," she replied, whilst her glorious dark eye kindled, and her snowy temples got red as fire, "that is, that I should elope with you. I presume? Sir," she added, "you are the last man from whom I should have expected an insult. You forget yourself, and you forget me."

The high sense of honor that flashed from that glorious eye, and which made itself felt through the indignant tones of her voice, rebuked him at once.

"I have erred," said he, "but I have erred from an excess of affection—will you not pardon me?"

She felt the difficulty and singular distress of her position, and in spite of her firmness and the unnatural harshness of her father, she almost regretted the step she had taken. As it was, she made no reply to the stranger, but seemed absorbed in thoughts of bitterness and affliction.

"Let me press you," said the stranger, "to come into the hotel: you require both rest and refreshment—and I entreat and implore you, for the sake both of my happiness and your own, to grant me a quarter of an hour's conversation."

"I have reconsidered our position," she replied. "Alley will fetch in our very slight luggage; she has money, too, to pay the guard and driver—she says it is usual: and I feel that to give you a short explanation now may possibly enable us to avoid much future embarrassment and misunderstanding—Alley, however, must accompany us, and be present in the room. But then," she added, starting, "is it proper?—is it delicate?—no, no, I cannot, I cannot; it might compromise me with the world. Leave me, I entreat, I implore, I command you. I ask it as a proof of your love. We will, I trust, have other opportunities. Let us trust, too, to time—let us trust to God—but I will do nothing wrong, and I feel that this would be unworthy of my mother's daughter."

"Well," replied the stranger, "I shall obey you as a proof of my love for you: but will you not allow me to write to you?—will you not give me your address?"

"No," she returned; "and I enjoin you, as you hope that we shall ever be happy, not to attempt to trace me. I ask this from you as a man of honor. Of course it may or perhaps it will be discovered that we travelled in the same coach. The accident may be misinterpreted. My father may seek an explanation from you—he may ask if you know where I am. Should I have placed the knowledge of my retreat in your possession, you know that, as a man of honor, you could not tell him a falsehood. Goodby," she added, "we may meet in better times, but I much fear that our destinies will be separated forever—Come, Alley."

Her voice softened as she uttered the last words, and the stranger felt the influence of her ascendency over him too strongly to hesitate in manifesting this proof of his obedience to her wishes.

CHAPTER XIV.

Crackenfudge put upon a Wrong Scent — Miss Gourlay takes Refuge with an Old Friend.

Little did Lucy dream that the fact of their discovery as fellow-travellers would so soon reach her father's ears, and that the provision against that event, and the inferences which calumny might draw from it, as suggested by her prudence and good sense, should render her advice to the stranger so absolutely necessary.

Whilst the brief dialogue which we have recited at the close of the last chapter took place, another, which as a faithful historian we are bound to detail, was proceeding between the redoubtable Crackenfudge and our facetious friend, Dandy Dulcimer. Crackenfudge in following the stranger to the metropolis by the Flash of Lightning, in order to watch his movements, was utterly ignorant that Lucy had been that gentleman's fellow-traveller in the Fly. A strong opposition, as we have already said, existed between the two coaches, and so equal was their speed, that in consequence of the

mutual delay caused by changing horses, they frequently passed each other on the road, the driver, guard, and outside passengers of both coaches uniformly grimacing at each other amidst a storm of groans, cheers, and banter on both sides. So equal, however, were their relative powers of progress, that no effort on either side was found sufficient to enable any one of them to claim a victory. On the contrary, their contests generally ended in a dead heat, or something very nearly approaching it. On the night in question the Fly had a slight advantage, and but a slight one. Before the coachman had time to descend from his ample seat, the Flash of Lightning came dashing in at a most reckless speed—the unfortunate horses snorting and panting—steaming with smoke, which rose from them in white wreaths, and streaming in such a manner with perspiration that it was painful to look upon them.

Crackenfudge was one of the first out of the Flash of Lightning, which, we should say, drew up at a rival establishment, directly opposite that which patronized the Fly. He lost no time in sending in his trunk by "boots," or some other of those harpies that are always connected with large hotels in the metropolis. Having accomplished this, he set himself, but quite in a careless way, to watch the motions of the stranger. For this purpose he availed himself of a position from whence he could see without being himself seen. Judge, then, of his surprise on ascertaining that the female whom he saw with the stranger was no other than Lucy Gourlay, and in conversation with the very individual with whose name, motions, and projects he wished so anxiously to become acquainted. If he watched Miss Gourlay and her companion well, however, he himself was undergoing quite as severe a scrutiny. Dandy Dulcimer having observed him, in consequence of some hints that he had already received from a source with which the reader may become ultimately acquainted, approached, and putting his hand to his hat, exclaimed:

"Why, then, Counsellor Crackenfudge, is it here I find your honor?"

"Don't you see a'm here, Dandy, my fine fellow?" and this he uttered in a very agreeable tone, simply because he felt a weak and pitiable ambition to be addressed by the title of "Your honor."

"What does all this mean, Dandy?" asked Crackenfudge; "it looks very odd to see Miss Gourlay in conversation with an impostor—a' think it's an elopement, Dandy. And pray Dandy, what brought *you* to town?"

"I think your honor's a friend to Sir Thomas, counsellor?" replied Dandy, answering by another question.

"A' am, Dandy, a stanch friend to Sir Thomas."

"Bekaise I know that if you aren't a friend of his, he is a friend of yours. I was playin' a tune the other day in the hall, and while I was in the very middle of it I heard him say—'We must have Counsellor Crackenfudge on the bench;' and so they had a long palaver about you, and the whole thing ended by Sir Thomas getting the tough old Captain to promise you his support, with some great man that they called *custos rascalorum*."

"A' am obliged to Sir Thomas," said Crackenfudge, "and a' know he *is* a true friend of mine."

"Ay, but will you now be a true friend to *him*, plaise your honor, counsellor?"

"To be sure I will, Dandy, my fine fellow."

"Well, then, listen—Sir Thomas got me put into this strange fellow's sarvice, in ordher to ah—ahem—why, you see in ordher to keep an eye upon him—and, what do you think? but he's jist afther tellin' me that he doesn't think he'll have any further occasion for my sarvices."

"Well, a' think that looks suspicious—it's an elopement, there's no doubt about it."

"I think so, your honor; although I am myself completely in the dark about it, any farther than this, counsellor—listen, now—I know the road they're goin', for I heard it by accident—they'll be off, too, immediately. Now, if your honor is a true friend to Sir Thomas, you'll take a post chaise and start off a little before them upon the Naas road. You know that by going before them, they never can suspect that you're followin' them. I'll remain here to watch their motions, and while you keep before them, I'll keep after them, so that it will be the very sorra if they escape us both. Whisper, counsellor, your honor—I'm in Sir Thomas's pay. Isn't that enough? but I want assistance, and if you're his friend, as you say, you will be guided by me and sarve him."

Crackenfudge felt elated; he thought of the magistracy, of his privilege to sit on the bench in all the plenitude of official authority; he reflected that he could commit mendicants, impostors, vagrants, and vagabonds of all descriptions, and that he would be entitled to the solemn and reverential designation of "Your worship." Here, then, was an opening. The very object for which he came to town was accomplished—that is to say, the securing to himself the magistracy through the important services rendered to Sir Thomas Gourlay.

It occurred to him, we admit, that as it must have been evidently a case of elopement, it might be his duty to have the parties arrested, until at least the parent of the lady could be apprised of the circumstances. There was, however, about Crackenfudge a wholesome regard for what is termed a whole skin, and as he had been, through the key-hole of the Mitre inn, a witness of certain scintillations and flashes that lit up the eye of this most mysterious stranger, he did not conceive that such steps and his own personal safety were compatible. In the meantime, he saw that there was an air of sincerity and anxiety about Dandy Dulcimer, which he could impute to nothing but a wish, if possible, to make a lasting friend of Sir Thomas, by enabling him to trace his daughter.

Dandy's plea and plan both succeeded, and in the course of a few minutes Crackenfudge was posting at an easy rate toward the town of Naas. Many a look did he give out of the chaise, with a hope of being able to observe the vehicle which contained those for whom he was on the watch, but in vain. Nothing of the kind was visible; but notwithstanding this he drove on to the town, where he ordered breakfast in a private room, with the anxious expectation that they might soon arrive. At length, his patience having become considerably exhausted, he determined to return to Dublin, and provided he met them, with Dandy in pursuit, to wheel about and also to join the musician in the chase. Having settled his bill, which he did not do without half an hour's wrangling with the waiter, he came to the hall door, from which a chaise with close Venetian blinds was about to start, and into which he thought the figure of a man entered, who very much resembled that of Corbet, Sir Thomas's house steward and most confidential servant. Of this, however, he could not feel quite certain, as he had not at all got a glimpse of his face. On inquiring, he found that the chaise contained another man also, who was so ill as not to be able to leave it. One of them, however, drank some spirits in the chaise, and got a bottle of it, together with some provisions, to take along with them.

So far had Crackenfudge been most adroitly thrown off the trace of Miss Gourlay and the stranger; and when Dandy joined his master, who, from principles of delicacy and respect for Lucy, went to the opposite inn, he candidly told him of the hoax he had played off on the embryo magistrate.

"I sent him, your honor, upon what they call a fool's errand, and certain I am, he is the very boy will deliver it—not but that he's the divil's own knave on the other. The truth is, sir, it's just one day a knave and the other a fool with him."

The stranger paid little attention to these observations, but walked up and down the room in a state of sorrow and disappointment, that completely abstracted him from every object around him.

"Good God!" he exclaimed, "she will not even allow me to know the place of her retreat, and she may stand in need of aid and support, and probably of protection, a thousand ways. Would to heaven I knew how to trace her, and become acquainted with her residence, and that more for her own sake than for mine!"

"I beg your pardon, sir," said Dandy, "I see a cousin o' mine over the way; would your honor give me a couple of hours to spend wid him? I haven't seen him this—God knows how long."

Well might Dandy say so—the cousin alluded to having been only conceived and brought forth from his own own fertile fancy at the moment, or rather, while his master was unconsciously uttering his soliloquy. The truth was, that while the latter spoke, Dandy, whom he had ordered to attend him, without well knowing why, observed a hackney-coach draw up at the door of the opposite hotel; but this fact would not have in any particular way arrested his attention, had he not seen Alley Mahon giving orders to the driver.

"You'll give me a couple of hours, your honor?"

"I'll give you the whole day, Dandy, if you wish. I shall be engaged, and will not require any further services from you until to-morrow."

Dandy looked at him very significantly, and with a degree of assurance, for which we can certainly offer no apology, puckered his naturally comic face into a most mysterious grin, and closing one eye, or in other words, giving his master a knowing wink, said—

"Very well, sir, I know how many banes makes five at any rate—let me alone."

"What do you mean, you varlet," said his master, "by that impudent wink?"

"Wink?" replied Dandy, with a face of admirable composure. "Oh, you observed it, then? Sure, God help me, it's a wakeness I have in one of my eyes ever since I had the small-pock."

"And pray which eye is it in?" asked his master.

"In the left, your honor."

"But, you scoundrel, you winked at me with the right."

"Troth, sir, maybe I did, for it sometimes

passes from the one to the other wid me—but not often indeed—it's principally in my left."

"Very well; but in speaking to me, use no such grimaces in future; and now go see your cousin. I shall sleep for a few hours, for I feel somewhat jaded, and out of order on many accounts. But before you go, listen to me, and mark me well. You saw me in conversation with Miss Gourlay?"

Dandy, whose perception was quick as lightning, had his finger on his lips immediately. "I understand you, sir," said he; "and once for all, sir," he proceeded, "do you listen to me. You may lay it down as one of the ten commandments, that any secret you may plaise to trust me with, will be undher a tombstone. I'm not the stuff that a traitor or villain is made of. So, once for all, your honor, make your mind aisy on that point."

"It will be your own interest to prove faithful," said his master. "Here is a month's wages for you in advance."

Dandy, having accepted the money, immediately proceeded to the next hackney station, which was in the same street, where he took a coach by the hour; and having got into it, ordered the driver to follow that which he saw waiting at the door of the hotel aforesaid.

"Folly that hackney," said he to the driver, "at what is called a respectful distance, an' you'll be no loser by it."

"Is there a piece of fun in the wind?" asked the driver, with a knowing grin.

"When you go to your Padereens tonight," replied Dandy, "that is, in case you ever trouble them, you may swear it on them."

"Whish! More power—I'm the boy will rowl you on."

"There, they're off," said Dandy; "but don't be in a hurry, for fraid we might seem to folly them—only for your life and sowl, and as you hope to get half-a-dozen gumticklers when we come come back—don't let them out o' sight. By the rakes o' Mallow, this jaunt may be the makin' o' you. Says his lordship to me, 'Dandy,' says he, "find out where she goes to, and you and every one that helps you to do so, is a made man.'"

"Ha, ha!" exclaimed the driver, with glee, "is that it? Come, then—here's at you—they're off."

It was not yet five o'clock, and the stranger requested to be shown to a bedroom, to which he immediately retired, in order to gain a few hours' sleep, after the fatigue of his journey and the agitation which he had undergone.

In the meantime, as Dandy followed Miss Gourlay, so shall we follow him. The chase, we must admit, was conducted with singular judgment and discretion, the second chaise jogging on—but that, in fact, is not the term—we should rather say flogging on, inasmuch as that which contained the fair fugitives went at a rate of most unusual speed. In this manner they proceeded, until they reached a very pretty cottage, about three quarters of a mile from the town of Wicklow, situated some fifty or sixty yards in from the road side. Here they stopped; but Dandy desired his man to drive slowly on. It was evident that this cottage was the destination of the fugitives. Dandy, having turned a corner of the road, desired the driver to stop and observe whether they entered or not; and the latter having satisfied himself that they did—

"Now," said Dandy, "let us wait where we are till we see whether the chaise returns or not; if it does, all's right, and I know what I know."

In a few minutes the empty chaise started once more for Dublin, followed, as before, by the redoubtable Dulcimer, who entered the city a much more important person than when he left it. Knowledge, as Bacon says, is power.

About two o'clock the stranger was dressed, had breakfasted, and having ordered a car, proceeded to Constitution Hill. As he went up the street, he observed the numbers of the houses as well as he could, for some had numbers and some had not. Among the latter was that he sought for, and he was consequently obliged to inquire. At length he found it, and saw by a glance that it was one of those low lodging-houses to which country folks of humble rank—chapmen, hawkers, pedlers, and others of a similar character—resort. It was evident, also, that the proprietor dealt in huckstery, as he saw a shop in which there was bacon, meal, oats, eggs, potatoes, bread, and such other articles as are usually to be found in small establishments of the kind. He entered the shop, and found an old man, certainly not less than seventy, but rather beyond it, sitting behind the counter. The appearance of this man was anything but prepossessing. His brows were low and heavy; his mouth close, and remarkably hard for his years; the forehead low and narrow, and singularly deficient in what phrenologists term the moral and intellectual qualities. But the worst feature in the whole face might be read in his small, dark, cunning eyes, which no man of any penetration could look upon without feeling that they were significant of duplicity, cruelty,

and fraud. His hair, though long, and falling over his neck, was black as ebony; for although Time had left his impress upon the general features of his face, it had not discolored a single hair upon his head; whilst his whiskers, on the contrary, were like snow—a circumstance which, in connection with his sinister look, gave him a remarkable and startling appearance. His hands were coarse and strong, and the joints of his thick fingers were noded either by age or disease; but, at all events, affording indication of a rude and unfeeling character.

"Pray," said the stranger, "is your name Denis Dunphy?"

The old man fastened his rat-like eyes upon him, compressed his hard, unfeeling lips, and, after surveying him for some time, replied—

"What's your business, sir, with Denis Dunphy?"

"That, my friend, can be mentioned only to himself; are you the man?"

"Well, and what if I be?"

"But I must be certain that you *are*."

There was another pause, and a second scrutiny, after which he replied,

"May be my name *is* Denis Dunphy."

"I have no communication to make," said the stranger, "that you may be afraid of; but, such as it is, it can be made to no person but Denis Dunphy himself. I have a letter for him."

"Who does it come from?" asked the cautious Denis Dunphy.

"From the parish priest of Ballytrain," replied the other, "the Rev. Father M'Mahon."

The old man pulled out a large snuff-box, and took a long pinch, which he crammed with his thumb first into one nostril, then into the other, bending his head at the same time to each side, in order to enjoy it with greater relish, after which he gave a short deliberative cough or two.

"Well," said he, "I *am* Denis Dunphy."

"In that case, then," replied the other, "I should very much wish to have a short private conversation with you of some importance. But you had better first read the reverend gentleman's letter," he added, "and perhaps we shall then understand each other better;" and as he spoke he handed him the letter.

The man received it, looked at it, and again took a more rapid and less copious pinch, peered keenly at the stranger, and asked—"Pray, sir, do you know the contents of this letter?"

"Not a syllable of it."

He then coughed again, and having opened the document, began deliberately to peruse it.

The stranger, who was disagreeably impressed by his whole manner and appearance, made a point to watch the effect which the contents of the document might have on him. The other, in the meantime, read on, and, as he proceeded, it was obvious that the communication was not only one that gave him no pleasure, but filled him with suspicion and alarm. After about twenty minutes—for it took him at least that length of time to get through it—he raised his head, and fastening his small, piercing eyes upon the stranger, said:

"But how do I know that this letter comes from Father M'Mahon?"

"I'd have you to understand, sir," replied the stranger, nearly losing his temper, "that you are addressing a gentleman and a man of honor."

"Faith," said the other, "I don't know whether I am or not. I have only your word for it—and no man's willin' to give a bad character of himself—but if you will keep the shop here for a minute or two, I'll soon be able to tell whether it's Father M'Mahon's hand-write or not."

So saying, he deliberately locked both tills of the counter—to wit, those which contained the silver and coppers—then, surveying the stranger with a look of suspicion—a look, by the way, that, after having made his cash safe, had now something of the triumph and confidence of security in it, he withdrew to a little backroom, that was divided from the shop by a partition of boards and a glass door, to which there was a red curtain.

"It is betther," said the impudent old sinner, alluding to the cash in the tills, "to greet over it than greet afther it—just keep the shop for a couple of minutes, and then we'll undherstand one another, may be. There's a great many skamers going in this world."

Having entered the little room in question, he suddenly popped out his head and asked:

"Could you weigh a stone or a half stone of praties, if they were called for? But, never mind—you'd be apt to give *down* weight—I'll come out and do it myself, if they're wanted;" saying which, he drew the red curtain aside, in order the better, as it would seem, to keep a watchful eye upon the other.

The latter was at first offended, but ultimately began to feel amused by the offensive peculiarities of the old man. He now perceived that he was eccentric and capricious, and that, in order to lure any information out of him, it would be necessary to watch and take advantage of the disagreeable whimsicalities which marked his character. Patience, he saw clearly, was his only remedy.

After remaining in the back parlor for about eight or ten minutes, he put out his thin, sharp face, with a grin upon it, which was intended for a smile—the expression of which, however, was exceedingly disagreeable.

"We will talk this matter over," he said, "by and by. I have compared the handwrite in this letther wid a certificate of Father M'Mahon's, that I have for many years in my possession. Step inside in the meantime; the ould woman will be back in a few minutes, and when she comes we'll go upstairs and speak about it."

The stranger complied with this invitation, and felt highly gratified that matters seemed about to take a more favorable turn.

"I trust," said he, "you are satisfied that I am fully entitled to any confidence you may feel disposed to place in me?"

"The priest speaks well of you," replied Dunphy; "but then, sure I know him; he's so kind-hearted a creature, that any one who speaks him fair, or that he happens to take a fancy to, will be sure to get his good word. It isn't much assistance I can give you, and it's not on account of his letther altogether that I do it; but bekaise I think the time's come, or rather soon *will* be come. Oh, here," he said, "is the ould woman, and she'll keep the shop. Now, sir, come upstairs, if you plaise, for what we're goin' to talk about is what the very stones oughtn't to hear so long as that man——"

He paused, and instantly checked himself, as if he felt that he had already gone too far.

"Now, sir," he proceeded, "what is it you expect from me? Name it at wanst."

"You are aware," said the stranger, "that the son of the late Sir Edward Gourlay, and the heir of his property, disappeared very mysteriously and suspiciously——"

"And so did the son of the present man," replied Dunphy, eying the stranger keenly.

"It is not of him I am speaking," replied the other; "although at the same time I must say, that if I could find a trace even of him I would leave no stone unturned to recover him."

The old man looked into the floor, and mused for some time.

"It was a strange business," he observed, "that both should go—you may take my word, there has been mischief and revenge, or both, at the bottom of the same business."

"The worthy priest, whose letter I presented to you to-day, led me to suppose, that if any man could put me in a capacity to throw light upon it you could."

"He didn't say, surely, that *I* could throw light upon it—did he?"

"No, certainly not—but that if any man *could*, you are that man."

"Ay, ay," replied old Dunphy; "all bekaise he thinks I have a regard for the Gourlays. That's what makes him suppose that I know anything about the business; just as if I was in the saicrets of the family. I may have suspicions like other people; but that's all."

"Can you throw out no hint, or give no clew, that might aid me in the recovery of this unhappy young man, if he be alive?"

"You did well to add *that*, for who can tell whether he is or not?—maybe it's only thrashing the water you are, after all."

The stranger saw the old fellow had once more grown cautious, and avoided giving a direct reply to him; but on considering the matter, he was, after all, not much surprised at this. The subject involved a black and heinous crime, and if it so happened that Dunphy could in any way have been implicated in or connected with it, even indirectly, it would be almost unreasonable to expect that he should now become his own accuser. Still the stranger could observe that in spite of all his caution, there was a mystery and uneasiness in his manner, when talking of it, which he could not shake off.

When the conversation had reached this point, the old woman called her husband down in a voice that seemed somewhat agitated, but not, as far as he could guess, disagreeably.

"Denis, come down a minute," she said, "come down, will you? here's a stranger that you haven't seen for some time."

"What stranger?" he inquired, peevishly. "Who is it? I wish you wouldn't bother me—I'm talkin' with a gentleman."

"It's Ginty."

"Ginty, is it?" said he, musing. "Well, that's odd, too—to think that *she* should come at this very moment. Maybe, the hand of G——. I beg your pardon, sir, for a minute or two—I'll be back immediately"

He went down stairs, and found in the back parlor the woman named Ginty Cooper, the same fortune-teller and prophetess whom we have already described to the reader.

The old man seemed to consider her appearance not as an incident that stirred up any natural affection in himself, but as one that he looked upon as extraordinary. Indeed, to tell the truth, he experienced a sensation of surprise, mingled with a superstitious feeling, that startled him considerably, by her unexpected appearance at that particular period. He did not resume his conversation with the stranger for at least twenty minutes; but the latter was perfectly

aware, from the earnestness of their voices, although their words were not audible, that he and the new-comer were discussing some topic in which they must have felt a very deep interest. At length he came up and apologized for the delay, adding:

"With regard to this business, it's altogether out of my power to give you any assistance. I have nothing but my suspicions, and it wouldn't be the part of a Christian to lay a crime like that to any man's door upon mere guess."

"If you know anything of this dark transaction," replied the stranger, whose earnestness of manner was increased by his disappointment, as well as by an impression that the old man knew more about it than he was disposed to admit, "and will not enable us to render justice to the wronged and defrauded orphan, you will have a heavy reckoning of it—an awful one when you meet your God. By the usual course of nature that is a reckoning that must soon be made. I advise you, therefore, not to tamper with your own conscience, nor, by concealing your knowledge of this great crime to peril your hopes of eternal happiness. Of one thing you may rest assured, that the justice we seek will not stoop to those who have been merely instruments in the hands of others."

"That's all very fine talk," replied Dunphy, uneasily however, "and from the high-flown language you give me, I take you to be a lawyer; but if you were ten times a lawyer, and a judge to the back of that, a man can't tell what he doesn't know."

"Mark me," replied the stranger, assailing him through his cupidity, "I pledge you my solemn word that for any available information you may or can give us you shall be most liberally and amply remunerated."

"I have money enough," replied Dunphy; "that is to say, as much as barely does me, for the wealthiest of us cannot bring it to the grave. I'm thankful to you, but I can give you no assistance."

"Whom do you suspect, then?—whom do you even suspect?"

"Hut!—why, the man that every one suspects—Sir Thomas Gourlay."

"And upon what grounds, may I ask?"

"Why, simply because no other man had any interest in getting the child removed. Every one knows he's a dark, tyrannical, bad man, that wouldn't be apt to scruple at anything. There now," he added, "that is all I know about it; and I suppose it's not more than you knew yourself before."

In order to close the dialogue he stood up, and at once led the way down to the back parlor, where the stranger, on following him, found Ginty Cooper and the old woman in close conversation, which instantly ceased when they made their appearance.

The stranger, chagrined and vexed at his want of success, was about to depart, when Dunphy's wife said:

"Maybe, sir, you'd wish to get your fortune tould? bekaise, if you would, here's a woman that will tell it to you, and you may depend upon it she'll tell you nothing but the truth."

"I am not in a humor for such nonsense, my good woman; I have much more important matters to think of, I assure you; but I suppose the woman wishes to have her hand crossed with silver; well, it shall be done. Here, my good woman," he said offering her money, "accept this, and spare your prophecy."

"I will not have your money, sir," replied the prophetess; "and I say so to let you know that I'm not an impostor. Be advised, and hear me—show me your hand."

The startling and almost supernatural appearance of the woman struck him very forcibly, and with a kind of good-humored impatience, he stretched out his hand to her. "Well," said he, "I will test the truth of what you promise."

She took it into hers, and after examining the lines for a few seconds said, "The lines in your hand, sir, are very legible—so much so that I can read your name in it— and it's a name which very few in this country know."

The stranger started with astonishment, and was about to speak, but she signed to him to be silent.

"You are in love," she continued, "and your sweetheart loves you dearly. You saw her this morning, and you would give a trifle to know where she will be to-morrow. You traveled with her last night and didn't know it—and the business that brought you to town will prosper."

"You say you know my name," replied the stranger, "if so, write it on a slip of paper."

She hesitated a moment.

"Will it do," she asked, "if I give you the initials?"

"No," he replied, "the name in full—and I think you are fairly caught."

She gave no reply, but having got a slip of paper and a pen, went to the wall and knocked three times, repeating some unintelligible words with an appearance of great solemnity and mystery. Having knocked, she applied her ear to the wall three times also, after which she seemed satisfied.

The stranger of course imputed all this to imposture; but when he reflected upon what

she had already told him, he felt perfectly confounded with amazement. The prophetess then went to her father's counter and wrote something upon a small fragment of paper, which she handed to him. No earthly language could now express his astonishment, not from any belief he entertained that she possessed supernatural power, but from the almost incredible fact that she could have known so much of a man's affairs who was an utter stranger to her, and to whom she was herself unknown.

"Well, it is odd enough," he added; "but this knocking on the wall and listening was useless jugglery. Did you not say, when first you inspected my hand, that you could read my name in the lines of it? then, of course you knew it before you knocked at the wall—the knocking, therefore, was imposture."

"I knew the name," she replied, "the moment I looked into your hand, but I was obliged to ask *permission to reveal it.* Your observation, however, was very natural. It may, in the meantime, be a consolation for you to know that I'm not at liberty to mention it to any one but yourself and one other person."

"A man or woman?"

"A woman—she you saw this morning."

"Whether that be true or not," observed the stranger, "the mention of my name at present would place me in both difficulty and danger; so that I hope you'll keep it secret."

She threw the slip of paper into the fire. "There it lies," she replied, "and you might as well read it in those white ashes as extract it from me until the proper time comes. But with respect to it, there is one thing I must tell you before you go."

"What is that, pray?"

"It is a name you will not carry long. Ask me no more questions. I have already said you will succeed in the object of your pursuit, but not without difficulty and danger. Take my advice, and never go anywhere without a case of loaded pistols. I have good reasons for saying so. Now pass on, for I am silent."

There was an air of confidence and superiority about her as she uttered these words—a sense, as it were, of power—of a privilege to command, by which the stranger felt himself involuntarily influenced. He once more offered her money, but, with a motion of her hand, she silently, and somewhat indignantly refused it.

Whilst this singular exhibition took place, the stranger observed the very remarkable and peculiar expression of the old man's countenance. It is indeed very difficult to describe it. He seemed to experience a feeling of satisfaction and triumph at the revelations the woman had made; added to which was something that might be termed shrewd, ironical, and derisive. In fact, his face bore no bad resemblance to that of Mephistopheles, as represented in Retsch's powerful conception and delineation of it in his illustration of Goethe's "Faust," so inimitably translated by our admirable countryman, Anster.

The stranger now looked at his watch, bade them good day, and took his leave.

CHAPTER XV.

Interview between Lady Gourlay and the Stranger—Dandy Dulcimer makes a Discovery—The Stranger receives Mysterious Communications.

From Constitution Hill our friend drove directly to Merrion square, the residence of Lady Gourlay, whom he found alone in the drawing-room. She welcomed him with a courtesy that was expressive at once of anxiety, sorrow, and hope. She extended her hand to him and said, after the usual greetings were over:

"I fear to ask what the result of your journey has been—for I cannot, alas! read any expression of success in your countenance."

"As yet," replied the stranger, "I have not been successful, madam; but I do not despair. I am, and have been, acting under an impression, that we shall ultimately succeed; and although I can hold out to your ladyship but very slender hopes, if any, still I would say, do not despair."

Lady Gourlay was about forty-eight, and although sorrow, and the bitter calamity with which the reader is already acquainted, had left their severe traces upon her constitution and features, still she was a woman on whom no one could look without deep interest and sympathy. Even at that age, her fine form and extraordinary beauty bore up in a most surprising manner against her sufferings. Her figure was tall—its proportions admirable; and her beauty, faded it is true, still made the spectator feel, with a kind of wonder, what it must have been when she was in the prime of youth and untouched by affliction. She possessed that sober elegance of manner that was in melancholy accordance with her fate; and evinced in every movement a natural dignity that excited more than ordinary respect and sympathy for her character and the sorrows she had suffered. Her face was oval, and had

been always of that healthy paleness than which, when associated with symmetry and expression—as was the case with her—there is nothing more lovely among women. Her eyes, which were a dark brown, had lost, it is true, much of the lustre and sparkle of early life; but this was succeeded by a mild and mellow light to which an abiding sorrow had imparted an expression that was full of melancholy beauty.

For many years past, indeed, ever since the disappearance of her only child, she had led a secluded life, and devoted herself to the Christian virtues of charity and benevolence; but in such a way as to avoid anything like ostentatious display. Still, such is the structure of society, that it is impossible to carry the virtues for which she was remarkable to any practical extent, without the world by degrees becoming cognizant of the secret. The very recipients themselves, in the fulness of their heart, will commit a grateful breach of confidence with which it is impossible to quarrel.

Consoled, as far as any consolation could reach her, by the consciousness of doing good, as well as by a strong sense of religion, she led a life which we regret so few in her social position are disposed to imitate. For many years before the period at which our narrative commences, she had given up all hope of ever recovering her child, if indeed he was alive. Whether he had perished by an accidental death in some place where his body could not be discovered—whether he had been murdered, or kidnapped, were dreadful contingencies that wrung the mother's soul with agony. But as habits of endurance give to the body stronger powers of resistance, so does time by degrees strengthen the mind against the influence of sorrow. A blameless life, therefore, varied only by its unobtrusive charities, together with a firm trust in the goodness of God, took much of the sting from affliction, but could not wholly eradicate it. Had her child died in her arms—had she closed its innocent eyes with her own hands, and given the mother's last kiss to those pale lips on which the smile of affection was never more to sit—had she been able to go, and, in the fulness of her childless heart, pour her sorrow over his grave—she would have felt that his death, compared with the darkness and uncertainty by which she was enveloped, would have been comparatively a mitigated dispensation, for which the heart ought to feel almost thankful.

The death of Corbet, her steward, found her in that mournful apathy under which she had labored for years. Indeed she resembled a certain class of invalids who are afflicted with some secret ailment, which is not much felt unless when an unexpected pressure, or sudden change of posture, causes them to feel the pang which it inflicts. From the moment that the words of the dying man shed the serenity of hope over her mind, and revived in her heart all those tender aspirations of maternal affection which, as associated with the recovery of her child, had nearly perished out of it—from that moment, we say, the extreme bitterness of her affliction had departed.

She had already suffered too much, however, to allow herself to be carried beyond unreasonable bounds by sanguine and imprudent expectations. Her rule of heart and of conduct was simple, but true—she trusted in God and in the justice of his providence.

On hearing the stranger's want of success, she felt more affected by that than by the faint consolation which he endeavored to hold out to her, and a few bitter tears ran slowly down her cheeks.

"Hope had altogether gone," said she, "and with hope that power in the heart to cherish the sorrow which it sustains; and the certainty of his death had thrown me into that apathy, which qualifies but cannot destroy the painful consequences of reflection. That which presses upon me now, is the fear that although he may still live, as unquestionably Corbet on his death-bed had assured me, yet it is possible we may never recover him. In that case he is dead to me—lost forever."

"I will not attempt to offer your ladyship consolation," replied the stranger; "but I would suggest simply, that the dying words of your steward, perhaps, may be looked upon as the first opening—the dawn of a hopeful issue. I think we may fairly and reasonably calculate that your son lives. Take courage, madam. In our efforts to trace him, remember that we have only commenced operations. Every day and every successive attempt to penetrate this painful mystery will, I trust, furnish us with additional materials for success."

"May God grant it!" replied her ladyship; "for if we fail, my wounds will have been again torn open in vain. Better a thousand times that that hope had never reached me."

"True, indeed, madam," replied the stranger; "but still take what comfort you can. Think of your brother-in-law; he also has lost his child, and bears it well."

"Ah, yes," she replied, "but you forget that he has one still left, and that I am childless. If there be a solitary being on earth, it is a childless and a widowed mother—a

widow who has known a mother's love—a wife who has experienced the tender and manly affection of a devoted husband."

"I grant," he replied, "that it is, indeed, a bitter fate."

"As for my brother-in-law," she proceeded, "the child which God, in his love, has spared to him is a compensation almost for any loss. I trust he loves and cherishes her as he ought, and as I am told she deserves. There has been no communication between us ever since my marriage. Edward and he, though brothers, were as different as day and night. Unless once or twice, I never even saw my niece, and only then at a distance; nor has a word ever passed between us. They tell me she is an angel in goodness, as well as in beauty, and that her accomplishments are extraordinary—but *I*—I, alas!—am alone and childless."

The stranger's heart palpitated; and had Lady Gourlay entertained any suspicion of his attachment, she might have perceived his agitation. He also felt deep sympathy with Lady Gourlay.

"Do not say childless, madam," he replied. "Your ladyship must hope for the best."

"But what have you done?" she asked. "Did you see the young man?"

"I saw him, madam; but it is impossible to get anything out of him. That he is wrapped in some deep mystery is unquestionable. I got a letter, however, from an amiable Roman Catholic clergyman, the parish priest of Ballytrain, to a man named Dunphy, who lives in a street called Constitution Hill, on the north side of the city."

"He is a relation, I understand, of Edward Corbet, who died in my service," replied her ladyship, with an interest that seemed instantly to awaken her. "Well," said she, eagerly, "what was the result? Did you present the letter?"

"I presented the letter, my lady; and had at first strong hopes—no, not at first—but in the course of our conversation. He dropped unconscious hints that induce me to suspect he knows more about the fate of your son than he wishes to acknowledge. It struck me that he might have been an agent in this black business, and, on that account, that he is afraid to criminate himself. I have, besides," he added, smilingly, "had the gratification to have heard a prophecy uttered, by which I was assured of ultimate success in my efforts to trace out your son;—a prophecy uttered under and accompanied by circumstances so extraordinary and incomprehensible as to confound and amaze me."

He then detailed to her the conversation he had had with old Dunphy and the fortune-teller, suppressing all allusion to what the latter had said concerning Lucy and himself. After which, Lady Gourlay paused for some time, and seemed at a loss what construction to put upon it.

"It is very strange," she at length observed; "that woman has been here, I think, several times, visiting her late brother, who left her some money at his death. Is she not extremely pale and wild-looking?"

"So much so, madam, that there is something awful and almost supernatural-looking in the expression of her eyes and features. I have certainly never seen such a face before on a denizen of this life."

"It is strange," replied her ladyship, "that she should have taken upon her the odious character of a fortune-teller. I was not aware of that. Corbet, I know, had a sister, who was deranged for some time; perhaps this is she, and that the gift of fortune-telling to which she pretends may be a monomania or some other delusion that her unhappy malady has left behind it."

"Very likely, my lady," replied the other; "nothing more probable. The fact you mention accounts both for her strange appearance and conduct. Still I must say, that so far as I had an opportunity of observing, there did not appear to be any obvious trace of insanity about her."

"Well," she exclaimed, "we know to foretell future events is not now one of the privileges accorded to mortals. I will place my assurance in the justice of God's goodness and providence, and not in the delusions of a poor maniac, or, perhaps, of an impostor. What course do you propose taking now?"

"I have not yet determined, madam. I think I will see this old Dunphy again. He told me that he certainly suspected your brother-in-law, but assured me that he had no specific grounds for his suspicions—beyond the simple fact, that Sir Thomas would be the principal gainer by the child's removal. At all events, I shall see him once more to-morrow."

"What stay will you make in town?"

"I cannot at the present moment say, my lady. I have other matters, of which your ladyship is aware, to look after. My own rights must be vindicated; and I dare say you will not regret to hear that everything is in a proper train. We want only one link of the chain. An important document is wanting; but I think it will soon be in our hands. Who knows," he added, smiling, "but your ladyship and I may ere long be able to congratulate each other upon our mutual success? And now, madam, permit me to take my leave. I am not without hope on your account; but of this you may rest

assured, that my most strenuous exertions shall be devoted to the object nearest your heart."

"Alas," she replied, as she stood up, "it is neither title nor wealth that I covet. Give me my child—restore me my child—and I shall be happy. That is the simple ambition of his mother's heart. I wish Sir Thomas to understand that I shall allow him to enjoy both title and estates during his life, if, knowing where my child is, he will restore him to my heart. I will bind myself by the most solemn forms and engagements to this. Perhaps that might satisfy him."

They then shook hands and separated, the stranger involuntarily influenced by the confident predictions of Ginty Cooper, although he was really afraid to say so; whilst Lady Gourlay felt her heart at one time elevated by the dawn of hope that had arisen, and again depressed by the darkness which hung over the fate of her son.

His next visit was to his attorney, Birney, who had been a day or two in town, and whom he found in his office in Gloucester street.

"Well, Mr. Birney," he inquired, "what advance are you making?"

"Why," replied Birney, "the state of our case is this: if Mrs. Norton could be traced we might manage without the documents you have lost;—by the way, have you any notion where the scoundrel might be whom you suspect of having taken them?"

"What! M'Bride? I was told, as I mentioned before, that he and the Frenchwoman went to America, leaving his unfortunate wife behind him. I could easily forgive the rascal for the money he took; but the misfortune was, that the documents and the money were both in the same pocket-book. He knew their value, however, for unfortunately he was fully in my confidence. The fellow was insane about the girl, and I think it was love more than dishonesty that tempted him to the act. I have little doubt that he would return me the papers if he knew where to send them."

"Have you any notion where the wife is?"

"None in the world, unless that she is somewhere in this country, having set out for it a fortnight before I left Paris."

"As the matter stands, then," replied Birney, "we shall be obliged to go to France in order to get a fresh copy of the death and the marriage properly attested—or, I should rather say, of the marriage and the death. This will complete our documentary evidence; but, unfortunately, Mrs. Norton, who was her maid at the time, and a witness of both the death and marriage, cannot be found, although she was seen in Dublin about three months ago. I have advertised several times for her in the papers, but to no purpose. I cannot find her whereabouts at all. I fear, however, and so does the Attorney-General, that we shall not be able to accomplish our purpose without her."

"That is unfortunate," replied the stranger. "Let us continue the advertisements; perhaps she may turn up yet. As to the other pursuit, touching the lost child, I know not what to say. There are but slight grounds for hope, and yet I am not at all disposed to despair, although I cannot tell why."

"It cannot be possible," observed Birney, "that that wicked old baronet could ultimately prosper in his villainy. I speak, of course, upon the supposition that he is, or was, the bottom of the business. Your safest and best plan is to find out his agents in the business, if it can be done."

"I shall leave nothing unattempted," replied the other; "and if we fail, we shall at least have the satisfaction of having done our duty. The lapse of time, however, is against us;—perhaps the agents are dead."

"If this man is guilty," said the attorney, "he is nothing more nor less than a modern Macbeth. However, go on, and keep up your resolution; effort will do much. I hope in this case—in both cases—it will do all."

After some further conversation upon the matter in question, which it is not our intention to detail here, the stranger made an excursion to the country, and returned about six o'clock to his hotel. Here he found Dandy Dulcimer before him, evidently brimful of some important information on which he (Dandy) seemed to place a high value, and which gave to his naturally droll countenance such an expression of mock gravity as was ludicrous in the extreme.

"What is the matter, sir?" asked his master; "you look very big and important just now. I hope you have not been drinking."

Dandy compressed his lips as if his master's fate depended upon his words, and pointing with his forefinger in the direction of Wicklow, replied:

"The deed is done, sir—the deed is done."

"What deed, sirra?"

"Weren't you tould the stuff that was in me?" he replied. "But God has gifted me, and sure that's one comfort, glory be to his name. Weren't——"

"Explain yourself, sir!" said his master, authoritatively. "What do you mean by 'the deed is done?' You haven't got married, I hope. Perhaps the cousin you went to see was your sweetheart?"

"No, sir, I haven't got married. God keep me a little while longer from sich a calamity?

But I have put *you* in the way of being so."

"How, sirra—put me into a state of calamity? Do you call that a service?"

"A state of repentance, sir, they say, is a state of grace; an' when one's in a state of grace they can make their soul; and anything, you know, that enables one to make his soul, is surely for his good."

"Why, then, say 'God forbid,' when I suppose you had yourself got married?"

"Bekaise I'm a sinner, sir,—a good deal hardened or so,—and haven't the grace even to wish for such a state of grace."

"Well, but what deed is this you have done? and no more of your gesticulations."

"Don't you undherstand, sir!" he replied, extending the digit once more in the same direction, and with the same comic significance.

"She's safe, sir. Miss Gourlay—I have her."

"How, you impudent scoundrel, what kind of language is this to apply to Miss Gourlay?"

"Troth, an' I have her safe," replied the pertinacious Dandy. "Safe as a hare in her form; but it is for your honor I have her. Cousin! oh, the divil a cousin has Dandy widin the four walls of Dublin town; but well becomes me, I took a post-chaise, no less, and followed her hot foot—never lost sight of her, even while you'd wink, till I seen her housed."

"Explain yourself, sirra."

"Faith, sir, all the explanation I have to give you've got, barrin' where she lives."

The stranger instantly thought of Lucy's caution, and for the present determined not to embarrass himself with a knowledge of her residence; "lest," as she said, "her father might demand from him whether he was aware of it." In that case he felt fully the truth and justness of her injunctions. Should Sir Thomas put the question to him he could not betray her, nor could he, on the other hand, stain his conscience by a deliberate falsehood; for, in truth, he was the soul of honor itself.

"Harkee, Dandy," said he, not in the slightest degree displeased with him, although he affected to be so, "if you wish to remain in my service keep the secret of Miss Gourlay's residence—a secret not only from me, but from every human being that lives. You have taken a most unwarrantable and impudent liberty in following her as you did. You know not, sirra, how you may have implicated both her and me by such conduct, especially the young lady. You are known to be in my service; although, for certain reasons, I do not intend, for the present at least, to put you into livery; and you ought to know, sir, also, that it will be taken for granted that you acted by my orders. Now, sir, keep that secret to yourself, and let it not pass your lips until I may think proper to ask you for it."

One evening, on the second day after this, he reached his hotel at six o'clock, and was about to enter, when a young lad, dancing up to him, asked in a whisper if that was for him, at the same time presenting a note. The other, looking at it, saw that it was addressed to him only by his initials.

"I think it is, my boy," said he; "from whom did it come, do you know?"

The lad, instead of giving him any reply, took instantly to his heels, as if he had been pursued for life and death, without even waiting to solicit the gratuity which is usually expected on such occasions. Our friend took it for granted that it had come from the fortune-teller, Ginty Cooper; but on opening it he perceived at a glance that he must have been mistaken, as the writing most certainly was not that of this extraordinary sibyl. The hand in which she had written his name was precisely such as one would expect from such a woman—rude and vulgar—whereas, on the contrary, that in the note was elegant and lady-like. The contents were as follows:

"Sir,—On receipt of this you will, if you wish to prosper in that which you have undertaken to accomplish, hasten to Ballytrain, and secure the person of a young man named Fenton, who lives in or about the town. You will claim him as the lawful heir of the title and property of Red Hall, for such in fact he is. Go then to Sir Thomas Gourlay, and ask him the following questions:

"1st. Did he not one night, about sixteen years ago, engage a man who was so ingeniously masked that the child neither perceived the mask, nor knew the man's person, to lure him from Red Hall, under the pretence of bringing him to see a puppet show?

"2d. Did not Sir Thomas give instructions to this man to take him *out of his path, out of his sight, and out of his hearing?*

"3d. Was not this man well rewarded by Sir Thomas for that act?

"There are other questions in connection with the affair that could be put, but at present they would be unseasonable. The curtain of this dark drama is beginning to rise; truth will, ere long, be vindicated, justice rendered to the defrauded orphan, and guilt punished.

"A Lover of Justice."

It is very difficult to describe the feelings with which the stranger perused this welcome

but mysterious document. To him, it was one of great pleasure, and also of exceedingly great pain. Here was something like a clew to the discovery which he was so deeply interested in making. But, then, at whose expense was this discovery to be made? He was betrothed to Lucy Gourlay, and here he was compelled by a sense of justice to drag her father forth to public exposure, as a criminal of the deepest dye. What would Lucy say to this? What would she say to the man who should entail the heavy ignominy with which a discovery of this atrocious crime must blacken her father's name. He knew the high and proud principles by which she was actuated, and he knew how deeply the disgrace of a guilty parent would affect her sensitive spirit. Yet what was he to do? Was the iniquity of this ambitious and bad man to deprive the virtuous and benevolent woman—the friend of the poor and destitute, the loving mother, the affectionate wife who had enshrined her departed husband in the sorrowful recesses of her pure and virtuous heart, was this cold-blooded and cruel tyrant to work out his diabolical purposes without any effort being made to check him in his career of guilt, or to justify her pious trust in that God to whom she looked for protection and justice? No, he knew Lucy too well; he knew that her extraordinary sense of truth and honor would justify him in the steps he might be forced to take, and that whatever *might* be the result, he at least was the last man whom *she* could blame for rendering justice to the widow of her father's brother. But, then again, what reliance could be placed upon anonymous information—information which, after all, was but limited and obscure? Yet it was evident that the writer—a female beyond question—whoever she was, must be perfectly conversant with his motives and his objects. And if in volunteering him directions how to proceed, she had any purpose adversative to his, her note was without meaning. Besides, she only reawakened the suspicion which he himself had entertained with respect to Fenton. At all events, to act upon the hints contained in the note, might lead to something capable of breaking the hitherto impenetrable cloud under which this melancholy transaction lay; and if it failed to do this, he (the stranger) could not possibly stand worse in the estimation of Sir Thomas Gourlay than he did already. In God's name, then, he would make the experiment; and in order to avoid mail-coach adventures in future, he would post it back to Ballytrain as quietly, and with as little observation as possible.

He accordingly ordered Dandy to make such slight preparations as were necessary for their return to that town, and in the meantime he determined to pay another visit to old Dunphy of Constitution Hill.

On arriving at the huckster's, he found him in the backroom, or parlor, to which we have before alluded. The old man's manner was, he thought, considerably changed for the better. He received him with more complacency, and seemed as if he felt something like regret for the harshness of his manner toward him during his first visit.

"Well, sir," said he, "is it fair to ask you, how you have got on in ferritin' out this black business?"

There are some words so completely low and offensive in their own nature, that no matter how kind and honest the intention of the speaker may be, they are certain to vex and annoy those to whom they are applied.

"*Ferreling out!*" thought the stranger—"what does the old scoundrel mean?" Yet, on second consideration, he could not for the soul of him avoid admitting that, considering the nature of the task he was engaged in, it was by no means an inappropriate illustration.

"No," said he, "we have made no progress, but we still trust that you will enable us to advance a step. I have already told you that we only wish to come at the principals. Their mere instruments we overlook. You seem to be a poor man—but listen to me—if you can give us any assistance in this affair, you shall be an independent one during the remainder of your life. Provided murder has not been committed I guarantee perfect safety to any person who may have only acted under the orders of a superior."

"Take your time," replied the old man, with a peculiar expression. "Did you ever see a river?"

"Of course," replied the other; "why do you ask?"

"Well, now, could you, or any livin' man, make the strame of that river flow faster than its natural course?"

"Certainly not," replied the stranger.

"Well, then—I'm an ould man and be advised by me—don't attempt to hurry the course o' the river. Take things as they come. If there's a man on this earth that's a livin' divil in flesh and blood, it's Sir Thomas Gourlay, the Black Barrownight; and if there's a man livin' that would go half way into hell to punish him, I'm that man. Now, sir, you said, the last day you were here, that you were a gentleman and a man of honor, and I believe you. So these words that *I* have spoken to you about him you will never mention them—you promise that?"

"Of course I can, and do. To what purpose should I mention them?"

"For your own sake, or, I should say, for the sake of the cause you are engaged in, don't do it."

The bitterness of expression which darkened the old man's features, while he spoke of the Baronet, was perfectly diabolical, and threw him back from the good opinion which the stranger was about to form of him, notwithstanding his conduct on the previous day's visit.

"You don't appear to like Sir Thomas," he said. "He is certainly no favorite of yours."

"Like him," replied the old man, bitterly. "He is supposed to be the best friend I have; but little you know the punishment he will get in his heart, sowl, and spirit—little you know what he will be made to suffer yet. Of course now you undherstand, that if I could help you, as you say, to advance a single step in finding the right heir of this property I would do it. As matthers stand now, however, I can do nothing—but I'll tell you what I will do—I'll be on the look-out—I'll ask, seek, and inquire from them that have been about him at the time of the child's disappearance, and if I can get a single particle worth mentionin' to you, you shall have it, if I could only know where a letther would find you."

The cunning, the sagacity, the indefinable twinkle that scintillated from the small, piercing eyes, were too obvious to be overlooked. The stranger instantly felt himself placed, as it were, upon his guard, and he replied,

"It is possible that I may not be in town, and my address is uncertain; but the moment you are in a capacity to communicate any information that may be useful, go to the proper quarter—to Lady Gourlay herself. I understand that a relation of yours lived and died in her service?"

"That's true," said the man, "and a bether mistress never did God put breath in, nor a beither masther than Sir Edward. Well, I will follow your advice, but as for Sir Thomas—no matther, the time's comin'—the river's flowin—and if there's a God in heaven, he will be punished for *all* his misdeeds—for *other* things as well as takin' away the child—that is, if he has taken him away. Now, sir, that's all I can say to you at present—for I know nothing about *this* business. Who can tell, however, but I may ferret out something? It won't be my heart, at any rate, that will hinder me."

There was nothing further now to detain the stranger in town. He accordingly posted it at a rapid rate to Ballytrain, accompanied by Dandy and his dulcimer, who, except during the evenings among the servants in the hotel, had very little opportunity of creating a sensation, as he thought he would have done as an amateur musician in the metropolis.

"Musha, you're welcome back, sir," said Pat Sharpe, on seeing the stranger enter the Mitre; "troth, we were longin' for you, sir. And where is herself, your honor?"

"Whom do you mean, Pat?" said the stranger, sharply.

Pat pointed with his thumb over his shoulder toward Red Hall.

"Ah!" he exclaimed, with a laugh, by my soul I knew you'd manage it well. And troth, I'll drink long life an' happiness an' a sweet honeymoon to yez both, this very night, till the eyes stand in my head. Ah, thin, but she is the darlin', God bless her!"

If a thunderbolt had fallen at his feet, the stranger could not have felt more astonishment; but that is not the word—sorrow—agony—indignation.

"Gracious heaven!" he exclaimed, "what is this? what villanous calumny has gone abroad?"

Here Dandy saw clearly that his master was in distress, and generously resolved to step in to his assistance.

"Paudeen," said he, "you know nothing about this business, my hurler. You're a day before the fair. They're not married yet—but it's as good—so hould your prate about it till the knot's tied—then trumpet it through the town if you like."

The stranger felt that to enter into an altercation with two such persons would be perfect madness, and only make what now appeared to be already too bad, much worse. He therefore said, very calmly,

"Pat, I assure you, that my journey to Dublin had nothing whatsoever to do with Miss Gourlay's. The whole matter was accidental. I know nothing about her; and if any unfortunate reports have gone abroad they are unfounded, and do equal injustice to that lady and to me."

"Divil a thing else, now, Paudeen," said Dandy, with a face full of most villanous mystery—that had runaway and elopement in every line of it—and a tone of voice that would have shamed a couple-beggar—"bad scran to the ha'p'orth happened. So don't be puttin' bad constructions on things too soon. However, there's a good time comin', plaise God—so now, Paudeen, behave yourself, can't you, and don't be vexin' the masther."

"Pat," said the stranger, feeling that the best way to put an end to this most painful conversation was to start a fresh topic, "will

you send for Fenton, and say I wish to see him?"

"Fenton, sir!—why, poor Mr. Fenton has been missed out of the town and neighborhood ever since the night you and Miss Gour—I beg pardon——"

"Upon my soul, Paudeen," said Dandy, "I'll knock you down if you say that agin now, afther what the masther an' I said to you. Hang it, can't you have discretion, and keep your tongue widin your teeth, on *this* business at any rate?"

"Is not Fenton in town?" asked the stranger.

"No, sir; he has neither been seen nor heard of since that night, and the people's beginnin' to wonder what has become of him."

Here was a disappointment; just at the moment when he had determined, by seizing upon Fenton, with a view to claim him as the son of the late Sir Edward Gourlay, and the legitimate heir of Red Hall, in order, if it were legally possible, to bring about an investigation into the justice of those claims, it turned out that, as if in anticipation of his designs, the young man either voluntarily disappeared, or else was spirited forcibly away. How to act now he felt himself completely at a loss, but as two heads he knew were better than one, he resolved to see Father M'Mahon, and ask his opinion and advice upon this strange and mysterious occurrence. In the mean time, while he is on the way to visit that amiable and benevolent priest, we shall so far gratify the reader as to throw some light upon the unaccountable disappearance of the unfortunate Fenton.

CHAPTER XVI.

Conception and Perpetration of a Diabolical Plot against Fenton.

Sir Thomas Gourlay was a man prompt and inexorable in following up his resolutions. On the night of Lucy's flight from Red Hall, he had concocted a plan which it was not his intention to put in execution for a day or two, as he had by no means made up his mind in what manner to proceed with it. On turning over the matter, however, a second time in his thoughts, and comparing the information which he had received from Crackenfudge respecting the stranger, and the allusion to the toothpick manufacturer, he felt morally certain that Fenton was his brother's son, and that by some means or other unknown to him he had escaped from the asylum in which he had been placed, and by some unaccountable fatality located himself in the town of Ballytrain, which, in fact, was a portion of his inheritance.

"I am wrong," thought he, "in deferring this project. There is not a moment to be lost. Some chance incident, some early recollection, even a sight of myself—for he saw me once or twice, to his cost—may awaken feelings which, by some unlucky association, might lead to a discovery. Curse on the cowardly scoundrel, Corbet, that did not take my hint, and put him at once and forever out of my path, sight, and hearing. But he had scruples, forsooth; and here now is the serpent unconsciously crossing my path. This is the third time he has escaped and broken out of bounds. Upon the two former I managed him myself, without a single witness; and, but that I had lost my own child—and there is a mystery I cannot penetrate—I would have——"

Here he rang the bell, and a servant entered.

"Send up Gillespie."

The servant, as usual, bowed, and Gillespie entered.

"Gillespie, there is a young fellow in Ballytrain, named—Fenton, I think?"

"Yes, your honor; he is half-mad, or whole mad, as a good many people think."

"I am told he is fond of liquor."

"He is seldom sober, Sir Thomas."

"Will you go into Ballytrain, and try to see him? But first see the butler, and desire him, by my orders, to give you a bottle of whiskey. I don't mean this moment, sirra," he said, for Gillespie was proceeding to take him instantly at his word.

"Listen, sir. See Fenton—lure him as quietly and secretly as you can out of town—bring him into some remote nook——"

"Sir Thomas, I beg your pardon," exclaimed Gillespie, getting pale; "if you mean that I should——"

"Silence, sir," replied the baronet, in his sternest and deepest voice; "hear me; bring him, if you can, to some quiet place, where you will both be free from observation; then produce your bottle and glass, and ply him with liquor until you have him druuk."

"It's very likely that I'll find him drunk as it is, sir; he is seldom otherwise."

"So much the better; you will have the less trouble. Well, when you have him sufficiently drunk, bring him to the back gate of the garden, which you will find unlocked; lodge him in the tool-house, ply him with more liquor, until he becomes helpless. In the meantime, lock the back gate after you—here is the key, which you can keep in your pocket. Having left him in the tool-house—in a sufficiently helpless state, mark

—lock him in, put that key in your pocket, also; then get my travelling carriage ready, put to the horses, and when all this is done, come to me here; I shall then instruct you how and where to proceed. I shall also accompany you myself to the town of ——, after which you shall take a post-chaise, and proceed with this person to the place of his destination. Let none of the servants see you; and remember we are not to start from the garden gate until about twelve o'clock, or later."

Gillespie promised compliance, and, in fact, undertook the business with the greater alacrity, on hearing that there was to be a bottle of whiskey in the case. As he was leaving the room, however, Sir Thomas called him back, and said, with a frown which nobody could misunderstand, "Harkee, Gillespie, keep yourself strictly sober, and—oh yes, I had nearly forgotten it—try if there is a hard scar, as if left by a wound, under his chin, to the left side; and if you find none, have nothing to do with him. You understand, now, all I require of you?"

"Perfectly, your honor. But I may not be able to find this Fenton."

"That won't be your own fault, you must only try another time, when you may have better success. Observe, however, that if there is no scar under the left side of his chin, you are to let him pass—he is not the person in whom I feel interested, and whom I am determined to serve, if I can—even against his wishes. He is, I believe, the son of an old friend, and I will endeavor to have him restored to the perfect use of his reason, if human skill can effect it."

"That's very kind of you, Sir Thomas, and very few would do it," replied Gillespie, as he left the apartment, to fulfil his execrable mission.

Gillespie having put the bottle of strong spirits into his pocket, wrapped a great coat about him, and, by a subsequent hint from Sir Thomas, tied a large handkerchief across his face, in order the better to conceal his features, and set out on his way to Ballytrain.

It may be remarked with truth, that the projects of crime are frequently aided by those melancholy but felicitous contingencies, which, though unexpected and unlooked for, are calculated to enable the criminal to effect his wicked purposes with more facility and less risk. Gillespie, on the occasion in question, not only met Fenton within a short distance of the town, and in a lonely place, but also found him far advanced in a state of intoxication.

"Is this Mr. Fenton?" said he. "How do you do, Mr. Fenton? A beautiful night, sir."

"Yes, sir," replied the unfortunate young man; "it is *Mr.* Fenton, and you are a gentleman. Some folks now take the liberty of calling me Fenton, which is not only impudently familiar and ridiculous, but a proof that they do not know how to address a gentleman."

"You are leaving the town, it seems, Mr. Fenton?"

"Yes, there's a wake down in Killyfaddy, where there will be a superfluity, sir, of fun; and I like to see fun and sorrow associated. They harmonize, my friend—they concatenate."

"Mr. Fenton," proceeded Gillespie, "you are a young gentleman——"

"Yes, sir, that's the term. I am a gentleman. What can I do for you? I have rare interest among the great and powerful."

"I don't at all doubt it," replied Gillespie; "but I was goin' to say, sir, that you are a young gentleman that I have always respected very highly."

"Thanks, my friend, thanks."

"If it wouldn't be takin' a liberty, I'd ask a favor of you."

"Sir, you are a gentleman, and it should be granted. Name it."

"The night, sir, although a fine enough night, is a little sharp, for all that. Now, I happen to have a sup of as good liquor in my pocket as ever went down the red lane, and if we could only get a quiet sheltering spot, behind one of these ditches, we could try its pulse between us."

"The project is good and hospitable," replied poor Fenton, "and has my full concurrence."

"Well, then, sir," said the other, "will you be so good as to come along with me, and we'll make out some snug spot where I'll have the pleasure of drinkin' your honor's health."

"Good again," replied the unlucky dupe; "upon my soul you're an excellent fellow! Proceed, I attend you. The liquor's good, you say?"

"Betther was never drank, your honor."

"Very well, sir, I believe you. We shall soon, however, put the truth of that magnificent assertion to the test; and besides, sir, it will be an honor for you to share your bottle with a gentleman."

In a few minutes they reached a quiet little dell, by which there led a private pathway, open only to the inmates of Red Hall when passing to or from the town, and which formed an agreeable and easy shortcut when any hurried message was necessary. This path came out upon an old road which ran behind the garden, and joined the larger thoroughfare, about a quarter of a mile beyond it.

In a sheltered little *cul de sac*, between two white-thorn hedges, they took their seats; and Gillespie having pulled out his bottle and glass, began to ply the luckless young man with the strong liquor. And an easy task he found it; for Fenton resembled thousands, who, when the bounds of moderation are once passed, know not when to restrain themselves. It would be both painful and disagreeable to dwell upon the hellish iniquity of this merciless and moral murder; it is enough to say that, having reduced the young man to the precise condition which was necessary for his purpose, this slavish and unprincipled ruffian, as Delahunt did with his innocent victim, deliberately put his hand to his throat, or, rather, to the left side of his neck, and there found beyond all doubt a large welt, or cicatrice, precisely as had been described by Sir Thomas. After the space of about two hours—for Gillespie was anxious to prolong the time as much as possible—he assisted Fenton, now unable to walk without support, and completely paralyzed in his organs of speech, along the short and solitary path to the back gate of the garden. He opened it, dragged Fenton in like a dog whom he was about to hang, but still the latter seemed disposed to make some unconscious and instinctive resistance. It was to no purpose, however. The poor young man was incapable of resistance, either by word or deed. In a short time they reached the tool-house, where he threw Fenton on a heap of apples, like a bag, and left him to lie in cold and darkness, as if he were some noxious animal, whom it would be dangerous to set at large. He then locked the door, put the key in his pocket, and went to acquaint the baronet with the success of his mission.

The latter, on understanding from Gillespie that Fenton was not only secured, but that his suspicions as to his identity were correct, desired him to have the carriage ready in the course of about an hour. He had already written a letter, containing a liberal enclosure, to the person into whose merciless hands he was about to commit him. In the meantime, it is impossible to describe the confused character of his feelings—the tempest, the tornado of passions, that swept through his dark and ambitious spirit.

"This is the third time," he thought to himself, as he paced the room in such a state of stormy agitation as reacted upon himself, and filled him with temporary alarm. His heart beat powerfully, his pulsations were strong and rapid, and his brain felt burning and tumultuous. Occasional giddiness also seized him, accompanied by weakness about the knee-joints, and huskiness in the throat. In fact, once or twice he felt as if he were about to fall. In this state he hastily gulped down two or three large glasses of Madeira, which was his favorite wine, and he felt his system more intensely strung.

"That woman," said he, alluding to Lady Gourlay, "has taken her revenge by destroying my son. There can be no doubt of that. And what now prevents me from crushing this viper forever? If my daughter were not with me, it should be done; yes, I would do it silently and secretly, ay, and surely, with my own hand. I would have blood for blood. What, however, if the murr——if the act came to light! Then I must suffer; my daughter is involved in my infamy, and all my dreams for her aggrandizement come to worse than nothing. But I know not how it is, I fear that girl. Her moral ascendency, as they call it, is so dreadful to me, that I often feel as if I hated her. What right has she to subjugate a spirit like mine, by the influence of her sense of honor and her virtuous principles? or to school me to my face by her example? I am not a man disposed to brook inferiority, yet she sometimes makes me feel as if I were a monster. However, she is a fool, and talks of happiness as if it were anything but a chimera or a dream. Is she herself happy? I would be glad to see the mortal that is. Do her virtues make her happy? No. Then where is the use of this boasted virtue, if it will not procure that happiness after which all are so eager in pursuit, but which none has ever yet attained? Was Christ, who is said to have been spotless, happy? No; he was a man of sorrows. Away, then, with this cant of virtue. It is a shadow, a deception; a thing, like religion, that has no existence, but takes our senses, our interests, and our passions, and works with them under its own mask. Yet why am I afraid of my daughter? and why do I, in my heart, reverence her as a being so far superior to myself? Why is it that I could murder—ay, murder—this worthless object that thrust himself, or would thrust himself, or might thrust himself, between me and the hereditary honors of my name, were it not that her very presence, if I did it, would, I feel, overpower and paralyze me with a sense of my guilt? Yet I struck her—I struck her; but her spirit trampled mine in the dust—she humiliated me. Away! I am not like other men. Yet for her sake this miserable wretch shall live. I will not imbrue my hands in his blood, but shall place him where he will never cross me more. It is one satisfaction to me, and

security besides, that he knows neither his real name nor lineage; and now he shall enter this establishment under a new one. As for Lucy, she shall be Countess of Cullamore, if she or I should die for it."

He then swallowed another glass of wine, and was about to proceed to the stables, when a gentle tap came to the door, and Gillespie presented himself.

"All's ready, your honor."

"Very well, Gillespie. I shall go with you to see that all is right. In the course of a few minutes will you bring the carriage round to the back gate? The horses are steady, and will remain there while we conduct him down to it. Have you a dark lantern?"

"I have, your honor."

Both then proceeded toward the stables. The baronet perceived that everything was correct; and having seen Gillespie, who was his coachman, mount the seat, he got into the carriage, and got out again at the door of the tool-house, where poor Fenton lay. After unlocking the door, for he had got the key from Gillespie, he entered, and cautiously turning the light of the lantern in the proper direction, discovered his unhappy victim, stretched cold and apparently lifeless.

Alas, what a melancholy picture lay before him! Stretched upon some apples that were scattered over the floor, he found the unhappy young man in a sleep that for the moment resembled the slumber of the dead. His hat had fallen off, and on his pale and emaciated temples seemed indeed to dwell the sharp impress of approaching death. It appeared, nevertheless, that his rest had not been by any means unbroken, nor so placid as it then appeared to be; for the baronet could observe that he must have been weeping in his sleep, as his eyelids were surcharged with tears that had not yet had time to dry. The veins in his temples were blue, and as fine as silk; and over his whole countenance was spread an expression of such hopeless sorrow and misery as was sufficient to soften the hardest heart that ever beat in human bosom. One touch of nature came over even that of the baronet. "No," said he, "I could not take his life. The family likeness is obvious, and the resemblance to his cousin Lucy is too strong to permit me to shed his blood; but I will secure him so that he shall never cross my path again. He will not, however, cross it long," he added to himself, after another pause, "for the stamp of death is upon his face."

Gillespie now entered, and seizing Fenton, dragged him up upon his legs, the baronet in the meantime turning the light of the lantern aside. The poor fellow, being properly neither asleep nor awake, made no resistance, and without any trouble they brought him down to the back gate, putting him into the coach, Sir Thomas entering with him, and immediately drove off, about half-past twelve at night, their victim having fallen asleep again almost as soon as he entered the carriage.

The warmth of the carriage, and the comfort of its cushioned sides and seat occasioned his sleep to become more natural and refreshing. The consequence was, that he soon began to exhibit symptoms of awakening. At first he groaned deeply, as if under the influence of physical pain, or probably from the consciousness of some apprehension arising from the experience of what he had already suffered. By and by the groan subsided to a sigh, whose expression was so replete with misery and dread, that it might well have touched and softened any heart. As yet, however, the fumes of intoxication had not departed, and his language was so mingled with the feeble delirium resulting from it, and the terrors arising from the situation in which he felt himself placed, that it was not only wild and melancholy by turns, but often scarcely intelligible. Still it was evident that one great apprehension absorbed all his other thoughts and sensations, and seemed, whilst it lasted, to bury him in the darkness of despair.

"Hold!" he exclaimed; "where am I?—what is this? Let me see, or, rather, let me feel where I am, for that is the more appropriate expression, considering that I am in utter obscurity. What is this, I ask again? Is my hospitable friend with me? he with whom I partook of that delicious liquor under 'the greenwood-tree'?"

He then searched about, and in doing so his hands came necessarily in contact with the bulky person of the baronet. "What!" he proceeded, supposing still that it was Gillespie, "is this you, my friend?—but I take that fact for granted. Sir, you are a gentleman, and know how to address a gentleman with proper respect; but how is this, you have on your hat? Sir, you forget yourself—uncover, and remember you are in *my* presence."

As he uttered the words, he seized the baronet's hat, tore it forcibly off, and, in doing so, accidentally removed a mask which that worthy gentleman had taken the precaution to assume, in order to prevent himself from being recognized.

"Ha!" exclaimed Fenton, with something like a shriek—"a mask! Oh, my God! This mysterious enemy is upon me! I am once more caught in his toils! What have

I done to deserve this persecution? I am innocent of all offence—all guilt. My life has been one of horror and of suffering indescribable, but not of crime; and although they say I am insane, I know there is a God above who will render me justice, and my oppressor justice, and who knows that I have given offence to none.

> There is a bird that sings alone—heigh ho!
> And every note is but a tone of woe.
> Heigh ho!"

The baronet grasped his wrist tightly with one hand—and both feeble and attenuated was that poor wrist—the baronet, we say, grasped it, and in an instant had regained possession of the mask, which he deliberately replaced on his face, after which he seized the unfortunate young man by the neck, and pressed it with such force as almost to occasion suffocation. Still he (Sir Thomas) uttered not a syllable, a circumstance which in the terrified mind of his unhappy victim caused his position as well as that of his companion to assume a darker, and consequently a more terrible mystery.

"Ah!" he exclaimed, in a low and trembling voice, "I know you now. You are the stranger who came to stop in the 'Mitre.' Yes, you came down to stop in the 'Mitre.' I know you by your strong grasp. I care not, however, for your attempt to strangle me. I forgive you—I pardon you; and I will tell you why—treat me as violently as you may—I feel that there is goodness in your face, and mercy in your heart. But I *did* see a face, one day, in the inn," he added, in a voice that gradually became quite frantic—"a face that was dark, damnable, and demoniac—oh, oh! may God of heaven ever preserve me from seeing that face again!" he exclaimed, shuddering wildly. "Open me up the shrouded graves, my friend; I will call you so notwithstanding what has happened, for I still think you are a gentleman; open me up, I say, the shrouded graves—set me among the hideous dead, in all their ghastly and loathsome putrefaction—lay me side by side with the sweltering carcass of the gibbeted murderer—give me such a vision, and expose me to the anger of the Almighty when raging in his vengeance; or, if there be a pitch of horror still beyond this, then I say—mark me, my friend—then I say, open me up all hell at full work—hissing, boiling, bubbling, scalding, roasting, frying, scorching, blazing, burning, but ever-consuming hell, sir, I say, in full operation—the whole dark and penal machinery in full play—open it up—there they are—the yell, the scream, the blasphemy, the shout, the torture, the laughter of despair—with the pleasing consciousness that all this is to be eternal; hark ye, sir, open me up a view of this aforesaid spectacle upon the very brow of perdition, and having allowed me time to console myself by a contemplation of it, fling me, soul and body, into the uttermost depths of its howling tortures; do any or all of these things, sooner than let me have a sight of that face again—it bears such a terrible resemblance to that which blighted me."

He then paused for a little, and seemed as if about to sink into a calmer and more thoughtful mood—at least the baronet inferred as much from his silence. The latter still declined to speak, for he felt perfectly aware, from this incoherent outburst, that although Fenton had seen him only two or three times, many years ago, when the unfortunate young man was scarcely a boy, yet he had often heard his voice, and he consequently avoided every possibility of giving the former a clew to his identity. At length Fenton broke silence.

"What was I saying?" he asked. "Did I talk of that multitudinous limbo called hell? Well, who knows, perhaps there may be a general jail delivery there yet; but talking of the thing, I assure you, sir, I feel a portion of its tortures. Like Dives—no, not like the rich and hardened glutton—I resemble him in nothing but my sufferings. Oh! a drink, a drink—water, water—my tongue, my mouth, my throat, my blood, my brain, are all on fire?"

Oh, false ambition, to what mean and despicable resources, to what low and unscrupulous precautions dost thou stoop in order to accomplish thy selfish, dishonest, and heartless designs! The very gratification of this expected thirst had been provided for and anticipated. As Fenton spoke, the baronet took from one of the coach pockets a large flask of spirits and water, which he instantly, but without speaking, placed in the scorching wretch's hands, who without a moment's hesitation, put it to his lips and emptied it at one long, luxurious draught.

"Thanks, friend," he then exclaimed; "I have been agreeably mistaken in you, I find. You are—you must be—no other than my worthy host of the 'Hedge.' Poor Dives! D—n the glutton; after all, I pity him, and would fain hope that he has got relief by this time. As for Lazarus, I fear that his condition in life was no better than it deserved. If he had been a trump, now, and anxious to render good for evil, he would have dropped a bottle of *aqua pura* to the suffering glutton, for if worthy Dives did nothing else, he fed the dogs that licked the old fellow's sores. Fie, for shame, old Lazarus, d—n me, if I

had you back again, but we'd teach you sympathy for Dives; and how so, my friend of the hawthorn—why, we'd send him to the poor-house,* or if that wouldn't do, to the mad-house—to the mad-house. Oh, my God—my God! what is this? Where are you bringing me, sir? but I know—I feel it—this destiny that's over me!"

He again became silent for a time, but during the pause, we need scarcely say, that the pernicious draught began to operate with the desired effect.

"That mask," he then added, as if speaking to himself, "bodes me nothing but terror and persecution, and all this in a Christian country, where there are religion and laws—at least, they say so—as for my part, I could never discover them. However, it matters not, let us clap a stout heart to a steep brae, and we may jink them and blink them yet; that's all.

> There was a little bird, a very little bird,
> And a very little bird was he;
> And he sang his little song all the summer day long,
> On a branch of the fair green-wood tree,
> Heigh ho!"

This little touch of melody, which he sang to a sweet and plaintive air, seemed to produce a feeling of mournfulness and sorrow in his spirit, for although the draught he had taken was progressing fast in its operations upon his intellect, still it only assumed a new and more affecting shape, and occasioned that singular form and ease of expression which may be observed in many under the influence of similar stimulants.

"Well," he proceeded, "I will soon go home; that is one consolation! There is a sickness, my friend, whoever you are, at my heart here, and in what does that sickness consist? I will tell you—in the memory of some beautiful dreams that I had when a child or little boy: I remember something about green fields, groves, dark mountains, and summer rivers flowing sweetly by. This now, to be sure, is a feeling which but few can understand. It is called homesickness, and assumes different aspects, my worthy friend. Sometimes it is a yearning after immortality, which absorbs and consumes the spirit, and then we die and go to enjoy that which we have pined for. Now, my worthy mute friend, mark me, in my case the malady is not so exalted. I only want my green fields, my dark mountains, my early rivers, with liberty to tread them for a brief space. There lies over them in my imagination—there does, my worthy and most taciturn friend, upon my soul there does—a golden light so clear, so pure, so full of happiness, that I question whether that of heaven itself will surpass it in radiance. But now I am caged once more, and will never see anything even like them again."

The poor young man then wept for a couple of minutes, after which he added, "Yes, sir, this is at once my malady and my hope. You see, then, I am not worth a plot, nor would it be a high-minded or honorable act for any gentleman to conspire against one who is nobody's enemy, but appears to have all the world against him. Yes, and they thought when I used to get into my silent moods that I was mad. No, but I was in heaven, enjoying, as I said, my mountains, my rivers, and my green fields. I was in heaven, I say, and walked in the light of heaven, for I was a little boy once more, and saw its radiance upon them, as I used to do long ago. But do you know what occurs to me this moment, most taciturn?" He added, after a short pause, being moved, probably, by one of those quick and capricious changes to which both the intoxicated and insane are proverbially liable: "It strikes me, that you probably are descended from the man in the iron mask—ha—ha—ha! Or stay, was there ever such a thing in this benevolent and humane world of ours as a man with an iron heart? If so, who knows, then, but you may date your ancestry from *him?* Ay, right enough; we are in a coach, I think, and going—going—going to—to—to—ah, where to? I know—oh, my God—we are going to—to—to——" and here poor Fenton once more fell asleep, as was evident by his deep but oppressive breathing.

Now the baronet, although he maintained a strict silence during their journey, a silence which it was not his intention to break, made up for this cautious taciturnity by thought and those reflections which originated from his designs upon Fenton. He felt astonished, in the first place, at the measures, whatever they might have been, by which the other must have obtained means of escaping from the asylum to which he had been committed with such strict injunctions as to his secure custody. It occurred to him, therefore, that by an examination of his pockets he might possibly ascertain some clew to this circumstance, and as the man was not overburdened with much conscience or delicacy, he came to the determination, as Fenton was once more dead asleep, to search for and examine whatever papers he should find about him, if any. For this purpose he ignited a match—such as they had in those days—and with

* It is to be presumed, that Fenton speaks here from his English experience. We find no poor-houses at the time.

this match lit up a small dark lantern, the same to which we have already alluded. Aided by its light, he examined the sleeping young man's pockets, in which he felt very little, in the shape of either money or papers, that could compensate him for this act of larceny. In a breast-pocket, however, inside his waistcoat, he found pinned to the lining a note—a pound note—on the back of which was jotted a brief memorandum of the day on which it was written, and the person from whom he had received it. To this was added a second memorandum, in the following words: "*Mem.* This note may yet be useful to myself if I could get a sincere friend that would find out the man whose name—Thomas Skipton—is written here upon it. He is the man I want, for I know his signature."

No sooner had the baronet read these lines, than he examined the several names on the note, and on coming to one which was underlined evidently by the same ink that was used by Fenton in the *memoranda*, his eyes gleamed with delight, and he waved it to and fro with a grim and hideous triumph, such as the lurid light of his foul principles flashing through such eyes, and animating such features as his, could only express.

"Unhappy wretch," thought he, looking upon his unconscious victim, "it is evident that you are doomed; this man is the only individual living over whom I have no control, that could give any trace of you; neither of the other two, for their own sakes, dare speak. Even fate is against you; that fate which has consigned this beggarly representative of wealth to my hands, through your own instrumentality. I now feel confident; nay, I am certain that my projects will and must succeed. The affairs of this world are regulated unquestionably by the immutable decrees of destiny. What is to be *will* be; and I, in putting this wretched, drunken, mad, and besotted being out of my way, am only an instrument in the hands of that destiny myself. The blame then is not mine, but that of the law which constrains—forces me to act the part I am acting, a part which was allotted to me from the beginning; and this reflection fills me with consolation."

He then re-examined the note, put it into a particular fold of his pocket-book which had before been empty, in order to keep it distinct, and once more thrusting it into his pocket, buttoned it carefully up, extinguished the lantern, and laid himself back in the corner of the carriage, in which position he reclined, meditating upon the kind partiality of destiny in his favor, the virtuous tendencies of his own ambition, and the admirable, because successful, means by which he was bringing them about.

In this manner they proceeded until they reached the entrance of the next town, when the baronet desired Gillespie to stop. "Go forward," said he, "and order a chaise and pair without delay. I think, however, you will find them ready for you; and if Corbet is there, desire him to return with you. *He* has already had his instructions. I am sick of this work, Gillespie; and I assure you it is not for the son of a common friend that I would forego my necessary rest, to sit at such an hour with a person who is both mad and drunk. What is friendship, however, if we neglect its duties? Care and medical skill may enable this unfortunate young man to recover his reason, and take a respectable position in the world yet. Go now and make no delay. I shall take charge of this poor fellow and the horses until you return. But, mark me, my name is not to be breathed to mortal, under a penalty that you will find a dreadful one, should you incur it."

"Never fear, your honor," replied Gillespie; "I am not the man to betray trust and indeed, few gentlemen of your rank, as I said, would go so far for the son of an auld friend. I'll lose no time, Sir Thomas."

Sir Thomas, we have had occasion to say more than once, was quick and energetic in all his resolutions, and beyond doubt, the fact that Gillespie found Corbet ready and expecting him on this occasion, fully corroborates our opinion.

Indeed, it was his invariable habit, whenever he found that more than one agent or instrument was necessary, to employ them, as far as was possible, independently of each other. For instance, he had not at all communicated to Gillespie the fact of his having engaged Corbet in the matter, nor had the former any suspicion of it until he now received the first hint from Sir Thomas himself. A chaise and pair in less than five minutes drove gently, but with steady pace, back to the spot where the baronet stood at the head of his horses, watching the doors of the carriage on each side every quarter of a minute, lest by any possible chance his victim might escape him. Of this, however, there was not the slightest danger; poor Fenton's sleep, like that of almost all drunken men, having had in it more of stupor than of ordinary and healthful repose.

We have informed our readers that the baronet was not without a strong tinge of superstition, notwithstanding his religious infidelity, and his belief in the doctrine of fate and necessity. On finding himself alone

at that dead and dreary hour of the night—half-past two—standing under a shady range of tall trees that met across the road, and gave a character of extraordinary gloom and solitude to the place, he began to experience that vague and undefined terror which steals over the mind from an involuntary apprehension of the supernatural. A singular degree of uneasiness came over him: he coughed, he hemmed, in order to break the death-like stillness in which he stood. He patted the horses, he rubbed his hand down their backs, but felt considerable surprise and terror on finding that they both trembled, and seemed by their snorting and tremors to partake of his own sensations. Under such terrors there is nothing that extinguishes a man's courage so much as the review of an ill-spent life, or the reproaches of an evil conscience. Sir Thomas Gourlay could not see and feel, for the moment, the criminal iniquity of his black and ungodly ambition, and the crimes into which it involved him. Still, the consciousness of the flagitious project in which he was engaged against the unoffending son of his brother, the influence of the hour, and the solitude in which he stood, together with the operation upon his mind of some unaccountable fear apart from that of personal violence—all, when united, threw him into a commotion that resulted from such a dread as intimated that something supernatural must be near him. He was seized by a violent shaking of the limbs, the perspiration burst from every pore; and as he patted the horses a second time for relief, he again perceived that their terrors were increasing and keeping pace with his own. At length, his hair fairly stood, and his excitement was nearly as high as excitement of such a merely ideal character could go, when he thought he heard a step—a heavy, solemn, unearthly step—that sounded as if there was something denouncing and judicial in the terrible emphasis with which it went to his heart, or rather to his conscience. Without having the power to restrain himself, he followed with his eyes this symbolical tread as it seemed to approach the coach door on the side at which he stood. This was the more surprising and frightful, as, although he heard the tramp, yet he could for the moment see nothing in the shape of either figure or form, from which he could resolve what he had heard into a natural sound. At length, as he stood almost dissolved in terror, he thought that an indistinct, or rather an unsubstantial figure stood at the carriage-door, looked in for a moment, and then bent his glance at him, with a severe and stern expression; after which, it began to rub out or efface a certain portion of the armorial bearings, which he had added to his heraldic coat in right of his wife. The noise of the chaise approaching now reached his ears, and he turned as a relief to ascertain if Gillespie and Corbet were near him. As far as he could judge, they were about a couple of hundred yards off, and this discovery recalled his departed courage; he turned his eyes once more to the carriage-door, but to his infinite relief could perceive nothing. A soft, solemn, mournful blast, however, somewhat like a low moan, amounting almost to a wail, crept through the trees under which he stood; and after it had subsided—whether it was fact or fancy cannot now be known—he thought he heard the same step slowly, and, as it were with a kind of sorrowful anger, retreating in the distance.

"If mortal spirit," he exclaimed as they approached, "ever was permitted to return to this earth, that form was the spirit of my mortal brother. This, however," he added, but only in thought, when they came up to him, and after he had regained his confidence by their presence, "this is all stuff—nothing but solitude and its associations acting upon the nerves; thus enabling us, as we think, to see the very forms created only by our fears, and which, apart from them, have no existence."

The men and the chaise were now with him—Gillespie on horseback, that is to say, he was to bring back the same animal on which Sir Thomas had secretly despatched Corbet from Red Hall to the town of ——, for the purpose of having the chaise ready, and conducting Fenton to his ultimate destination. The poor young man's transfer from the carriage to the chaise was quickly and easily effected. Several large flasks of strong spirits and water were also transferred along with him.

"Now, Corbet," observed Sir Thomas apart to him, "you have full instructions how to act; and see that you carry them out to the letter. You will find no difficulty in keeping this person in a state of intoxication all the way. Go back to ——, engage old Bradbury to drive the chaise, for, although deaf and stupid, he is an excellent driver. Change the chaise and horses, however, as often as you can, so as that it may be difficult, if not impossible, to trace the route you take. Give Benson, who, after all, is the prince of mad doctors, the enclosure which you have in the blank cover; and tell him, he shall have an annuity to the same amount, whether this fellow lives or dies. Mark me, Corbet—whether his charge lives or dies. Repeat these words to him twice, as I have done to you. Above all things, let him keep

him safe—safe—safe. Remember, Corbet, that our family have been kind friends to yours. I, therefore, have trusted you all along in this matter, and calculate upon your confidence as a grateful and honest man, as well as upon your implicit obedience to every order I have given you. I myself shall drive home the carriage; and when we get near Red Hall, Gillespie can ride forward, have his horse put up, and the stable and coach-house doors open, so that everything to-morrow morning may look as if no such expedition had taken place."

They then separated; Corbet to conduct poor Fenton to his dreary cell in a mad-house, and Sir Thomas to seek that upon which, despite his most ambitious projects, he had been doomed all his life to seek after in vain—rest on an *uneasy* pillow.

CHAPTER XVII.

A Scene in Jemmy Trailcudgel's—Retributive Justice, or the Robber robbed.

In the days of which we write, travelling was a very different process from what it is at present. Mail-coaches and chaises were the only vehicles then in requisition, with the exception of the awkward gingles, buggies, and other gear of that nondescript class which were peculiar to the times, and principally confined to the metropolis. The result of this was, that travellers, in consequence of the slow jog-trot motion of those curious and inconvenient machines, were obliged, in order to transact their business with something like due dispatch, to travel both by night and day. In this case, as in others, the cause produced the effect; or rather, we should say, the temptation occasioned the crime. Highway-robbery was frequent; and many a worthy man—fat farmer and wealthy commoner—was eased of his purse in despite of all his armed precautions and the most sturdy resistance. The poorer classes, in every part of the country, were, with scarcely an exception, the friends of those depredators; by whom, it is true, they were aided against oppression, and assisted in their destitution, as a compensation for connivance and shelter whenever the executive authorities were in pursuit of them. Most of these robberies, it is true, were the result of a loose and disorganized state of society, and had their direct origin from oppressive and unequal laws, badly or partially administered. Robbery, therefore, in its general character, was caused, not so much by poverty, as from a desperate hatred of those penal statutes which operated for punishment but not for protection. Our readers may not feel surprised, then, when we assure them that the burglar and highway-robber looked upon this infamous habit as a kind of patriotic and political profession, rather than a crime; and it is well known that within the last century the sons of even decent farmers were bound apprentices to this flagitious craft, especially to that of horse stealing, which was then reduced to a system of most extraordinary ingenuity and address. Still, there were many poor wretches who, sunk in the deepest destitution, and contaminated by a habit which familiarity had deprived in their eyes of much of its inherent enormity, scrupled not to relieve their distresses by having recourse to the prevalent usage of the country.

Having thrown out these few preparatory observations, we request our readers to follow us to the wretched cabin of a man whose *nom de guerre* was that of Jemmy Trailcudgel—a name that was applied to him, as the reader may see, in consequence of the peculiar manner in which he carried the weapon aforesaid. Trailcudgel was a man of enormous personal strength and surprising courage, and had distinguished himself as the leader of many a party and faction fight in the neighboring fairs and markets. He had been, not many years before, in tolerably good circumstances, as a tenant under Sir Thomas Gourlay; and as that gentleman had taken it into his head that his tenantry were bound, as firmly as if there had been a clause to that effect in their leases, to bear patiently and in respectful silence, the imperious and ribald scurrility which in a state of resentment, he was in the habit of pouring upon them, so did he lose few opportunities of making them feel, for the most trivial causes, all the irresponsible insolence of the strong and vindictive tyrant. Now, Jemmy Trailcudgel was an honest man, whom every one liked; but he was also a man of spirit, whom, in another sense, most people feared. Among his family he was a perfect child in affection and tenderness—loving, playful, and simple as one of themselves. Yet this man, affectionate, brave, and honest, because he could not submit in silence and without vindication, to the wanton and overbearing violence of his landlord, was harassed by a series of persecutions, under the pretended authority of law, until he and his unhappy family were driven to beggary—almost to despair.

"Trailcudgel," said Sir Thomas to him one day that he had sent for him in a fury, "by what right and authority, sirra, did you

dare to cut turf on that part of the bog called Berwick's Bank?"

"Upon the right and authority of my ease, Sir Thomas," replied Trailcudgel; "and with great respect, sir, you had neither right nor authority for settin' *my* bog, that I'm payin' you rent for, to another tenant."

The baronet grew black in the face, as he always did when in a passion, and especially when replied to.

"You are a lying scoundrel, sirra," continued the other; "the bog does not belong to you, and I will set it to the devil if I like."

"I know nobody so fit to be your tenant," replied Trailcudgel. "But I am no scoundrel, Sir Thomas," added the independent fellow, "and there's very few dare tell me so but yourself."

"What, you villain! do you contradict me? do you bandy words and looks with me?" asked the baronet, his rage deepening at Trailcudgel's audacity in having replied at all.

"Villain!" returned his gigantic tenant, in a voice of thunder. "You called me a scoundrel, sirra, and you have called me a villain, sirra, now I tell you to your teeth, you're a liar—I am neither villain nor scoundrel; but you're both; and if I hear another word of insolence out of your foul and lying mouth, I'll thrash you as I would a shafe of wiate or oats."

The black hue of the baronet's rage changed to a much modester tint; he looked upon the face of the sturdy yeoman, now flushed with honest resentment; he looked upon the eye that was kindled at once into an expression of resolution and disdain; and turning on his toe, proceeded at a pace by no means funereal to the steps of the hall-door, and having ascended them, he turned round and said, in a very mild and quite a gentlemanly tone,

"Oh, very well, Mr. Trailcudgel; very well, indeed. I have a memory, Mr. Trailcudgel—I have a *memory*. Good morning!"

"Betther for you to have a *heart*," replied Trailcudgel; "what you never had."

Having uttered these words he departed, conscious at the same time, from his knowledge of his landlord's unrelenting malignity, that his own fate was sealed, and his ruin accomplished. And he was right. In the course of four years after their quarrel, Trailcudgel found himself, and his numerous family, in the scene of destitution to which we are about to conduct the indulgent reader.

We pray you, therefore, gentle reader, to imagine yourself in a small cabin, where there are two beds—that is to say, two scanty portions of damp straw, spread out thinly upon a still damper foot of earth, in a portion of which the foot sinks when walking over it. The two beds—each what is termed a *shake down*—have barely covering enough to perserve the purposes of decency, but not to communicate the usual and necessary warmth. In consequence of the limited area of the cabin floor they are not far removed from each other. Upon a little three-legged stool, between them, burns a dim rush candle, whose light is so exceedingly feeble that it casts ghastly and death-like shadows over the whole inside of the cabin. That family consists of nine persons, of whom five are lying ill of fever, as the reader, from the nature of their bedding, may have already anticipated—for we must observe here, that the epidemic was rife at the time. Food of any description has not been under that roof for more than twenty-four hours. They are all in bed but one. A low murmur, that went to the heart of *that* one, with a noise which seemed to *it* louder and more terrible than the deepest peal that ever thundered through the firmament of heaven—a low murmur, we say, of this description, arose from the beds, composed of those wailing sounds that mingle together as they proceed from the lips of weakness, pain, and famine, until they form that many-toned, incessant, and horrible voice of multiplied misery, which falls upon the ear with the echoes of the grave, and upon the heart as something wonderful in the accents of God, or, as we may suppose the voice of the accusing angel to be, whilst recording before His throne the official inhumanity of councils and senates, who harden their hearts and shut their ears to "the cry of the poor."

Seated upon a second little stool was a man of huge stature, clothed, if we can say so, with rags, contemplating the misery around him, and having no sounds to listen to but the low, ceaseless wail of pain and suffering which we have described. His features, once manly and handsome, are now sharp and hollow; his beard is grown; his lips are white; and his eyes without speculation, unless when lit up into an occasional blaze of fire, that seemed to proceed as much from the paroxysms of approaching insanity as from the terrible scene which surrounds him, as well as from his own wolfish desire for food. His cheek bones project fearfully, and his large temples seem, by the ghastly skin which is drawn tight about them, to remind one of those of a skeleton, were it not that the image is made still more appalling by the existence of life.

Whilst in this position, motionless as a

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HE STOOPED AND KISSED HER NOW PASSIVE LIPS, EXCLAIMING, IN WORDS PURPOSELY LOW, THAT THE OTHER INMATES OF THE CABIN MIGHT NOT HEAR THEM.—p. 409.

statue, a voice from one of the beds called out "Jemmy," with a tone so low and feeble that to other ears it would probably not have been distinctly audible. He went to the bedside, and taking the candle in his hand, said, in a voice that had lost its strength but not its tenderness :

"Well, Mary dear ? "

"Jemmy," said she, for it was his wife who had called him, "my time has come. I must lave you and them at last."

"Thanks be to the Almighty," he exclaimed, fervently ; "and don't be surprised, darlin' of my life, that I spake as I do. Ah, Mary dear," he proceeded, with a wild and bitter manner, "I never thought that my love for you would make me say such words, or wish to feel you torn out of my breakin' heart ; but I know how happy the change will be for you, as well as the sufferers you are lavin' behind you. Death now is our only consolation."

"It cannot be that God, who knows the kind and affectionate heart you have, an' ever had," replied his dying wife, "will neglect you and them long,"—but she answered with difficulty. "We were very happy," she proceeded, slowly, however, and with pain ; "for, hard as the world was of late upon us, still we had love and affection among ourselves ; and that, Jemmy, God in his goodness left us, blessed be his—his—holy name—an' sure it was betther than all he took from us. I hope poor Alley will recover ; she's now nearly a girl, an' will be able to take care of you and be a mother to the rest. I feel that my tongue's gettin' wake ; God bless you and them, an', above all, her—for she was our darlin' an' our life, especially yours. Raise me up a little," she added, "till I take a last look at them before I go." He did so, and after casting her languid eyes mournfully over the wretched sleepers, she added : "Well, God is good, but this is a bitther sight for a mother's heart. Jemmy," she proceeded, "I won't be long by myself in heaven ; some of them will be with me soon—an' oh, what a joyful meeting will that be. But it's you I feel for most—it's you I'm loath to lave, light of my heart. Howsomever, God's will be done still. He sees we can't live here, an' He's takin' us to himself. Don't, darlin', don't kiss me, for fraid you might catch this fav——"

She held his hand in hers during this brief and tender dialogue, but on attempting to utter the last word he felt a gentle pressure, then a slight relaxation, and on holding the candle closer to her emaciated face—which still bore those dim traces of former beauty, that, in many instances, neither sickness nor death can altogether obliterate—he stooped and wildly kissed her now passive lips, exclaiming, in words purposely low, that the other inmates of the cabin might not hear them :

"A million favers, my darlin' Mary, would not prevent me from kissin' your lips, that will never more be opened with words of love and kindness to my heart. Oh, Mary, Mary ! little did I drame that it would be in such a place, and in such a way, that you'd lave me and them."

He had hardly spoken, when one of the little ones, awaking, said :

"Daddy, come here, an' see what ails Alley; she won't spake to me."

"She's asleep, darlin', I suppose," he replied ; "don't spake so loud, or you'll waken her."

"Ay, but she's as could as anything," continued the little one ; "an' I can't rise her arm to put it about me the way it used to be."

Her father went over, and placing the dim light close to her face, as he had done to that of her mother, perceived at a glance, that when the spirit of that affectionate mother—of that faithful wife—went to happiness, she had one kindred soul there to welcome her.

The man, whom we need not name to the reader, now stood in the centre of his "desolate hearth," and it was indeed a fearful thing to contemplate the change which the last few minutes had produced on his appearance. His countenance ceased to manifest any expression of either grief or sorrow ; his brows became knit, and fell with savage and determined gloom, not unmingled with fury, over his eyes, that now blazed like coals of fire. His lips, too, became tight and firm, and were pressed closely together, unconsciously and without effort. In this mood, we say, he gazed about him, his heart smote with sorrow and affliction, whilst it boiled with indignation and fury. "Thomas Gourlay," he exclaimed—"villain—oppressor—murdherer—devil—this is your work ! but I here entreat the Almighty God"—he dropped on his knees as he spoke—"never to suffer you to lave this world till he taches you that he can take vengeance for the poor." Looking around him once more, he lit a longer rushlight, and placed it in the little wooden candlestick, which had a slit at the top, into which the rush was pressed. Proceeding then to the lower corner of the cabin, he put up his hand to the top of the side wall, from which he took down a large stick, or cudgel, having a strong leathern thong in the upper part, within about six inches of the top. Into this thong he thrust his hand, and twisting it round his wrist, in order that no accident or chance blow might cause him to

lose his grip of it, he once more looked upon this scene of unexampled wretchedness and sorrow, and pulling his old caubeen over his brow, left the cabin.

It is altogether impossible to describe the storm of conflicting passions and emotions that raged and jostled against each other within him. Sorrow—a sense of relief—on behalf of those so dear to him, who had been rescued from such misery ; the love which he bore them now awakened into tenfold affection and tenderness by their loss ; the uncertain fate of his other little brood, who were ill, but still living ; then the destitution—the want of all that could nourish or sustain them—the furious ravenings of famine, which he himself felt—and the black, hopeless, impenetrable future—all crowded upon his heart, swept through his frantic imagination, and produced those maddening but unconscious impulses, under the influence of which great crimes are frequently committed, almost before their perpetrator is aware of his having committed them.

Trailcudgel, on leaving his cabin, cared not whither he went ; but, by one of those instincts which direct the savage to the peculiar haunts where its prey may be expected, and guides the stupid drunkard to his own particular dwelling, though unconscious even of his very existence at the time—like either, or both, of these, he went on at as rapid a pace as his weakness would permit, being quite ignorant of his whereabouts until he felt himself on the great highway. He looked at the sky now with an interest he had never felt before. The night was exceedingly dark, but calm and warm. An odd star here and there presented itself, and he felt glad at this, for it removed the monotony of the darkness.

"There," said he to himself, "is the place where Mary and Alley live now. Up there, in heaven. I am glad of it ; but still, how will I enther the cabin, and not hear their voices? But the other poor creatures! musn't I do something for them, or they will go too? Yes, yes,—but whisht! what noise is that? Ha! a coach. Now for it. May God support me! Here comes the battle for the little ones—for the poor weak hand that's not able to carry the drink to its lips. Poor darlins! Yes, darlins, your father is now goin' to fight your battle—to put himself, for your sakes, against the laws of man, but not against the laws of nature that God has put into my heart for my dying childre. Either the one funeral will carry three corpses to the grave, or I will bring yez relief. It's comin' near, and I'll stand undher this tree."

In accordance with this resolution, he planted himself under a large clump of trees where, like the famished tiger, he awaited the arrival of the carriage. And, indeed, it is obvious that despair, and hunger, and sorrow, had brought him down to the first elements of mere animal life ; and finding not by any process of reasoning or inference, but by the agonizing pressure of stern reality, that the institutions of social civilization were closed against him and his, he acted precisely as a man would act in a natural and savage state, and who had never been admitted to a participation in the common rights of humanity—we mean, the right to live honestly, when willing and able to contribute his share of labor and industry to the common stock.

Let not our readers mistake us. We are not defending the crime of robbery, neither would we rashly palliate it, although there are instances of it which deserve not only palliation, but pardon. We are only describing the principles upon which this man acted, and, considering his motives, we question whether this peculiar act, originating as it did in the noblest virtues and affections of our nature, was not rather an act of heroism than of robbery. This point, however, we leave to metaphysicians, and return to our narrative.

The night, as we said, was dark, and the carriage in question was proceeding at that slow and steady pace which was necessary to insure safety. Sir Thomas, for it was he, sat on the dickey ; Gillespie having proceeded in advance of him, in order to get horses, carriage, and everything safely put to rights without the possibility of observation.

We may as well mention here that his anxiety to keep the events of the night secret had overcome his apprehensions of the supernatural, and indeed, it may not be impossible that he made acquaintance with one of the flasks that had been destined for poor Fenton. Of this, however, we are by no means certain ; we only throw it out, therefore, as a probability.

It is well known that the stronger and more insupportable passions sharpen not only the physical but the mental faculties in an extraordinary degree. The eye of the bird of prey, which is mostly directed by the savage instincts of hunger, can view its quarry at an incredible distance ; and, instigated by vengeance, the American Indian will trace his enemy by marks which the utmost ingenuity of civilized man would never enable him to discover. Quickened by something of the kind, Trailcudgel instantly recognized his bitter and implacable foe, and in a moment an unusual portion of his former strength returned, with the impetuous and

energetic resentment which the appearance of the baronet, at that peculiar crisis, had awakened. When the carriage came nearly opposite where he stood, the frantic and unhappy man was in an instant at the heads of the horses, and, seizing the reins, brought them to a stand-still.

"What's the matter there?" exclaimed the baronet, who, however, began to feel very serious alarm. "Why do you stop the horses, my friend? All's right, and I'm much obliged—pray let them go."

"All's wrong," shouted the other in a voice so deep, hoarse, and terrible in the wildness of its intonations, that no human being could recognize it as that of Trailcudgel; "all's wrong," he shouted; "I demand your money! your life or your money—quick!"

"This is highway-robbery," replied Sir Thomas, in a voice of expostulation, "think of what you are about, my friend."

But, as he spoke, Trailcudgel could observe that he put his hand behind him as if with the intent of taking fire-arms out of his pocket. Like lightning was the blow which tumbled him from his seat upon the two horses, and a fortunate circumstance it proved, for there is little doubt that his neck would have been broken, or the fall proved otherwise fatal to so heavy a man, had he been precipitated directly, and from such a height, upon the hard road. As it was, he found himself instantly in the ferocious clutches of Trailcudgel, who dragged him from the horses, as a tiger would a bull, and ere he could use hand or word in his own defence, he felt the muzzle of one of his own pistols pressed against his head.

"Easy, my friend!" he exclaimed, in a voice that was rendered infirm by terror; "do not take my life—don't murder me—you shall have my money."

"Murdher!" shouted the other. "Ah, you black dog of hell, it is on your red sowl that many a murdher lies. Murdher!" he exclaimed, in words that were thick, vehement, and almost unintelligible with rage. "Ay, murdher is it? It was a just God that put the words into your guilty heart and wicked lips—prepare, your last moment's come—your doom is sealed—are you ready to die, villain?"

The whole black and fearful tenor of the baronet's life came like a vision of hell itself over his conscience, now fearfully awakened to the terrible position in which he felt himself placed.

"Oh, no!" he replied, in a voice whose tremulous tones betrayed the full extent of his agony and terrors. "Oh, no!" he exclaimed. "Spare me, whoever you are—spare my life, and if you will come to me to-morrow, I promise, in the presence of God, to make you independent as long as you live. Oh, spare me, for the sake of the living God—for I *am not* fit to die. If you kill me now, you will have the perdition of my soul to answer for at the bar of judgment. If you spare me, I will reform my life—I will become a virtuous man."

"Well," replied the other, relaxing—"for the sake of the name you have used, and in the hope that this may be a warnin' to you for your good, I will leave your wicked and worthless life with you. No, I'll not be the man that will hurl you into perdition—but it is on one condition—you must hand me out your money before I have time to count ten. Listen now—if I haven't every farthing that's about you before that reckonin's made, the bullet that's in this pistol will be through your brain."

The expedition of the baronet was amazing, for as Jemmy went on with this disastrous enumeration, steadily and distinctly, but not quickly, he had only time to get as far as *eight* when he found himself in possession of the baronet's purse.

"Is it *all* here?" he asked. "No tricks—no lyin'—the truth? for I'll search you."

"You may," replied the other, with confidence; "and you may shoot me, too, if you find another farthing in my possession."

"Now, then," said Trailcudgel, "get home as well as you can, and reform your life as you promised—as for me, I'll keep the pistols; indeed, for my own sake, for I have no notion of putting them into your hands at present."

He then disappeared, and the baronet, having with considerable difficulty gained the box-seat, reached home somewhat lighter in pocket than he had left it, convinced besides that an unexpected visit from a natural apparition is frequently much more to be dreaded than one from the supernatural.

The baronet was in the general affairs of life penurious in money matters, but on those occasions where money was necessary to enable him to advance or mature his plans, conceal his proceedings, or reward his instruments, he was by no means illiberal. This, however, was mere selfishness, or rather, we should say, self-preservation, inasmuch as his success and reputation depended in a great degree upon the liberality of his corruption. On the present occasion he regretted, no doubt, the loss of the money, but we are bound to say, that he would have given its amount fifteen times repeated, to get once more into his hands the single pound-note of which he had treacherously and like a coward robbed Fenton while

asleep in the carriage. This loss, in connection with the robbery which occasioned it, forced him to retrace to a considerable extent the process of ratiocination on the subject of fate and destiny, in which he had so complacently indulged not long before.

No matter how deep and hardened any villain may be, the most reckless and unscrupulous of the class possess some conscious principle within, that tells them of their misdeeds, and acquaints them with the fact that a point in the moral government of life has most certainly been made against them. So was it now with the baronet. He laid himself upon his gorgeous bed a desponding, and, for the present, a discomfited man; nor could he for the life of him, much as he pretended to disregard the operations of a Divine Providence, avoid coming to the conclusion that the highway robbery committed on him looked surprisingly like an act of retributive justice. He consoled himself, it is true, with the reflection, that it was not for the *value* of the note that he had committed the crime upon Fenton, for to him the note, except for its mere amount, was in other respects valueless. But what galled him to the soul, was the bitter reflection that he did not, on perceiving its advantage to Fenton, at once destroy it—tear it up—eat it—swallow it—and thus render it utterly impossible to ever contravene his ambition or his crimes. In the meantime slumber stole upon him, but it was neither deep nor refreshing. His mind was a chaos of dark projects and frightful images. Fenton—the ragged and gigantic robber, who was so much changed by famine and misery that he did not know him—the stranger—his daughter—Ginty Cooper, the fortune-teller—Lord Cullamore—the terrible pistol at his brain—Dunroe—and all those who were more or less concerned in or affected by his schemes, flitted through his disturbed fancy like the figures in a magic lantern, rendering his sleep feverish, disturbed, and by many degrees more painful than his waking reflections.

It has been frequently observed, that violence and tyranny overshoot their mark; and we may add, that no craft, however secret its operations, or rather however secret they are designed to be, can cope with the consequences of even the simplest accident. A short, feverish attack of illness having seized Mrs. Morgan, the housekeeper, on the night of Fenton's removal, she persuaded one of the maids to sit up with her, in order to provide her with whey and nitre, which she took from time to time, for the purpose of relieving her by cooling the system. The attack though short was a sharp one, and the poor woman was really very ill. In the course of the night, this girl was somewhat surprised by hearing noises in and about the stables, and as she began to entertain apprehension from robbers, she considered it her duty to consult the sick woman as to the steps she ought to take.

"Take no steps," replied the prudent housekeeper, "till we know, if we can, what the noise proceeds from. Go into that closet, but don't take the candle, lest the light of it might alarm them—it overlooks the stable-yard—open the window gently; you know it turns upon hinges—and look out cautiously. If Sir Thomas is disturbed by a false alarm, you might fly at once; for somehow of late he has lost all command of his temper."

"But we know the reason of that, Mrs. Morgan," replied the girl. "It's because Miss Gourlay refuses to marry Lord Dunroe, and because he's afraid that she'll run away with a very handsome gentleman that stops in the Mitre. That's what made him lock her up."

"Don't you breathe a syllable of that," said the cautious Mrs. Morgan, "for fear you might get locked up yourself. You know, nothing that happens in this family is ever to be spoken of to any one, on pain of Sir Thomas's severest displeasure; and you have not come to this time of day without understanding what *that* means. But don't talk to me, or rather, don't expect me to talk to you. My head is very ill, and my pulse going at a rapid rate. Another drink of that whey, Nancy; then see, if you can, what that noise means."

Nancy, having handed her the whey, went to the closet window to reconnoitre; but the reader may judge of her surprise on seeing Sir Thomas himself moving about with a dark lantern, and giving directions to Gillespie, who was putting the horses to the carriage. She returned to the housekeeper on tip-toe, her face brimful of mystery and delight.

"What do you think, Mrs. Morgan? If there isn't Sir Thomas himself walking about with a little lantern, and giving orders to Gillespie, who is yoking the coach."

Mrs. Morgan could not refrain from smiling at this comical expression of yoking the coach; but her face soon became serious, and she said, with a sigh, "I hope in God this is no further act of violence against his angel of a daughter. What else could he mean by getting out a carriage at this hour of the night? Go and look again, Nancy, and see whether you may not also get a glimpse of Miss Gourlay."

Nancy, however, arrived at the window only in time to see her master enter the carriage,

and the carriage disappear out of the yard; but whether Miss Gourlay was in it along with him, the darkness of the night prevented her from ascertaining. After some time, however, she threw out a suggestion, on which, with the consent of the patient, she immediately acted. This was to discover, if possible, whether Miss Gourlay with her maid was in her own room or not. She accordingly went with a light and stealthy pace to the door; and as she knew that its fair occupant always slept with a night-light in her chamber, she put her pretty eye to the key-hole, in order to satisfy herself on this point. All, however, so far as both sight and hearing could inform her, was both dark and silent. This was odd; nay, not only odd, but unusual. She now felt her heart palpitate; she was excited, alarmed. What was to be done? She would take a bold step—she would knock—she would whisper through the key-hole, and set down the interruption to anxiety to mention Mrs. Morgan's sudden and violent illness. Well, all these remedies for curiosity were tried, all these steps taken, and, to a certain extent, they were successful; for there could indeed be little doubt that Miss Gourlay and her maid were *not* in the apartment. Everything now pertaining to the mysterious motions of Sir Thomas and his coachman was as clear as crystal. He had spirited her away somewhere—"placed her, the old brute, under some she-dragon or other, who would make her feed on raw flesh and cobwebs, with a view of reducing her strength and breaking her spirit."

Mrs. Morgan, however, with her usual good sense and prudence, recommended the lively girl to preserve the strictest silence on what she had seen, and to allow the other servants to find the secret out for themselves if they could. To-morrow might disclose more, but as at present they had nothing stronger than suspicion, it would be wrong to speak of it, and might, besides, be prejudicial to Miss Gourlay's reputation. Such was the love and respect which all the family felt for the kind-hearted and amiable Lucy, who was the general advocate with her father when any of them had incurred his displeasure, that on her account alone, even if dread of Sir Thomas did not loom like a gathering storm in the background, not one of them ever seemed to notice her absence, nor did the baronet himself until days had elapsed. On the morning of the third day he began to think, that perhaps confinement might have tamed her down into somewhat of a more amenable spirit; and as he had in the interval taken all necessary steps to secure the person of the man who robbed him, and offered a large reward for his apprehension, he felt somewhat satisfied that he had done all that could be done, and was consequently more at leisure, and also more anxious to ascertain the temper of mind in which he should find her.

In the meantime, the delicious scandal of the supposed elopement was beginning to creep abroad, and, in fact, was pretty generally rumored throughout the redoubtable town of Ballytrain on the morning of the third or fourth day. Of course, we need scarcely assure our intelligent readers, that the friends of the parties are the very last to whom such a scandal would be mentioned, not only because such an office is always painful, but because every one takes it for granted that they are already aware of it themselves. In the case before us, such was the general opinion, and Sir Thomas's silence on the subject was imputed by some to the natural delicacy of a father in alluding to a subject so distressing, and by others to a calm, quiet spirit of vengeance, which he only restrained until circumstances should place him in a condition to crush the man who had entailed shame and disgrace upon his name and family.

Such was the state of circumstances upon the third or fourth morning after Lucy's disappearance, when Sir Thomas called the footman, and desired him to send Miss Gourlay's maid to him; he wished to speak with her.

By this time it was known through the whole establishment that Lucy and she had both disappeared, and, thanks to Nancy—to pretty Nancy—"that her own father, the hard-hearted old wretch, had forced her off—God knows where—in the dead of night."

The footman, who had taken Nancy's secret for granted; and, to tell the truth, he had it in the most agreeable and authentic shape—to wit, from her own sweet lips—and who could be base enough to doubt any communication so delightfully conveyed?—the footman, we say, on hearing this command from his master, started a little, and in the confusion or forgetfulness of the moment, almost stared at him.

"What, sirrah," exclaimed the latter; "did you hear what I said?"

"I did, sir," replied the man, still more confused; "but, I thought, your honor, that——"

"You despicable scoundrel!" said his master, stamping, "what means this? You thought! What right, sir, have you to think, or to do anything but obey your orders from me. It was not to think, sir, I brought you here, but to do your duty as footman. Fetch Miss Gourlay's maid, sir, immediately. Say I desire to speak with her."

"She is not within, sir," replied the man trembling.

"Then where is she, sir? Why is she absent from her charge?"

"I cannot tell, sir. We thought, sir——"

"Thinking again, you scoundrel!—speak out, however."

"Why, the truth is, your honor, that neither Miss Gourlay nor she has been here since Tuesday night last."

The baronet had been walking to and fro, as was his wont, but this information paralyzed him, as if by a physical blow on the brain. He now went, or rather tottered over, to his arm-chair, into which he dropped rather than sat, and stared at Gibson the footman as if he had forgotten the intelligence just conveyed to him. In fact, his confusion was such—so stunning was the blow—that it is possible he did forget it.

"What is that, Gibson?" said he; "tell me; repeat what you said."

"Why, your honor," replied Gibson, "since last Tuesday night neither Miss Gourlay nor her maid has been in this house."

"Was there no letter left, nor any verbal information that might satisfy us as to where they have gone?"

"Not any, sir, that I am aware of."

"Was her room examined?"

"I cannot say, sir. You know, sir, I never enter it unless when I am rung for by Miss Gourlay; and that is very rarely."

"Do you think, Gibson, that there is any one in the house that knows more of this matter than you do?"

Gibson shook his head, and replied, "As to that, Sir Thomas, I cannot say."

The baronet was not now in a rage. The thing was impossible; not within the energies of nature. He was stunned, stupefied, rendered helpless.

"I think," he proceeded, "I observed a girl named Nancy—I forget what else, Nancy something—that Miss Gourlay seemed to like a good deal. Send her here. But before you do so, may I beg to know why *I*, her father, her natural guardian and protector, was kept so long in ignorance of her extraordinary disappearance? Pray, Mr. Gibson, satisfy me on that head?"

"I think, sir," replied Gibson, most ungallantly shifting the danger of the explanation from his own shoulders to the pretty ones of Nancy Forbes—"I think, sir, Nancy Forbes, the girl you speak of, may know more about the last matter than I do."

"What do you mean by the *last* matter?"

"Why, sir, the reason why we did not tell your honor of it sooner——"

Sir Thomas waved his hand. "Go," he added, "send her here."

"D—n the old scoundrel," thought Gibson to himself; "but that's a fine piece of acting. Why, if he hadn't been aware of it all along he would have thrown me clean out of the window, even as the messenger of such tidings. However, he is not so deep as he thinks himself. We know him—see through him—on this subject at least."

When Nancy entered, her master gave her one of those stern, searching looks which often made his unfortunate menials tremble before him.

"What's your name, my good girl?"

"Nancy Forbes, sir."

"How long have you been in this family?"

"I'm in the first month of my second quarter, your honor," with a courtesy.

"You are a pretty girl."

Nancy, with another courtesy, and a simper, which vanity, for the life of her, could not suppress, "Oh la, sir, how could your honor say such a thing of a humble girl like me? You that sees so many handsome great ladies."

"Have you a sweetheart?"

Nancy fairly tittered. "Is it me, sir—why, who would think of the like of me? Not one, sir, ever I had."

"Because, if you have," he proceeded, "and that *I* approve of him, I wouldn't scruple much to give you something that might enable you and your husband to begin the world with comfort."

"I'm sure it's very kind, your honor, but I never did anything to desarve so much goodness at your honor's hands."

"The old villain wants to bribe me for something," thought Nancy.

"Well, but you may, my good girl. I think you are a favorite with Miss Gourlay?"

"Ha, ha!" thought Nancy, "I am sure of it now."

"That's more than I know, sir," she replied. "Miss Gourlay—God bless and protect her—was kind to every one; and not more so to me than to the other servants."

"I have just been informed by Gibson, that she and her maid left the Hall on Tuesday night last. Now, answer me truly, and you shall be the better for it. Have you any conception, any suspicion, let us say, where they have gone to?"

"La, sir, sure your honor ought to know that better than me."

"How so, my pretty girl? How should I know it? She told me nothing about it."

"Why, wasn't it your honor and Tom Gillespie that took her away in the carriage on that very night?"

Here now was wit against wit, or at least

cunning against cunning. Nancy, the adroit, hazarded an assertion of which she was not certain, in order to probe the baronet, and place him in a position by which she might be able by his conduct and manner to satisfy herself whether her suspicions were well-founded or not.

"But how do you know, my good girl, that I and Gillespie were out that night?"

It is unnecessary to repeat here circumstances with which the reader is already acquainted. Nancy gave him the history of Mrs. Morgan's sudden illness, and all the other facts already mentioned.

"But there is one thing that I still cannot understand," replied the baronet, "which is, that the disappearance of Miss Gourlay was never mentioned to me until I inquired for her maid, whom I wished to speak with."

"But sure that's very natural, sir," replied Nancy; "the reason we didn't speak to you upon the subject was because we thought that it was your honor who brought her away; and that as you took such a late hour in the night for it, you didn't wish that we should know anything about it."

The baronet's eye fell upon her severely, as if he doubted the truth of what she said. Nancy's eye, however, neither avoided his nor quailed before it. She now spoke the truth, and she did so, in order to prevent herself and the other servants from incurring his resentment by their silence.

"Very well," observed Sir Thomas, calmly, but sternly. "I think you have spoken what you believe to be the truth, and what, for all you know, *may* be the truth. But observe my words: let this subject be never breathed nor uttered by any domestic in my establishment. Tell your fellow-servants that such are my orders; for I swear, if I find that any one of you shall speak of it, my utmost vengeance shall pursue him or her to death itself. That will do." And he signed to her to retire.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Dunphy visits the County Wicklow—Old Sam and his Wife.

It was about a week subsequent to the interview which the stranger had with old Dunphy, unsuccessful as our readers know it to have been, that the latter and his wife were sitting in the back parlor one night after their little shop had been closed, when the following dialogue took place between them:

"Well, at all events," observed the old man, "*he* was the best of them, and to my own knowledge that same saicret lay hot and heavy on his conscience, especially to so good a master and mistress as they were to him. The truth is, Polly, *I'll do it.*"

"But why didn't he do it himself?" asked his wife.

"Why?—why?" he replied, looking at her with his keen ferret eyes—"why, don't you know what a weakminded, timorsome creature he was, ever since the height o' my knee?"

"Oh, ay," she returned; "and I hard something about an oath, I think, that they made him take."

"You did," said her husband; "and it was true, too. They swore him never to breathe a syllable of it *until* his dying day—an' although they meant by that that he should *never* revale it *at all*, yet he always was of opinion that he might tell it on *that* day, but on no other one. And it was his intention to do so."

"Wasn't it an unlucky thing that *she* happened to be out when he could do it with a safe conscience?" observed his wife.

"They almost threatened the life out of the poor creature," pursued her husband, "for Tom threatened to murder him if he betrayed them; and Ginty to poison him, if Tom didn't keep *his* word—and I believe in my sowl, that the same devil's pair would a' done either the one or the other, if he had broken his oath. Of the two, however, Ginty's the worst, I think; and I often believe, myself, that she deals with the devil; but thrat, I suppose, is bekaise she's sometimes not right in her head still."

"If she doesn't dale with the devil, the devil dales with her at any rate," replied the other. "They'll be apt to gain their point, Tom and she."

"Tom, I know, is just as bitther as she is," observed the old man, "and Ginty, by her promises as to what she'll do for him, has turned his heart altogether to stone; and yet I know a man that's bittherer against the black fellow than either o' them. She only thinks of the luck that's before her; but, afther all, Tom acts more from hatred to him than from Ginty's promises. He has no bad feelin' against the young man himself; but it's the others he's bent on punishing. God direct myself, I wish at any rate that I never had act or hand in it. As for your time o' life and mine, Polly, you know that age puts it out of our power ever to be much the betther one way or the other, even if Ginty *does* succeed in her devilry. Very few years now will see us both in our graves, and I don't know but it's safer to lave this world with an aisy conscience, than to face God with the

guilt of sich a black saicret as that upon us."

"Well, but haven't you promised them not to tell?"

"I have—an' only that I take sich delight in waitin' to see the black scoundrel punished till his heart 'll burst—I think I'd come out with it. That's one raison; and the other is, that I'm afraid of the consequences. The law's a dangerous customer to get one in its clushes, an' who can tell how we'd be dealt with?"

"Troth, an' that's true enough," she replied.

"And when I promised poor Edward on his death-bed," proceeded the old man, "I made him give me a sartin time; an' I did this in ordher to allow Ginty an opportunity of tryin' her luck. If she does not manage her point within that time, I'll fulfil my promise to the dyin' man."

"But, why," she asked, "did he make you promise to do it when he could—ay, but I forgot. It was jist, I suppose, in case he might be taken short as he was, and that you wor to do it for him if *he* hadn't an opportunity? But, sure, if Ginty succeeds, there's an end to your promise."

"Well, I believe so," said the old man; "but if she does succeed, why, all I'll wondher at will be that God would allow it. At any rate she's the first of the family that ever brought shame an' disgrace upon the name. Not but she felt her misfortune keen enough at the time, since it turned her brain almost ever since. And him, the villain—but no matter—*he* must be punished."

"But," replied the wife, "wont Ginty be punishin' him?"

"Ah, Polly, you know little of the plans—the deep plans an' plots that he's surrounded by. We know ourselves that there's not such a plotter in existence as he is, barrin' them that's plottin' aginst him. Lord bless us! but it's a quare world—here is both parties schamin' an' plottin' away—all bent on risin' themselves higher in it by pride and dishonesty. There's the high rogue and the low rogue—the great villain and the little villain—musha! Polly, which do you think is worst, eh?"

"Faith, I think it's six o' one and half-a-dozen of the other with them. Still, a body would suppose that the high rogue ought to rest contented; but it's a hard thing they say to satisfy the cravin's of man's heart when pride, an' love of wealth an' power, get into it."

"I'm not at all happy in my mind, Polly," observed her husband, meditatively; "I'm not at aise—and I won't bear this state of mind much longer. But, then, again, there's my pension; and that I'll lose if I spake out. I sometimes think I'll go to the country some o' these days, and see an ould friend."

"An' where to, if it's a fair question?"

"Why," he replied, "maybe it's a fair question to ask, but not so fair to answer. Ay! I'll go to the country—I'll start in a few days—in a few days! No, savin' to me, but I'll start to-morrow. Polly, I could tell you something if I wished—I say *I* have a secret that none o' them knows—ay, have I. Oh, God pardon me! The d——d thieves, to make me, me above all men, do the blackest part of the business—an' to think o' the way they misled Edward, too—who, after all, would be desavin' poor Lady Gourlay, if he had tould her all as he thought, although *he* did not know that he would be misleadin' her. Yes, faith, I'll start for the country to-morrow, plaise God; but listen, Polly, do you know who's in town?"

"Arra, no!—how could I?"

"Kate M'Bride, so Ginty tells me; she's livin' with her."

"And why didn't she call to see you?" asked his wife. "And yet God knows it's no great loss; but if ever woman was cursed wid a step-daughter, I was wid her."

"Don't you know very well that we never spoke since her runaway match with M'Bride. If she had married Cummins, I'd a' given her a purty penny to help him on; but instead o' that she cuts off with a sojer, bekaise he was well faced, and starts with him to the Aist Indies. No; I wouldn't spake to her then, and I'm not sure I'll spake to her now either; and yet I'd like to see her—the unfortunate woman. However, I'll think of it; but in the mane time, as I said, I'll start for the country in the mornin'."

And to the country he did start the next morning; and if, kind reader, it so happen that you feel your curiosity in any degree excited, all you have to do is to take a seat in your own imagination, whether outside or in, matters not, the fare is the same, and thus you will, at no great cost, be able to accompany him. But before we proceed further we shall, in the first place, convey you in ours to the ultimate point of his journey.

There was, in one of the mountain districts of the county Wicklow, that paradise of our country, a small white cottage, with a neat flower plot before, and a small orchard and garden behind. It stood on a little eminence, at the foot of one of those mountains, which, in some instances, abut from higher ranges. It was then bare and barren; but at present presents a very different aspect, a considerable portion of it having been since

reclaimed and planted. Scattered around this rough district were a number of houses that could be classed with neither farm-house nor cabin, but as humble little buildings that possessed a feature of each. Those who dwelt in them held in general four or five acres of rough land, some more, but very few less; and we allude to these small tenements, because, as our readers are aware, the wives of their proprietors were in the habit of eking out the means of subsistence, and paying their rents, by nursing illegitimate children or foundlings, which upon a proper understanding, and in accordance with the usual arrangements, were either transmitted to them from the hospital of that name in Dublin, or taken charge of by these women, and conveyed home from that establishment itself. The children thus nurtured were universally termed *parisheens*, because it was found more convenient and less expensive to send a country foundling to the hospital in Dublin, than to burden the inhabitants of the parish with its maintenance. A small sum, entitling it to be received in the hospital, was remitted, and as this sum, in most instances, was levied off the parish, these wretched creatures were therefore called *parisheens*, that is, creatures aided by parish allowance.

The very handsome little cottage into which we are about to give the reader admittance, commanded a singularly beautiful and picturesque view. From the little elevation on which it stood could be seen the entrancing vale of Ovoca, winding in its inexpressible lovliness toward Arklow, and diversified with green meadows, orchard gardens, elegant villas, and what was sweeter than all, warm and comfortable homesteads, more than realizing our conceptions of Arcadian happiness and beauty. Its precipitous sides were clothed with the most enchanting variety of plantation; whilst, like a stream of liquid light, the silver Ovoca shone sparkling to the sun, as it followed, by the harmonious law of nature, that graceful line of beauty which characterizes the windings of this unrivalled valley. The cottage which commanded this rich prospect we have partially described. It was white as snow, and had about it all those traits of neatness and good taste which are, we regret to say, so rare among, and so badly understood by, our humbler countrymen. The front walls were covered by honeysuckles, rose trees, and wild brier, and the flower plot in front was so well stocked, that its summer bloom would have done credit to the skill of an ordinary florist. The inside of this cottage was equally neat, clean, and cheerful. The floor, an unusual thing then, was tiled, which gave it a look of agreeable warmth; the wooden vessels in the kitchen were white with incessant scouring, whilst the pewter, brass, and tin, shone in becoming rivalry. The room you entered was the kitchen, off which was a parlor and two bedrooms, besides one for the servant.

As may be inferred from what we have said, the dresser was a perfect treat to look at, and as the owners kept a cow, we need hardly add that the delightful fragrance of milk which characterizes every well-kept dairy, was perfectly ambrosial here. The chairs were of oak, so were the tables; and a large arm-chair, with a semicircular back, stood at one side of the clean hearth, whilst over the chimney-piece hung a portrait of General Wolfe, with an engraving of the siege of Quebec. A series of four silver medals, enclosed in red morocco cases, having the surface of each protected by a glass cover, hung from a liliputian rack made of mahogany, at once bearing testimony to the enterprise and gallantry of the owner, as well as to the manly pride with which he took such especial pains to preserve these proud rewards of his courage, and the ability with which he must have discharged his duty as a soldier. On the table lay a large Bible, a Prayer-book, and the "Whole Duty of Man," all neatly and firmly, but not ostentatiously bound. Some works of a military character lay upon a little hanging shelf beside the dresser. Over this shelf hung a fishing-rod, unscrewed and neatly tied up; and upon the top of the other books lay one bound with red cloth, in which he kept his flies. On one side of the window sills lay a backgammon box, with which his wife and himself amused themselves for an hour or two every evening; and fixed in recesses intended for the purpose, Sam Roberts, for such was his name, having built the house himself, were comfortable cupboards filled with a variety of delft, several curious and foreign ornaments, an ostrich's egg, a drinking cup made of the polished shell of a cocoanut, whilst crossed saltier-wise over a portrait of himself and of his wife, were placed two feathers of the bird of paradise, constituting, one might imagine, emblems significant of the happy life they led. But we cannot close our description here. Upon the good woman's bosom, fastened to her kerchief, was a locket which contained a portion of beautiful brown hair, taken from the youthful head of a deceased son, a manly and promising boy, who died at the age of seventeen, and whose death, although it did not and could not throw a permanent gloom over two lives so innocent and happy, occasioned, nevertheless, periodical recollections

of profound and bitter sorrow. Old Sam had *his* locket also, but it was invisible; its position being on that heart whose affections more resembled the enthusiasm of idolatry than the love of a parent. His wife was a placid, contented looking old woman, with a complexion exceedingly hale and fresh for her years; a shrewd, clear, benevolent eye, and a general air which never fails to mark that ease and superiority of manner to be found only in those who have had an enlarged experience in life, and seen much of the world. There she sits by the clear fire and clean, comfortable hearth, knitting a pair of stockings for her husband, who has gone to Dublin. She is tidily and even, for a woman of her age, tastefully dressed, but still with a sober decency that showed her good sense. Her cap is as white as snow, with which a well fitting brown stuff gown, that gave her a highly respectable appearance, admirably contrasted. She wore an apron of somewhat coarse muslin, that seemed, as it always did, fresh from the iron, and her hands were covered with a pair of thread mittens that only came half-way down the fingers. Hanging at one side was a three-cornered pincushion of green silk, a proof at once of a character remarkable for thrift, neatness, and industry. Whilst thus employed, she looks from time to time through a window that commanded a prospect of the road, and seems affected by that complacent expression of uneasiness which, whilst it overshadows the features, never disturbs their benignity. At length, a good-looking, neat girl, their servant, enters the cottage with a can of new milk, for she had been to the fields a-milking; her name is Molly Byrne.

"Molly," said her mistress, "I wonder the master has not come yet. I am getting uneasy. The coach has gone past, and I see no appearance of him."

"I suppose, then, he didn't come by the coach, ma'am."

"Yes, but he said he would."

"Well, ma'am, something must 'a prevented him."

"Molly," said her mistress, smiling, "you are a good hand at telling us John Thompson's news; that is, any thing we know ourselves."

"Well, ma'am, but you know many a time he goes to Dublin, an' doesn't come home by the coach."

"Yes, whenever he visits Kilmainham Hospital, and gets into conversation with some of his old comrades; however, that's natural, and I hope he's safe."

"Well, ma'am," replied Molly, looking out, "I have betther news for you than Jenny Thompson's now."

"Attention, Molly; *John* Thompson's the word," said her mistress, with the slightest conceivable air of professional form; for if she had a foible at all, it was that she gave all her orders and exacted all obedience from her servant in a spirit of military discipline, which she had unconsciously borrowed from her husband, whom she imitated as far as she could. "Where, Molly? Fall back, I say, till I get a peep at dear old Sam."

"There he is, ma'am," continued Molly, at the same time obeying her orders, "and some other person along with him."

"Yes, sure enough; thank God, thank God!" she exclaimed. "But who can the other person be, do you think?"

"I don't know, ma'am," replied Molly. "I only got a glimpse of them, but I knew the master at once. I would know *him* round a corner."

"Advance, then, girl; take another look; *reconnoitre*, Molly, as Sam says, and see if you can make out who it is."

"I see him now well enough, ma'am," replied the girl, "but I don't know him; he's a stranger. What can bring a stranger here, ma'am, do you think?" she inquired.

"Why your kind master, of course, girl; isn't that sufficient? Whoever comes with my dear old Sam is welcome, to be sure."

Her clear, cloudless face was now lit up with a multiplicity of kind and hospitable thoughts, for dear old Sam and his friend were not more than three or four perches from the house, and she could perceive that her husband was in an extraordinary state of good humor.

"I know, Molly, who the strange man is now," she said. "He's an old friend of my husband's, named Dunphy; he was once in the same regiment with him; and I know, besides, our own good man has heard some news that has delighted him very much."

She had scarcely uttered the words when Sam and old Dunphy entered.

"Beck, my girl, here I am, safe and sound, and here's an old friend come to see us, and you know how much we are both indebted to him; I felt, Beck, and so did you, old girl, that we must have something to love and provide for, and to keep the heart moving, but that's natural, you know—quite natural—it's all the heart of man."

"Mr. Dunphy," said Beck—a curtailment of Rebecca—"I am glad to see you; take a seat; how is the old woman?"

"As tough as ever, Mrs. Roberts. 'Deed I had thought last winter that she might lave me a loose leg once more; but I don't know how it is, she's gatherin' strength on my hands, an' a young wife, I'm afraid, isn't

on the cards—ha—ha—ha! And how are you yourself, Mrs. Roberts?—but, indeed, one may tell with half an eye—fresh and well you look, thank God!"

"Doesn't she, man?" exclaimed Sam, slapping him with delight on the shoulder; "a woman that travelled half the world, and improved in every climate. Molly, attention!—let us turn in to mess as soon as possible. Good news, Beck—good news, but not till after mess; double-quick, Molly."

"Come, Molly, double-quick," added her mistress; "the master and his friend must be hungry by this time."

Owing to the expeditious habits to which Mrs. Roberts had disciplined Molly, a smoking Irish stew, hot and savory, was before them in a few minutes, which the two old fellows attacked with powers of demolition that would have shamed younger men. There was for some time a very significant lull in the conversation, during which Molly, by a hint from her mistress, put down the kettle, an act which, on being observed by Dunphy, made his keen old eye sparkle with the expectation of what it suggested. Shovelful after shovelful passed from dish to plate, until a very relaxed action on the part of each was evident.

"Dunphy," said Sam, "I believe our fire is beginning to slacken; but come, let us give the enemy another round, the citadel is nearly won—is on the point of surrender."

"Begad," replied Dunphy, who was well acquainted with his friend's phraseology, and had seen some service, as already intimated, in the same regiment, some fifty years before. "I must lay down my arms for the present."

"No matter, friend Dunphy, we'll renew the attack at supper; an easy mind brings a good appetite, which is but natural; it's all the heart of man."

"Well, I don't know that," said Dunphy, replying to the first of the axioms; "I have often aiten a hearty dinner enough when my mind was, God knows, anything but aisy."

"Well, then," rejoined Sam, "when the heart's down, a glass of old stingo, mixed stiff, will give it a lift; so, my old fellow, if there's anything wrong with you, we'll soon set it to rights."

The table was now cleared, and the word "Hot wate-r-r," was given, as if Molly had been on drill, as in fact, she may be considered to have been every day in the week; then the sugar and whiskey in the same tone. But whilst she is preparing and producing the materials, as they have been since termed, we shall endeavor to give an outline of old Sam,

Old Sam, then, was an erect, square-built, fine-looking old fellow, with firm, massive, but benevolent features; not, however, without a dash of determination in them that added very considerably to their interest. His eyes were gray, kind, and lively; his eyebrows rather large, but their expression was either stern or complacent, according to the mood of the moment. That of complacency, however, was their general character. Upon the front part of his head he had received a severe wound, which extended an inch or so down the side of his forehead, he had also lost the two last fingers of his left hand, and received several other wounds that were severe and dangerous when inflicted, but as their scars were covered by his dress, they were consequently invisible. Sam was at this time close upon seventy, but so regular had been his habits of life, so cheerful and kind his disposition, and so excellent his constitution, that he did not look more than fifty-five. It was utterly impossible not to read the fine old soldier in every one of his free, but well-disciplined, movements. The black stock, the bold, erect head, the firm but measured step, and the existence of something like military ardor in the eye and whole bearing; or it might be the proud consciousness of having bravely and faithfully discharged his duty to his king and his country; all this, we say, marked the man with an impress of such honest pride and frank military spirit, as, taken into consideration with his fine figure, gave the very *beau ideal* of an old soldier.

When each had mixed his tumbler, Sam, brimful of the good news to which he had alluded, filled a small glass, as was his wont, and placing it before Beck, said:

"Come, Beck, attention!—'The king, God bless him!' Attention, Dunphy!—off with it."

"The king, God bless him!" having been duly honored, Sam proceeded:

"Beck, my old partner, I said I had good news for you. Our son and his regiment—three times eleven, eleven times three—the gallant thirty-third, are in Dublin."

Beck laid down her stocking, and her eyes sparkled with delight.

"But that's not all, old girl, he has risen from the ranks—his commission has been just made out, and he is now a commissioned officer, in his majesty's service. But I knew it would come to that. Didn't I say so, old comrade, eh?"

"Indeed you did, Sam," replied his wife; "and I thought as much myself. There was something about that boy beyond the common."

"Ay, you may say that, girl; but who found it out first? Why, I did; but the thing was natural, it's all the heart of man—

when that's in the right place nothing will go wrong. What do you say, friend Dunphy? Did *you* think it would ever come to this?"

"Troth, I did not, Mr. Roberts; but it's you he may thank for it."

"God Almighty first, Dunphy, and me afterwards. Well, he shan't want a father, at all events; and so long as I have a few shmers to spare, he shan't want the means of supporting his rank as a British officer and gentleman should. There's news for you, Dunphy. Do you hear that, you old dog eh?"

"It's all the heart of man, Sam," observed his wife, eying him with affectionate admiration. "When the heart's in the right place, nothing will go wrong."

Now, nothing gratified Sam so much as to hear his own apothegms honored by repetition.

"Right, girl," he replied; "shake hands for that. Dunphy, mark the truth of that. Isn't she worth gold, you sinner?"

"Troth she is, Mr. Roberts, and silver to the back o' that."

"What?" said Sam, looking at him with comic surprise. "What do you mean by that, you ferret? Why don't you add, and 'brass to the back of that?' By fife and drum, I won't stand this to Beck. Apologize instantly, sir." Then breaking into a hearty laugh "he meant no offence, Beck," he added; "he respects and loves you—I know he does—as who doesn't that knows you, my girl?"

"What I meant to say, Mr. Roberts——"

"Mrs. Roberts, sir; direct the apology to herself."

"Well, then, what I wanted to say, Mrs. Roberts, was, that all the gold, silver, and brass in his majesty's dominions—(God bless him! *parenthetice*, from Sam)—couldn't purchase you, an' would fall far short of your value."

"Well done—thank you, Dunphy—thank you, honest old Dunphy; shake hands. He's a fine old fellow, Beck, isn't he, eh?"

"I'm very much obliged to you, Mr. Dunphy; but you overrate me a great deal too much," replied Mrs. Roberts.

"No such thing, Beck; you're wrong there, for once; the thing couldn't be done—by fife and drum! it couldn't; and no man has a better right to know that than myself—*and I say it*."

Sam, like all truly brave men, never boasted of his military exploits, although he might well have done so. On the contrary, it was a subject which he studiously avoided, and on which those who knew his modesty as well as his pride never ventured. He usually cut short such as referred to it, with:

"Never mind that, my friend; I did my duty, and that was all; and so did every man in the British army, or I wouldn't be here to say so. Pass the subject."

Sam and Dunphy, at all events, spent a pleasant evening; at least, beyond question, Sam did. As for Dunphy, he seemed occasionally relieved by hearing Sam's warm and affectionate allusions to his son; and, on the other hand, he appeared, from time to time, to fall into a mood that indicated a state of feeling between gloom and reflection.

"It's extraordinary, Mr. Roberts," he observed, after awakening from one of these reveries; "it looks as if Providence was in it."

"God Almighty's in it, sir,—didn't I say so? and under him, Sam Roberts. Sir, I observed that boy closely from the beginning. He reminded me, and you too, Beck, didn't he, of him that—that—we lost"—here he paused a moment, and placed his hand upon his heart, as if to feel for something there that awoke touching and melancholy remembrances; whilst his wife, on the other hand, unpinned the locket, and having kissed it, quietly let fall a few tears; after which she restored it to its former position. Sam cleared his voice a little, and then proceeded:

"Yes; I could never look at the one without thinking of the other; but 'twas all the heart of man. In a week's time he could fish as well as myself, and in a short time began to teach me. 'Gad! he used to take the rod out of my hand with so much kindness, so gently and respectfully—for, mark me, Dunphy, he respected *me* from the beginning—didn't he, Beck?"

"He did, indeed, Sam."

"Thank you, Beck; you're a good creature. So gently and respectfully, as I was saying, and showed me in his sweet words, and with his smiling eyes—yes, and his hair, too, was the very color of his brother's—I was afraid I might forget that. Well—yes, with such smiling eyes that it was impossible not to love him—I couldn't but love him—but, sure, it was only natural—all the heart of man, Dunphy. 'Ned,' said I to him one day, 'would you like to become a soldier—a SOLDIER, Ned?'" And as the old man repeated the word "soldier" his voice became full and impressive, his eyes sparkled with pride, and his very form seemed to dilate at the exulting reminiscences and heroic associations connected with it.

"Above all things in this life," replied the boy; "but you know I'm too young."

"'Never mind, my boy,' said I, 'that's a fault that every day will mend; you'll never grow less;' so I consulted with Beck there, and with you, Dunphy, didn't I?"

"You did, indeed, Mr. Roberts, and wouldn't do anything till you had spoken to me on the subject."

"Right, Dunphy, right—well, you know the rest. 'Education's the point,' said I to Beck—ignorance is a bad inheritance. What would I be to-day if I didn't write a good hand, and was a keen accountant! But no matter, off he went with a decent outfit to honest Mainwairing—thirty pounds a-year—five years—lost no time—was steady, but always showed a spirit. Couldn't get him a commission then, for I hadn't come in for my Uncle's legacy, which I got the other day—dashed him into the ranks though—and here he is—a commissioned officer—eh, old Dunphy! Well, isn't that natural? but it's all the heart of man."

"It's wonderful," observed Dunphy, ruminating, "it's wonderful indeed. Well, now, Mr. Roberts, it really *is* wonderful. I came down here to spake to you about that very boy, and see the news I have before me. Indeed, it is wonderful, and the hand o' God is surely in it."

"Right, Dunphy, that's the word; and under him, in the capacity of agent in the business, book down Sam Roberts, who's deeply thankful to God for making him, if I may say so, his adjutant in advancing the boy's fortunes."

"Did you see him to-day, Sam?" asked Mrs. Roberts.

"No," replied Sam, "he wasn't in the barracks, but I'll engage we'll both see him to-morrow, if he has life, that is, unless he should happen to be on duty. If he doesn't come to-morrow, however, I'll start the day after for Dublin."

"Well, now, Mr. Roberts," said Dunphy, "if you have no objection, I didn't care if I turned into bed; I'm not accustomed to travelin', and I'm a thrifle fatigued; only to-morrow morning, plaise God, I have something to say to you about that boy that may surprise you."

"Not a syllable, Dunphy, nothing about him that could surprise me."

"Well," replied the hesitating and cautious old man, "maybe I *will* surprise you for all that."

This he said whilst Mrs. Roberts and Molly Byrne were preparing his bed in one of the neat sleeping rooms which stood off the pleasant kitchen where they sat; "and listen, Mr. Roberts, before I tell it, you must pledge your honor as a soldier, that until I give you lave, you'll never breathe a syllable of what I have to mention to any one, not even to Mrs. Roberts."

"What's that? Keep a secret from Beck? Come, Dunphy, that's what I never did, unless the word and countersign when on duty, and, by life and drum, I never will keep your secret then; I don't want it, for as sure as I hear it, so shall she. And is it afraid of old Beck you are? By life and drum, sir, old Beck has more honor than either of us, and would as soon take a fancy to a coward as betray a secret. You don't know her, old Dunphy, you don't know her, or you wouldn't spake as if you feared that she's not truth and honesty to the backbone."

"I believe it, Mr. Roberts, but they say, afther all, that once a woman gets a secret, she thinks herself in a sartin way, until she's delivered of it."

Sam, who liked a joke very well, laughed heartily at this, bad as it was, or rather he laughed at the shrewd, ludicrous, but satirical grin with which old Dunphy's face was puckered whilst he uttered it.

"But, sir," said he, resuming his gravity, "Beck, I'd have you to know, is not like other women, by which I mean that no other woman could be compared to her. Beck's the queen of women, upon my soul she is; and all I have to say is, that if you tell me the secret, in half an hour's time she'll be as well acquainted with it as either of us. I have no notion, Dunphy, at this time of life, to separate my mind from Beck's; my conscience, sir, is my store-room; she has a key for it, and, by life and drum, I'm not going to take it from her now. Do you think Beck would treat old Sam so? No. And my rule is, and ever has been, treat your wife with confidence if you respect her, and expect confidence in your turn. No, no; poor Beck must have it if *I* have it. The truth is, I have no secrets, and never had. I keep none, Dunphy, and that's but natural; however, it's all the heart of man."

The next morning the two men took an early walk, for both were in the habit of rising betimes. Dunphy, it would appear, was one of those individuals, who, if they ever perform a praiseworthy act, do it rather from weakness of character and fear, than from a principle of conscientious rectitude. After having gone to bed the previous night he lay awake for a considerable time debating with himself the purport of his visit, *pro* and *con*, without after all, being able to accomplish a determination on the subject. He was timid, cunning, shrewd, avaricious, and possessed, besides, a large portion of that peculiar superstition which does not restrain from iniquity, although it renders the mind anxious and apprehensive of the consequences. Now the honest fellow with whom he had to deal was the reverse of all this in every possible phase of his character, being

candid, conscientious, fearless, and straightforward. Whatever he felt to be his duty, that he did, regardless of all opinion and all consequences. He was, in fact, an independent man, because he always acted from right principles, or rather from right impulses; the truth being, that the virtuous action was performed before he had allowed himself time to reason upon it. Every one must have observed that there is a rare class of men whose feelings, always on the right side, are too quick for their reason, which they generously anticipate, and have the proposed virtue completed before either reason or prudence have had time to argue either for or against the act. Old Sam was one of the latter, and our readers may easily perceive the contrast which the two individuals presented.

After about an hour's walk both returned to breakfast, and whatever may have been the conversation that took place between them, or whatever extent of confidence Dunphy reposed in old Sam, there can be little doubt that his glee this morning was infinitely greater than on the preceding evening, although, at Dunphy's earnest request, considerably more subdued. Nay, the latter had so far succeeded with old Sam as to induce him to promise, that for the present at least, he would forbear to communicate it to his wife. Sam, however, would under no circumstances promise this until he should first hear the nature of it, upon which, he said, he would then judge for himself. After hearing it, however, he said that on Dunphy's own account he would not breathe it even to her without his permission.

"Mind," said Dunphy, at the conclusion of their dialogue, and with his usual caution, "I am not *sartin* of what I have mentioned; but I hope, plaise God, in a short time to be able to prove it; and, if not, as nobody knows it but yourself an' me, why there's no harm done. Dear knows, I have a strong reason for lettin' the matter lie as it is, even if my suspicions are true; but my conscience isn't aisy, Mr. Roberts, an' for that raison I came to spake to you, to consult with you, and to have your advice."

"And my advice to you is, Dunphy, not to attack the enemy until your plans are properly laid, and all your forces in a good position. The thing can't be proved now, you say; very well; you'd be only a fool for attempting to prove it."

"I'm not sayin'," said the cautious old sinner again, "that it can be proved at any time, or proved *at all*—that is, for *a sartinty;* but I think, afther a time, *it may.* There's a person not now in the country, that will be back shortly, I hope; and if any one can prove what I mentioned to you, that person can. I know we'd make a powerful friend by it, but——"

Here he squirted his thin tobacco spittle "out owre his beard," but added nothing further.

"Dunphy, my fine old fellow," said Sam, "it was very kind of you to come to me upon this point. You know the affection I have for the young man; thank you, Dunphy; but it's natural—it's all the heart of man. Dunphy, how long is it, now, since you and I messed together in the gallant eleven times three? Fifty years, I think, Dunphy, or more. You were a smart fellow then, and became servant, I think, to a young captain—what's this his name was? oh! I remember—Gourlay; for, Dunphy, I remember the name of every officer in our regiment, since I entered it; when they joined, when they exchanged, sold out, or died like brave men in the field of battle. It's upwards of fifty. By the way, he left us—sold out immediately after his father's death."

"Ay, ould Sir Edward—a good man; but he had a woman to his wife, and if ever there was a divil—Lord bless us!—in any woman, there was one, and a choice bad one, too, in her. The present barrownight, Sir Thomas, is as like her as if she had spat him out of her mouth. The poor ould man, Sir Edward, had no rest night or day, because he wouldn't get himself made into a lord, or a peer, or some high-flown title of the kind; and all that she herself might rank as a nobleman's lady, although she was a 'lady,' by title, as it was, which, God knows, was more than she desarved, the thief."

"Ah, she was different from Beck, Dunphy. Talking of wives, have I not a right to feel thankful that God in his goodness gifted me with such a blessing? You don't know what I owe to her, Dunphy. When I was sick and wounded—I bear the marks of fifteen severe wounds upon me—when I was in fever, in ague, in jaundice, and several other complaints belonging to the different countries we were in, there she was—*there she was, Dunphy;* but enough said; ay, and in the field of battle, too," he added, immediately forgetting himself, "lying like a log, my tongue black and burning. Oh, yes, Beck's a great creature; that's all, now—that's all. Come in to breakfast, and now you shall know what a fresh egg means, for we have lots of poultry."

"Many thanks to you, Mr. Roberts, I and my ould woman know that."

"Tut—nonsense, man; lots of poultry, I say—always a pig or two, and never without a ham or a flitch, you old dog. Except

the welfare of that boy, we have nothing on earth, thank God, to trouble us; but that's natural—it's all the heart of man, Dunphy."

After having made a luxurious breakfast, Dunphy, who felt that he could not readily remain away from his little shop, bade this most affectionate and worthy couple good-by and proceeded on his way home.

This hesitating old man felt anything but comfortable since the partial confidence he had placed in old Sam. It is true, he stated the purport of his disclosure to him as a contingency that might or might not happen; thus, as he imagined, keeping himself on the safe side. But in the meantime, he felt anxious, apprehensive and alarmed, even at the lengths to which his superstitious fears had driven him; for he felt now that one class of terrors had only superinduced another, without destroying the first. But so must it ever be with those timid and pusillanimous villains who strive to impose upon their consciences, and hesitate between right and wrong.

On his way home, however, he determined to visit the barracks in which the thirty-third regiment lay, in order, if possible, to get a furtive glance at the young ensign. In this he was successful. On entering the barrack square, he saw a group of officers chatting together on the north side, and after inquiring from a soldier if Ensign Roberts was among them, he was answered in the affirmative.

"There he is," said the man, "standing with a whip in his hand—that tall, handsome young fellow."

Dunphy, who was sufficiently near to get a clear view of him, was instantly struck by his surprising resemblance to Miss Gourlay, whom he had often seen in town.

CHAPTER XIX.

Interview between Traïcuddel and the Stranger—A Peep at Lord Dunroe and his Friend.

It was on the morning that Sir Thomas Gourlay had made the disastrous discovery of the flight of his daughter—for he had not yet heard the spreading rumor of the imaginary elopement—that the stranger, on his way from Father M'Mahon's to the Mitre, was met in a lonely part of the road, near the priest's house, by a man of huge stature and savage appearance. He was literally in rags; and his long beard, gaunt features, and eyes that glared as if with remorse, distraction, or despair, absolutely constituted him an alarming as well as a painful spectacle. As he approached the stranger, with some obvious and urgent purpose, trailing after him a weapon that resembled the club of Hercules, the latter paused in his step and said,

"What is the matter with you, my good fellow? You seem agitated. Do you want anything with me? Stand back, I will permit you to come no nearer, till I know your purpose. I am armed."

The wretched man put his hand upon his eyes, and groaned as if his heart would burst, and for some moments was unable to make any reply.

"What can this mean?" thought the stranger; "the man's features, though wild and hollow, are not those of a ruffian."

"My good friend," he added, speaking in a milder tone, "you seem distressed. Pray let me know what is the matter with you?"

"Don't be angry with me," replied the man, addressing him with dry, parched lips, whilst his Herculean breast heaved up and down with agitation; "I didn't intend to do it, or to break in upon it, but now I must, for it's life or death with the three that's left me; and I durstn't go into the town to ask it there. I have lost four already. Maybe, sir, you could change this pound note for me? For the sake of the Almighty, do; as you hope for mercy don't refuse me. That's all I ask. I know that you stop in the inn in the town there above—that you're a friend of our good priest's—and that you are well spoken of by every one."

Now, it fortunately happened that the stranger had, on leaving the inn, put thirty shillings of silver in his pocket, not only that he might distribute through the hands of Father M'Mahon some portion of assistance to the poor whom that good man had on his list of distress, but visit some of the hovels on his way back, in order personally to witness their condition, and, if necessary, relieve them. The priest, however, was from home, and he had not an opportunity of carrying the other portion of his intentions into effect, as he was only a quarter of a mile from the good man's residence, and no hovels of the description he wished to visit had yet presented themselves.

"Change for a pound!" he exclaimed, with a good deal of surprise. "Why, from your appearance, poor fellow, I should scarcely suspect to find such a sum in your possession. Did you expect to meet me here?"

"No, sir, I was on my way to the priest, to open my heart to him, for if I don't, I know I'll be ragin' mad before forty-eight hours. Oh, sir, if you have it, make haste;

every minute may cost me a life that's dearer to me a thousand times than my own. Here's the note, sir."

The stranger took the note out of his hand, and on looking at the face of it made no observation, but, upon mechanically turning up the back, apparently without any purpose of examining it, he started, looked keenly at the man, and seemed sunk in the deepest possible amazement, not unrelieved, however, by an air of satisfaction. The sudden and mysterious disappearance of Fenton, taken in connection with the discovery of the note which he himself had given him, and now in the possession of a man whose appearance was both desperate and suspicious, filled him with instant apprehensions for the safety of Fenton.

His brow instantly became stern, and in a voice full of the most unequivocal determination, he said,

"Pray, sir, how did *you* come by this note?"

"By the temptation of the devil; for although it was in my possession, it didn't save my two other darlins from dying. A piece of a slate would be as useful as it was, for I couldn't change it—I durstn't."

"You committed a robbery for this note, sir?"

The man glared at him with something like incipient fury, but paused, and looking on him with a more sorrowful aspect, replied,

"That is what the world will call it, I suppose; but if you wish to get anything out of me, change the tone of your voice. I haven't at the present time, much command over my temper, and I'm now a desperate man, though I wasn't always so. Either give me the change or the note back again."

The stranger eyed him closely. Although desperate, as he said, still there were symptoms of an honest and manly feeling, even in the very bursts of passion which he succeeded with such effort in restraining.

"I repeat it, that this note came into your hands by an act of robbery—perhaps of murder."

"Murder!" replied the man, indignantly. "Give me back the note, sir, and provoke me no farther."

"No," replied the other, "I shall not; and you must consider yourself my prisoner. You not only do not deny, but seem to admit, the charge of robbery, and you shall not pass out of my hands until you render me an account of the person from whom you took this note. You see," he added, producing a case of pistols—for, in accordance with the hint he had received in the anonymous note, he resolved never to go out without them—"I am armed, and that resistance is useless."

The man gave a proud but ghastly smile, as he replied—dropping his stick, and pulling from his bosom a pair of pistols much larger and more dangerous than those of the stranger,

"You see, that if you go to that I have the advantage of you."

"Tell me," I repeat, "what has become of Mr. Fenton, from whom you took it."

"Fenton!" exclaimed the other, with surprise; "is that the poor young man that's not right in his head?"

"The same."

"Well, I know nothing about him."

"Did you not rob him of this note?"

"No."

"You did, sir; this note was in his possession; and I fear you have murdered him besides. You must come with me,"—and as he spoke, our friend, Trailcudgel, saw two pistols, one in each hand, levelled at him. "Get on before me, sir, to the town of Ballytrain, or resist at your peril."

Almost at the same moment the two pistols, taken from Sir Thomas Gourlay, were levelled at the stranger.

"Now," said the man, whilst his eyes shot fire and his brow darkened, "if it must be, it must; I only want the sheddin' of blood to fill up my misery and guilt; but it seems I'm doomed, and I can't help it. Sir," said he, "think of yourself. If I submit to become your prisoner, my life's gone. You don't know the villain you are goin' to hand me over to. I'm not afraid of you, nor of anything, but to die a disgraceful death through *his* means, as I must do."

"I will hear no reasoning on the subject," replied the other; "go on before me."

The man kept his pistols presented, and there they stood, looking sternly into each other's faces, each determined not to yield, and each, probably, on the brink of eternity.

At length the man dropped the muzzles of the weapons, and holding them reversed, approached the stranger, saying, in a voice and with an expression of feeling that smote the other to the heart,

"I will be conqueror still, sir. Instead of goin' with you, you will come with me. There are my pistols. Only come to a house of misery and sorrow and death, and you will know all."

"This is not treachery," thought the stranger. "There can be no mistaking the anguish—the agony—of that voice; and those large tears bear no testimony to the crime of murder or robbery."

"Take my pistols, sir," the other repeated, "only follow me."

"No," replied the stranger, "keep them: I fear you not—and what is more, I do not

now even suspect you. Here are thirty shillings in silver—but you must allow me to keep this note."

We need not describe anew the scene to which poor Trailcudgel introduced him. It is enough to say, that since his last appearance in our pages he had lost two more of his children, one by famine and the other by fever; and that when the stranger entered his hovel—that libel upon a human habitation—that disgrace to landlord inhumanity—he saw stretched out in the stillness of death the emaciated bodies of not less than four human beings—to wit, this wretched man's wife, their daughter, a sweet girl nearly grown, and two little ones. The husband and father looked at them for a little, and the stranger saw a singular working or change, taking place on his features. At length he clasped his hands, and first smiled then laughed outright, and exclaimed, "Thank God that they," pointing to the dead, "are saved from any more of this,"—but the scene—the effort at composure—the sense of his guilt—the condition of the survivors—exhaustion from want of food, all combined, overcame him, and he fell senseless on the floor.

The stranger got a porringer of water, bathed his temples, opened his teeth with an old knife, and having poured some of it down his throat, dragged him—and it required all his strength to do so, although a powerful man—over to the cabin-door, in order to get him within the influence of the fresh air. At length he recovered, looked wildly about him, then gazed up in the face of the stranger, and made one or two deep respirations.

"I see," said he, "I remember—set me sittin' upon this little ditch beside the door—but no, no—" he added, starting—"come away—I must get them food—come—quick, quick, and I will tell you as we go along."

He then repeated the history of his ruin by Sir Thomas Gourlay, of the robbery, and of the scene of death and destitution which drove him to it.

"And was it from Sir Thomas you got this note?" asked the stranger, whose interest was now deeply excited.

"From him I got it, sir; as I tould you," he replied, "and I was on my way to the priest to give him up the money and the pistols, when the situation of my children, of my family, of the livin' and the dead, overcame me, and I was tempted to break in upon one pound of it for their sakes. Sir, my life's in your hands, but there is something in your face that tells my heart that you won't betray me, especially afther what you have seen."

The stranger had been a silent and attentive listener to this narrative, and after he had ceased he spoke not for some time. He then added, emphatically but quickly, and almost abruptly:

"Don't fear me, my poor fellow. Your secret is as safe as if you had never disclosed it. Here are other notes for you, and in the meantime place yourself in the hands of your priest, and enable him to restore Sir Thomas Gourlay his money and his pistols. I shall see you and your family again."

The man viewed the money, looked at him for a moment, burst into tears, and hurried away, without saying a word, to procure food for himself and his children.

Our readers need not imagine for a moment that the scenes with which we have endeavored to present them, in the wretched hut of Trailcudgel, are at all overdrawn. In point of fact, they fall far short of thousands which might have been witnessed, and were witnessed, during the years of '47, '48, '49, and this present one of '50. We are aware that so many as twenty-three human beings, of all ages and sexes, have been found by public officers, all lying on the same floor, and in the same bed—if bed it can be termed—nearly one-fourth of them stiffened and putrid corpses. The survivors weltering in filth, fever, and famine, and so completely maddened by despair, delirium, and the rackings of intolerable pain, in its severest shapes—aggravated by thirst and hunger—that all the impulses of nature and affection were not merely banished from the heart, but superseded by the most frightful peals of insane mirth, cruelty, and the horrible appetite of the ghoul and vampire. Some were found tearing the flesh from the bodies of the carcasses that were stretched beside them. Mothers tottered off under the woful excitement of misery and frenzy, and threw their wretched children on the sides of the highways, leaving them there, with shouts of mirth and satisfaction, to perish or be saved, as the chances might turn out—whilst fathers have been known to make a wolfish meal upon the dead bodies of their own offspring. We might, therefore, have carried on our description up to the very highest point of imaginable horror, without going beyond the truth.

It is well for the world that the schemes and projects of ambition depend not in their fulfilment upon the means and instruments with which they are sought to be accomplished. Had Sir Thomas Gourlay, for instance, not treated his daughter with such brutal cruelty, an interview must have taken place between her and Lord Cullamore, which would, as a matter of course, have

put an end forever to her father's hopes of the high rank for which he was so anxious to sacrifice her. The good old nobleman, failing of the interview he had expected, went immediately to London, with a hope, among other objects, of being in some way useful to his son, whom he had not seen for more than two years, the latter having been, during that period, making the usual tour of the Continent.

On the second day of his arrival, and after he had in some degree recovered from the effects of the voyage—by which, on the whole, he was rather improved—he resolved to call upon Dunroe, in pursuance of a note which he had written to him to that effect, being unwilling besides to take him unawares. Before he arrives, however, we shall take the liberty of looking in upon his lordship, and thus enable ourselves to form some opinion of the materials which constituted that young nobleman's character and habits.

The accessories to these habits, as exponents of his life and character, were in admirable keeping with both, and a slight glance at them will be sufficient for the reader.

His lordship, who kept a small establishment of his own, now lies in a very elegantly furnished bedroom, with a table beside his bed, on which are dressings for his wound, phials of medicines, some loose comedies, and a volume still more objectionable in point both of taste and morals. Beside him is a man, whether young or of the middle age it is difficult to say. At the first glance, his general appearance, at least, seemed rather juvenile, but after a second—and still more decidedly after a third—it was evident to the spectator that he could not be under forty. He was dressed in quite a youthful style, and in the very extreme of fashion. This person's features were good, regular, absolutely symmetrical; yet was there that in his countenance which you could not relish. The face, on being examined, bespoke the life of a battered rake; for although the complexion was or had been naturally good, it was now set in too high a color for that of a *young* man, and was hardened into a certain appearance which is produced on some features by the struggle that takes place between dissipation and health. The usual observation in such cases is—"with what a constitution has that man been blessed on whose countenance the symptoms of a hard life are so slightly perceptible." The symptoms, however, *are* there in every case, as they were on his. This man's countenance, we say, at the first glance, was good, and his eye seemed indicative of great mildness and benignity of heart—yet here, again, was a drawback, for, upon a stricter examination of that organ, there might be read in it the expression of a spirit that never permitted him to utter a single word that was not associated with some selfish calculation. Add to this, that it was unusually small and feeble, intimating duplicity and a want of moral energy and candor. In the mere face, therefore, there was something which you could not like, and which would have prejudiced you, as if by instinct, against the man, were it not that the pliant and agreeable tone of his conversation, in due time, made you forget everything except the fact that Tom Norton was a most delightful fellow, with not a bit of selfishness about him, but a warm and friendly wish to oblige and serve every one of his acquaintances, as far as he could, and with the greatest good-will in the world. But Tom's excellence did not rest here. He was disinterested, and frequently went so far as almost actually to quarrel with some of his friends on their refusing to be guided by his advice and experience. Then, again, Tom was generous and delicate, for on finding that his dissuasions against some particular course had been disregarded, and the consequences he had predicted had actually followed, he was too magnanimous ever to harass them by useless expostulations or vain reproofs; such as—"I told you how it would happen"—"I advised you in time"—"you would not listen to reason"—and other postliminious apothegms of the same character. No, on the contrary, he maintained a considerate and gentlemanly silence on the subject—a circumstance which saved them from the embarrassment of much self-defence, or a painful admission of their error—and not only satisfied them that Tom was honest and unselfish, but modest and forbearing. It is true, that an occasional act or solecism of manner, somewhat at variance with the conventional usages of polite society, and an odd vulgarism of expression, were slight blemishes which might be brought to his charge, and would probably have told against any one else. But it was well known that Mr. Norton admitted himself to be a Connaught gentleman, with some of the rough habits of his country, as well of manner as of phraseology, about him; and it was not to be expected that a Connemara gentleman, no matter how high his birth and connection, could at once, or at all, divest himself of these *piquant* and agreeable peculiarities.

So much for Tom, who had been for at least a couple of years previous to his present appearance fairly domesticated with his lordship, acting not only as his "guide,

philosopher, and friend," but actually as *major-domo*, or general steward of the establishment, even condescending to pay the servants, and kindly undertaking to rescue his friend, who was ignorant of business, from the disagreeable trouble of coming in contact with tradesmen, and making occasional disbursements in matters of which Lord Dunroe knew little or nothing. Tom was indeed a most invaluable friend, and his lordship considered it a very fortunate night on which they first became acquainted; for, although he lost to the tune of five hundred pounds to him in one of the most fashionable gaming-houses of London, yet, as a compensation—and more than a compensation—for that loss, he gained Tom in return.

His lordship was lying on one side in bed, with the Memoirs of —— on the pillow beside him, when Tom, who had only entered a few minutes before, on looking at the walls of the apartment, exclaimed, "What the deuce is this, my lord? Are you aware that your father will be here in a couple of hours from this time?" and he looked at his watch.

"Oh, ay; the old peer," replied his lordship, in a languid voice, "coming as a missionary to reform the profane and infidel. I wish he would let me alone, and subscribe to the Missionary Society at once."

"But, my dear Dunroe, are you asleep?"

"Very nearly, I believe. I wish I was."

"But what's to be done with certain of these pictures? You don't intend his lordship should see them, I hope?"

"No; certainly not, Tom. We must have them removed. Will you see about it, Tom, like a good fellow? Stow them, however, in some safe place, where they won't be injured."

"Those five must go," said Norton.

"No," replied his lordship, "let the Magdalen stay; it will look like a tendency to repentance, you know, and the old peer may like it."

"Dunroe, my dear fellow, you know I make no pretence to religion; but I don't relish the tone in which you generally speak of that most respectable old nobleman, your father."

"Don't you, Tom? Well, but, I say, the idea of a most respectable old nobleman is rather a shabby affair. It's merely the privilege of age, Tom. I hope I shall never live to be termed a most respectable old nobleman. Pshaw, my dear Tom, it is too much. It's a proof that he wants character."

"I wish, in the mean time, Dunroe, that you and I had as much of that same commodity as the good old peer could spare us."

"Well, I suppose you do, Tom; I dare say. My sister is coming with him too."

"Yes; so he says in the letter."

"Well, I suppose I must endure that also; an aristocratic lecture on the one hand, and the uncouth affections of a hoiden on the other. It's hard enough, though."

Tom now rang the bell, and in a few moments a servant entered.

"Wilcox," said Norton, "get Taylor and M'Intyre to assist you in removing those five pictures; place them carefully in the green closet, which you will lock."

"Yes, *carefully*, Wilcox," said his lordship; "and afterwards give the key to Mr. Norton."

"Yes, my lord."

In a few minutes the paintings were removed, and the conversation began where it had been left off.

"This double visit, Tom, will be a great bore. I wish I could avoid it—philosophized by the father, beslobbered by the sister—faugh!"

"These books, too, my lord, had better be put aside, I think."

"Well, I suppose so; lock them in that drawer."

Norton did so, and then proceeded. "Now, my dear Dunroe——"

"Tom," said his lordship, interrupting him, "I know what you are going to say—try and put yourself into something like moral trim for the old peer—is not that it? Do you know, Tom, I have some thoughts of becoming religious? What is religion, Tom? You know we were talking about it the other day. You said it was a capital thing for the world—that it sharpened a man, and put him up to anything, and so on."

"What has put such a notion into your head now, my lord?"

"I don't know—nothing, I believe. Can religion be taught, Tom? Could one, for instance, take lessons in it?"

"For what purpose do you propose it, my lord?"

"I don't know—for two or three purposes, I believe."

"Will your lordship state them?"

"Why, Tom, I should wish to *do* the old peer; and touching the baronet's daughter, who is said to be very conscientious—which I suppose means the same thing as religion—I should wish to——"

"To *do* her too," added Norton, laughing.

"Yes, I believe so; but I forget. Don't the pas'ns teach it?"

"Yes, my lord, by precept, most of them do; not so many by example."

"But it's the theory only I want. You

don't suppose I intend to practice religion, Tom, I hope?"

"No, my lord, I have a different opinion of your principles."

"Could you hire me a pas'n, to give lessons in it—say two a week—I shall require to know something of it; for, my dear Tom, you are not to be told that twelve thousand a year, and a beautiful girl, are worth making an effort for. It is true she—Miss Gourlay, I mean—is not to be spoken of in comparison with the cigar-man's daughter; but then, twelve thousand a year, Tom!—and the good old peer is threatening to curtail my allowance. Or stay, Tom, would hypocrisy do as well as religion?"

"Every bit, my lord, so far as the world goes. Indeed, in point of fact, it requires a very keen eye to discover the difference between them. For one that practises religion, there are five thousand who practise hypocrisy."

"Could I get lessons in hypocrisy? Are there men set apart to teach it? Are there, for instance, professors of hypocrisy as there are of music and dancing?"

"Not exactly, my lord; but many of the professors of religion come very nearly to the same point."

"How is that, Tom? Explain it, like a good fellow."

"Why a great number of them deal in both—that is to say, they teach the one by their doctrine, and the other by their example. In different words, they inculcate religion to others, and practise hypocrisy themselves."

"I see—that is clear. Then, Tom, as they—the pas'ns I mean—are the best judges of the matter, of course hypocrisy must be more useful than religion, or they—and such an immense majority as you say—would not practise it."

"More useful it unquestionably is, my lord."

"Well, in that case, Tom, try and find me out a good hypocrite, a sound fellow, who properly understands the subject, and I will take lessons from him. My terms will be liberal, say——"

"Unfortunately for your lordship, there are no professors to be had; but, as I said, it comes to the same thing. Engage a professor of religion, and whilst you pretend to study his doctrine, make a point also to study his life, and ten to one but you will close your studies admirably qualified to take a degree in hypocrisy, if there were such an honor, and that you wish to imitate your teacher. Either that, my lord, or it may tend to cure you of a leaning toward hypocrisy as long as you live."

"Well, I wish I could make some progress in either one or the other, it matters not which, provided it be easier to learn, and more useful. We must think about it, Tom. You will remind me, of course. Was Sir George here to-day?"

"No, my lord, but he sent to inquire."

"Nor Lord Jockeyville?"

"He drove tandem to the door, but didn't come in. The other members of our set have been tolerably regular in their inquiries, especially since they were undeceived as to the danger of your wound."

"By the way, Norton, that was a d——d cool fellow that pinked me; he did the thing in quite a self-possessed and gentlemanly way, too. However it was my own fault; I forced him into it. You must know I had reason to suppose that he was endeavoring to injure me in a certain quarter; in short, that he had made some progress in the affections of Lucy Gourlay. I saw the attentions he paid to her at Paris, when I was sent to the right about. In short—but hang it—there—that will do—let us talk no more about it—I escaped narrowly—that is all."

"And I must leave you, my lord, for I assure you I have many things to attend to. Those creditors are unreasonable scoundrels, and must be put off with soft words and hard promises for some time longer. That Irish wine-merchant of yours, however, is a model to every one of his tribe."

"Ah, that is because he knows the old peer. Do you know, Tom, after all, I don't think it so disreputable a thing to be termed a respectable old nobleman; but still it indicates want of individual character. Now, Tom, I think I have a character. I mean an original character. Don't every one almost say—I allude, of course, to every one of sense and penetration—Dunroe's a character—quite an original—an enigma—a sphinx—an inscription that cannot be deciphered—an illegible dog—eh—don't they, Tom?"

"Not a doubt of it, my lord. Even I, who ought to know you so well, can make nothing of you."

"Well, but after all, Tom, my father's name overshadows a great number of my venialities. Dunroe is wild, they say, but then he is the son of a most respectable old nobleman; and so, many of them shrug and pity, when they would otherwise assail and blame."

"And I hope to live long enough to see you a most respectable old 'character' yet, my dear Dunroe. I must go as your representative to these d——d ravenous duns. But mark me, comport yourself in your father's and sister's presence as a young man

somewhat meditating upon the reformation of his life, so that a favorable impression may be made here, and a favorable report reach the baronet's fair daughter. *Au revoir!*"

CHAPTER XX.

Interview between Lords Cullamore, Dunroe, and Lady Emily — Tom Norton's Aristocracy fails Him—His Reception by Lord Cullamore.

At the hour appointed, Lord Dunroe's father and sister arrived. The old peer, as his son usually, but not in the most reverential spirit, termed him, on entering his sleeping chamber, paused for a moment in the middle of the room, as if to ascertain his precise state of health; but his sister, Lady Emily, with all the warmth of a young and affectionate heart, pure as the morning dew-drop, ran to his bedside, and with tears in her eyes, stooped down and kissed him, exclaiming at the same time,

"My dear Dunroe; but no—I hate those cold and formal titles—they are for the world, but not for brother and sister. My dear John, how is your wound? Thank God, it is not dangerous, I hear. Are you better? Will you soon be able to rise? My dear brother, how I was alarmed on hearing it; but there is another kiss to help to cure you."

"My dear Emily, what the deuce are you about? I tell you I have a prejudice against kissing female relations. It is too tame, and somewhat of a bore, child, especially to a sick man."

His father now approached him with a grave, but by no means an unfeeling countenance, and extending his hand, said, "I fear, John, that this has been a foolish business; but I am glad to find that, so far as your personal danger was concerned, you have come off so safely. How do you find yourself?"

"Rapidly recovering, my lord, I thank you. At first they considered the thing serious; but the bullet only grazed the rib slightly, although the flesh wound was, for a time, troublesome enough. I am now, however, free from fever, and the wound is closing fast."

Whilst this brief dialogue took place, Lady Emily sat on a chair by the bedside, her large, brilliant eyes no longer filled with tears, but open with astonishment, and we may as well add with pain, at the utter indifference with which her brother received her affectionate caresses. After a few moments' reflection, however, her generous heart supposed it had discovered his apology.

"Ah," thought the sweet girl, "I had forgotten his wound, and of course I must have occasioned him great pain, which his delicacy placed to a different motive. He did not wish to let me know that I had hurt him." And her countenance again beamed with the joy of an innocent and unsuspecting spirit.

"But, Dunroe," she said—"John, I mean, won't you soon be able to get up, and to walk about, or, at all events, to take an airing with us in the carriage? Will you not, dear John?"

"Yes, I hope so, Emily. By the way, Emily, you have grown quite a woman since I saw you last. It is now better than two years, I think, since then."

"How did you like the Continent, John?"

"Why, my dear girl, how is this? What sympathy can *you* feel with the experience of a young fellow like me on the Continent? When you know the world better, my dear girl, you will feel the impropriety of asking such a question. Pray be seated, my lord."

Lord Cullamore sat, as if unconsciously, in an arm-chair beside the table on which were placed his son's dressings and medicines, and resting his head on his hand for a moment, as if suffering pain, at length raised it, and said,

"No, Dunroe; no. I trust my innocent girl will never live to *feel* the impropriety of asking a question so natural."

"I'm sure I hope not, my lord, with all my heart," replied Dunroe. "Have you been presented, Emily? Have you been brought out?"

"She has been presented," said her father, "but not brought out; nor is it my intention, in the obvious sense of that word, that she ever shall."

"Oh, your lordship perhaps has a tendency to Popery, then, and there is a convent in the background? Is that it, my good lord?" he asked, smiling.

"No," replied his father, who could not help smiling in return, "not at all, John. Emily will not require to be brought out, nor paraded through the debasing formalities of fashion. She shall not be excluded from fashion, certainly; but neither shall I suffer her to run the vulgar gauntlet of heartless dissipation, which too often hardens, debases, and corrupts. But a truce to this; the subject is painful to me; let us change it."

The last observation of Dunroe to his sister startled her so much that she blushed deeply, and looked with that fascinating timidity which is ever associated with inno-

cence and purity from her brother to her father.

"Have I said anything wrong, papa?" she asked, when Lord Cullamore had ceased to speak.

"Nothing, my love, nothing but precisely what was natural and right. Dunroe's reply, however, was neither the one nor the other, and he ought to have known it."

"Well now, Emily," said her brother, "I don't regret it, inasmuch as it has enabled me to satisfy myself upon a point which I have frequently heard disputed—that is, whether a woman is capable of blushing or not. Now I have seen you blush with my own eyes, Emily; nay, upon my honor, you blush again this moment."

"Dunroe," observed his father, "you are teasing your sister; forbear."

"But don't you see, my lord," persisted his son, "the absolute necessity for giving her a course of fashionable life, if it were only to remove this constitutional blemish. If it were discovered, she is ruined; to blush being, as your lordship knows, contrary to all the laws and statutes of fashion in that case made and provided."

"Dunroe," said his father, "I intend you shall spend part of the summer and all the autumn in Ireland, with us."

"Oh, yes, John, you must come," said his sister, clapping her snow-white hands in exultation at the thought. "It will be so delightful."

"Ireland!" exclaimed Dunroe, with well-feigned surprise; "pray where is that, my lord?"

"Come, come, John," said his father, smiling; "be serious."

"Ireland!" he again exclaimed; "oh, by the way, that's an island, I think, in the Pacific—is it not?"

"No," replied his father; "a more inappropriate position you could not have possibly found for it."

"Is not that the happy country where the people live without food? Where they lead a life of independence, and starve in such an heroic spirit?"

"My dear Dunroe," said his father, seriously, "never sport with the miseries of a people, especially when that people are your own countrymen."

"My lord," he replied, disregarding the rebuke he had received, "for Heaven's sake conceal that disgraceful fact. Remember, I am a young nobleman; call me profligate—spendthrift—debauchee—anything you will but an Irishman. Don't the Irish refuse beef and mutton, and take to eating each other? What can be said of a people who, to please their betters, practise starvation as their natural pastime, and dramatize hunger to pamper their most affectionate lords and masters, who, whilst the latter witness the comedy, make the performers pay for their tickets? And yet, although the cannibal system flourishes, I fear they find it anything but a *Sandwich* island."

"Papa," said Lady Emily, in a whisper, and with tears in her eyes, "I fear John's head is a little unsettled by his illness."

"You will injure yourself, my dear Dunroe," said his father, "if you talk so much."

"Not at all, my good lord and father. But I think I recollect one of their bills of performance, which runs thus: "On Saturday, the 25th inst., a tender and affectionate father, stuffed by so many cubic feet of cold wind, foul air, all resulting from extermination and the benevolence of a humane landlord, will in the very wantonness of repletion, feed upon the dead body of his own child—for which entertaining performance he will have the satisfaction, subsequently, of enacting with success the interesting character of a felon, and be comfortably lodged at his Majesty's expense in the jail of the county.'* Why, my lord, how could you expect me to acknowledge such a country? However, I must talk to Tom Norton about this. He was born in the country you speak of—and yet Tom has an excellent appetite; eats like other people; abhors starvation; and is no cannibal. It is true, I have frequently seen him ready enough to eat a fellow—a perfect raw-head-and-bloody-bones—for which reason, I suppose, the principle, or instinct, or whatever you call it, is still latent in his constitution. But, on the other hand, whenever Tom gnashed his teeth at any one *à la cannibale*, if the other gnashed his teeth at him, all the cannibal disappeared, and Tom was quite harmless."

"By the way, Dunroe," said his father, "who is this Tom Norton you speak of?"

"He is my most particular friend, my lord—my companion—and traveled with me over the Continent. He is kind enough to take charge of my affairs: he pays my servants, manages my tradesmen—and, in short, is a man whom I could not do without. He's up to everything; and is altogether indispensable to me."

Lord Cullamore paused for some time, and seemed for a moment absorbed in some painful reflection or reminiscence. At length he said,

"This man, Dunroe, must be very useful to you, if he be what you have just described

* This alludes to a dreadful fact of cannibalism, which occurred in the South of Ireland in 1846.

him. Does he also manage your correspondence?"

"He does, my lord; and is possessed of my most unlimited confidence. In fact, I could never get on without him. My affairs are in a state of the most inextricable confusion, and were it not for his sagacity and prudence, I could scarcely contrive to live at all. Poor Tom; he abandoned fine prospects in order to devote himself to my service."

"Such a friend must be invaluable, John," observed his sister. "They say a friend, a true friend, is the rarest thing in the world; and when one meets such a friend, they ought to appreciate him."

"Very true, Emily," said the Earl; "very true, indeed." He spoke, however, as if in a state of abstraction. "Norton!—Norton. Do you know, John, who he is? Anything of his origin or connections?"

"Nothing whatever," replied Dunroe; "unless that he is well connected—he told me so himself—too well, indeed, he hinted, to render the situation of a dependent one which he should wish his relatives to become acquainted with. Of course, I respected his delicacy, and did not, consequently, press him further upon the point."

"That was considerate on your part," replied the Earl, somewhat dryly; "but if he be such as you have described him, I agree with Emily in thinking he must be invaluable. And now, John, with respect to another affair—but perhaps this interview may be injurious to your health. Talking much, and the excitement attending it, may be bad, you know."

"I am not easily excited, my lord," replied Dunroe; "rather a cool fellow; unless, indeed, when I used to have duns to meet. But now Norton manages all that for me. Proceed, my lord."

"Yes, but, John," observed Lady Emily, "don't let affection for papa and me allow you to go beyond your strength."

"Never mind, Emily; I am all right, if this wound were healed, as it will soon be. Proceed, my lord."

"Well, then, my dear Dunroe, I am anxious you should know that I have had a long conversation with Sir Thomas Gourlay, upon the subject of your marriage with his beautiful and accomplished daughter."

"Yes, the Black Baronet; a confounded old scoundrel by all accounts."

"You forget, sir," said the Earl, sternly, "that he is father to your future wife."

"Devilish sorry for it, my lord. I wish Lucy was daughter to any one else—but it matters not; I am not going to marry the black fellow, but twelve thousand a year and a pretty girl. I know a prettier, though."

"Impossible, John," replied Lady Emily, with enthusiasm. "I really think Lucy Gourlay the most lovely girl I have ever seen—the most amiable, the most dignified, the most accomplished, the most—dear John, how happy I shall be to call her sister!"

"Dunroe," proceeded his father, "I beg you consider this affair seriously—solemnly—the happiness of such a girl as Lucy Gourlay is neither to be sported with nor perilled. You will have much to reform before you can become worthy of her. I now tell you that the reformation must be effected, sincerely and thoroughly, before I shall ever give my consent to your union with her. There must be neither dissimulation nor hypocrisy on your part. Your conduct must speak for you, and I must, from the clearest evidence, be perfectly satisfied that in marrying you she is not wrecking her peace and happiness, by committing them to a man who is incapable of appreciating her, or who is insensible to what is due to her great and shining virtues."

"It would be dreadful, John," said his sister, "if she should not feel happy. But if John, papa, requires reformation, I am sure he will reform for Lucy's sake."

"He ought to reform from a much higher principle, my dear child," replied her father.

"And so he will, papa. Will you not, dear brother?"

"Upon my honor, my lord," said Dunroe, "I had a conversation this very morning upon the subject with Tom Norton."

"I am glad to hear it, my dear son. It is not too late—it is never too late—to amend the life; but in this instance there is an event about to take place which renders a previous reformation, in its truest sense, absolutely indispensable."

"My lord," he replied, "the truth is, I am determined to try a course of religion. Tom Norton tells me it is the best thing in the world to get through life with."

"Tom Norton might have added that it is a much better thing to get through death with," added the Earl, gravely.

"But he appears to understand it admirably, my lord," replied Dunroe. "He says it quickens a man's intellects, and not only prevents him from being imposed upon by knaves and sharpers, but enables him, by putting on a long face, and using certain cabalistic phrases, to overreach—no, not exactly that, but to—let me see, to steer a safe course through the world; or something to that effect. He says, too, that religious folks always come best off, and pay more attention to the things of this life, than any one else; and that, in consequence, they thrive and prosper under it. No one, he says, gets

credit so freely as a man that is supposed to be religious. Now this struck me quite forcibly, as a thing that might be very useful to me in getting out of my embarrassments. But then, it would be necessary to go to church, I believe—to pray—sing psalms—read the Bible—and subscribe to societies of some kind or other. Now all that would be very troublesome. How does a person pray, my lord? Is it by repeating the Ten Commandments, or reading a religious book?"

Despite the seriousness of such a subject, Lord Cullamore and his daughter, on glancing at each other, could scarcely refrain from smiling.

"Now, I can't see," proceeded Dunroe, "how either the one or the other of the said commandments would sharpen a man for the world, as Tom Norton's religion does."

The good old Earl thought either that his son was affecting an ignorance on the subject which he did not feel, or that his ignorance was in reality so great that for the present, at least, it was useless to discuss the matter with him.

"I must say, my dear Dunroe," he added, in a kind and indulgent voice, "that your first conceptions of reformation are very original, to say the least of them."

"I grant it, my lord. Every one knows that all my views, acts, and expressions are original. 'Dunroe's a perfect original' is the general expression among my friends. But on the subject of religion, I am willing to be put into training. I told Tom Norton to look out and hire me a pas'n, or somebody, to give me lessons in it. Is there such a thing, by the way, as a Religious Grammar? If so, I shall provide one, and make myself master of all the rules, cases, inflections, interjections, groans, exclamations, and so on, connected with it. The Bible is the dictionary, I believe?"

Poor Lady Emily, like her father, could not for the life of her suppose for a moment that her brother was serious: a reflection that relieved her from much anxiety of mind and embarrassment on his account.

"Papa," said she, whilst her beautiful features were divided, if we may so say, between smiles and tears, "papa, Dunroe is only jesting; I am sure he is only jesting, and does not mean any serious disrespect to religion."

"That may be, my dear Emily; but he will allow me to tell him that it is the last subject upon which he, or any one else, should jest. Whether you are in jest or earnest, my dear Dunroe, let me advise you to bring the moral courage and energies of a man to the contemplation of your life, in the first place; and in the next, to its improvement. It is not reading the Bible, nor repeating prayers, that will, of themselves, make you religious, unless the heart is in earnest; but a correct knowledge of what is right and wrong—in other words, of human duty—will do much good in the first place; with a firm resolution to avoid the evil and adopt the good. Remember that you are accountable to the Being who placed you in this life, and that your duty here consists, not in the indulgence of wild and licentious passions, but in the higher and nobler ones of rendering as many of your fellow-creatures happy as you can: for such a course will necessarily insure happiness to yourself. This is enough for the present; as soon as you recover your strength you shall come to Ireland."

"When I recover my strength!" he exclaimed. "Ay, to be eaten like a titbit. Heavens, what a delicious morsel a piece of a young peer would be to such fellows! but I will not run that horrible risk. Lucy must come to me—I am sure the prospect of a countess's coronet ought to be a sufficient inducement to her. But, to think that I should run the risk of being shot from behind a hedge—made a component part of a midnight bonfire, or entombed in the bowels of some Patagonian cannibal, savagely glad to feed upon the hated Saxon who has so often fed upon him!—No, I repeat, Lucy, if she is to be a countess, must travel in this direction."

The indelicacy and want of all consideration for the feelings of his father, so obvious in his heartless allusion to a fact which could only result from that father's death, satisfied the old man that any reformation in his son was for the present hopeless, and even Lady Emily felt anxious to put an end to the visit as soon as possible.

"By the way," said his father, as they were taking their leave, "I have had an unpleasant letter from my brother, in which he states that he wrote to you, but got no answer."

"I never received a letter from him," replied his lordship; "none ever reached me; if it had, the very novelty of a communication from such a quarter would have prevented me from forgetting it."

"I should think so. His letter to me, indeed, is a strange one. He utters enigmatical threats——"

"Come, I like that—I am enigmatical myself—you see it is in the family."

"Enigmatical threats which I cannot understand, and desires me to hold myself prepared for certain steps which he is about to take, in justice to what he is pleased to

term his own claims. However, it is not worth notice. But this Norton, I am anxious to see him, Dunroe—will you request him to call upon me to-morrow at twelve o'clock?—of course, I feel desirous to make the acquaintance of a man who has proved himself such a warm and sterling friend to my son."

"Undoubtedly, my lord, he shall attend on you—I shall take care of that. Good-by, my lord—good by, Emily—good—good—my dear girl, never mind the embrace—it is quite undignified—anything but a patrician usage, I assure you."

Now it is necessary that we should give our readers a clearer conception of Lord Dunroe's character than is to be found in the preceding dialogue. This young gentleman was one of those who wish to put every person who enters into conversation with them completely at fault. It was one of his whims to affect ignorance on many subjects with which he was very well acquainted. His ambition was to be considered a character; and in order to carry this idea out, he very frequently spoke on the most commonplace topics as a man might be supposed to do who had just dropped from the moon. He thought, also, that there was something aristocratic in this fictitious ignorance, and that it raised him above the common herd of those who could talk reasonably on the ordinary topics of conversation or life. His ambition, the reader sees, was to be considered original. It had besides, this advantage, that in matters where his ignorance is anything but feigned, it brought him out safely under the protection of his accustomed habit, without suffering from the imputation of the ignorance he affected. It was, indeed, the ambition of a vain and silly mind; but provided he could work out this paltry joke upon a grave and sensible though unsuspecting individual, he felt quite delighted at the feat, and took the person thus imposed upon into the number of his favorites. It was upon this principle among others that Norton, who pretended never to see through his flimsy irony, contrived to keep in his favor, and to shape him according to his wishes, whilst he made the weak-minded young man believe that everything he did and every step he took was the result of his own deliberate opinion, whereas in fact he was only a puppet in his hands.

His father, who was naturally kind and indulgent, felt deeply grieved and mortified by the reflections arising from this visit. During the remainder of the day he seemed wrapped in thought; but we do not attempt to assert that the dialogue with his son was the sole cause of this. He more than once took out his brother's letter which he read with surprise, not unmingled with strong curiosity and pain. It was, as he said, extremely enigmatical, whilst at the same time it contained evidences of that deplorable spirit which almost uniformly embitters so deeply the feuds which arise from domestic misconceptions. On this point, however, we shall enable the reader to judge for himself. The letter was to the following effect:

"My Lord Cullamore.—It is now nine months and upwards since I addressed a letter to your son; and I wrote to him in preference to you, because it had been for many years my intention never to have renewed or held any communication whatsoever with you. It was on this account, therefore, that I opened, or endeavored to open, a correspondence with him rather than with his father. In this I have been disappointed, and my object, which was not an unfriendly one, frustrated. I do not regret, however, that I have been treated with contempt. The fact cancelled the foolish indulgence with which an exhibition of common courtesy and politeness, if not a better feeling, on the part of your son, might have induced me to treat both you and him. As matters now stand between us, indulgence is out of the question; so is compromise. I shall now lose little time in urging claims which you will not be able to withstand. Whether you suspect the nature of these claims or not is more than I know. Be that, however, as it may, I can assure you that I had resolved not to disturb your last days by prosecuting them during your lifetime. That resolution I have now rescinded, and all that remains for me to say is, that as little time as possible shall be lost in enforcing the claims I allude to, in justice to my family.

"I am, my Lord Cullamore,

"Your obedient servant,

"Richard Stapleton."

This strange and startling communication caused the good old man much uneasiness, even although its object and purpose were altogether beyond his comprehension. The only solution that occurred to him of the mystery which ran through it, was that it must have been written under some misconception or delusion for which he could not account. Another key to the difficulty—one equally replete with distress and alarm—was that his brother's reason had probably become unsettled, and that the communication in question was merely the emanation of mental alienation. And, indeed, on this point only could he account for the mis-

carriage of the letter to his son, which probably had never been written at all, and existed only in the disturbed imagination of his unfortunate brother.

At all events, the contents of this document, like those mysterious presentiments of evil which sometimes are said to precede calamity, hung like a weight upon his mind, view them as he might. He became nervous, depressed, and gloomy, pleaded illness as an apology for not dining abroad; remained alone and at home during the whole evening, but arose the next morning in better spirits, and when our friend Tom Norton presented himself, he had regained sufficient equanimity and composure to pay proper attention to that faithful and friendly gentleman.

Now Tom, who resolved to make an impression, as it is termed, was dressed in the newest and most fashionable morning visit costume, drove up to the hall-door at that kind of breakneck pace with which your celebrated whips delight to astonish the multitude, and throwing the reins to a servant, desired, if he knew how to pace the horse up and down, to do so; otherwise to remember that he had a neck.

The servant in question, a stout, compact fellow, with a rich Milesian face and a mellow brogue, looked at him with a steady but smiling eye.

"Have a neck, is it?" he exclaimed; "by my sowl, an' it's sometimes an inconvenience to have that same. My own opinion is, sir, that the neck now is jist one of the tenderest joints in the body."

Norton looked at him for a moment with an offended and haughty stare.

"If you are incapable of driving the landau, sir," he replied, "call some one who can; and don't be impertinent."

"Incapable," replied the other, with a cool but humorous kind of gravity; "troth, then it's disgrace I'd bring on my taicher if I couldn't sit a saddle an' handle a whip with the best o' them. And wid regard to the neck, sir, many a man has escaped a worse fall than one from the box or the saddle."

Norton drew himself up with a highly indignant scowl, and turning his frown once more upon this most impertinent menial, encountered a look of such comic familiarity, easy assurance, and droll indifference, as it would not be easy to match. The beau started, stared, again pulled himself to a still greater height—as if by the dignity of the attitude to set the other at fault—frowned more awfully, then looked bluster, and once more surveyed the broad, knowing face and significant laughing eyes that were fixed upon him—set, as they were, in the centre of a broad grin—after which he pulled up his collar with an air—taking two or three strides up and down with what he intended as aristocratic dignity—

"Hem! ahem! What do you mean, sir?"

To this, for a time, there was no reply; but there, instead, were the laughing fascinators at work, fixed not only upon him, but in him, piercing him through; the knowing grin still increasing and gathering force of expression by his own confusion.

"Curse me, sir, I don't understand this insolence. What do you mean? Do you know who it is you treat in this manner?"

Again he stretched himself, pulled up his collar as before, displaying a rich diamond ring, then taking out a valuable gold watch, glanced at the time, and putting it in his fob, looked enormously big and haughty, exclaiming again, with a frown that was intended to be a stunner—after again pacing up and down with the genuine tone and carriage of true nobility—

"I say, sir, do you know the gentleman whom you are treating with such impertinence? Perhaps you mistake me, on account of a supposed resemblance, for some former acquaintance of yours. If, so, correct yourself; I have never seen you till this moment."

There, however, was the grin, and there were the eyes as before, to which we must add a small bit of pantomime on the part of Morty O'Flaherty, for such was the servant's name, which bit of pantomime consisted in his (Morty's) laying his forefinger very knowingly alongside his nose, exclaiming, in a cautious and friendly voice however,

"Barney, achora, don't be alarmed; there's no harm done yet. You're safe if you behave yourself."

"What!" said Norton. "By the bones of St. Patrick but you are Morty O'Flaherty! Confound it, my dear Morty, why didn't you make yourself known at once? it would have relieved both of us."

"*One* of us, you mane," replied Morty, with a wink.

"Upon my soul I am glad to see you, Morty. And how are you, man alive? In a snug berth here, I see, with the father of my friend, Lord Dunroe."

"Ha!" exclaimed Morty, shrewdly; "is that it? Your *friend;* Oh, I see. Nate as ever, like a clane sixpence. Well, Barney, the world will have its way."

"Ay, Morty, and we must comply with it. Some it brings up, and others it brings down."

"Whisht, now, Barney," said Morty; "let by-gones be by-gones. That it didn't bring

you *up*, be thankful to a gracious Providence and a light pair o' heels; that's all. And what are you now?"

"No longer Barney Bryan, at any rate," replied the other. "My name, at present, is Norton."

"*At present!* Upon my sowl, Barney, so far as names goes, you're a walkin' catalogue."

"Thomas Norton, Esquire; residing with that distinguished young nobleman, Lord Dunroe, as his bosom friend and inseparable companion."

"Hem! I see," said Morty, with a shrug, which he meant as one of compassion for the aforesaid Lord Dunroe; "son to my masther. Well, God pity him, Barney, is the worst I wish him. You will take care of him; you'll tache him a thing or two—and that's enough. But, Barney——"

"Curse Barney—Mr. Norton's the word."

"Well, Mr. Norton—ah, Mr. Norton, there's one person you'll *not* neglect."

"Who is that, Morty?"

"Faith, your mother's son, achora. However, you know the proverb—'A burnt child dreads the fire.' You have a *neck* still, Barney—beg pardon, Mr. Norton—don't forget *that* fact."

"And I'll take care of the said neck, believe me, Morty; I shall keep it safe, never fear."

"Take care you don't keep it a little *too* safe. A word to the wise is enough, Bar—Mr. Norton."

"It is, Morty; and I trust you will remember that *that* is to be a regulation between us. 'A close mouth is the sign of a wise head,' too; and there's a comrade for your proverb—but we are talking too long. Listen; keep my secret, and I will make it worth your while to do so. You may ruin me, without serving yourself; but as a proof that you will find me your friend, I will slip you five guineas, as a recompense, you know, for taking care of the landau and horses. In short, if we work into each other's hands it will be the better for us both."

"I'll keep your saicret," replied honest Morty, "so long, Barney—hem! Mr. Norton—as you keep yourself honest; but I'll dirty my hands wid none o' your money. If I was willin' to betray you, it's not a bribe would prevent me."

Mr. Norton, in a few moments, was ushered into the presence of Lord Cullamore.

On entering the apartment, the old nobleman, with easy and native courtesy, rose up, and received him with every mark of attention and respect.

"I am happy, Mr. Norton," he proceeded, "to have it in my power to thank you for the friendship and kindness which my son, Lord Dunroe, has been so fortunate as to receive at your hands. He speaks of you with such warmth, and in terms of such high esteem, that I felt naturally anxious to make your acquaintance, as his friend. Pray be seated."

Norton, who was a quick and ready fellow, in more senses than one, bowed lowly, and with every mark of the deepest respect; but, at the same time, he certainly started upon a high and a rather hazardous theory—to wit, that of a man of consequence, who wished to be considered with respect to Dunroe rather as a patron than a dependent.

The fellow, we should have stated to the reader, was originally from Kerry, though he adopted Connaught, and consequently had a tolerable acquaintance with Latin and Greek—an acquisition which often stood him in stead through life; joined to which was an assurance that nothing short of a scrutiny such as Morty O'Flaherty's could conquer.

"I assure you, my lord," he replied, "you quite overrate any trifling services I may have rendered to my friend Dunroe. Upon my soul and honor you do. I have done nothing for him—that is, nothing to speak of. But the truth is, I took a fancy to Dunroe; and I do assure you again, Lord Cullamore, that when I do take a fancy to any person—a rare case with me, I grant—I would go any possible lengths to serve him. Every man has his whim, my lord, and that is mine. I hope your lordship had a pleasant trip across Channel?"

"Yes, thank you, Mr. Norton; but I have been for some time past in delicate health, and am not now so capable of bearing the trip as formerly. Still I feel no reason to complain, although far from strong. Dunroe, I perceive, is reduced considerably by his wound and the consequent confinement."

"Oh, naturally, of course, my lord; but a few days now will set him upon his legs."

"That, it seems to me, Mr. Norton, was a very foolish and unpleasant affair altogether."

"Nothing could be more so, my lord. It was altogether wrong on the part of Dunroe; and so I told him."

"Could you not have prevented it, Mr. Norton?"

"Ha, ha, ha! very good, Lord Cullamore. Ask me could I prevent or check a flash of lightning. Upon my soul and honor, the thing was over, and my poor friend down, before you could say Jack Robinson—hem! —as we say in Connaught."

"You have travelled, too, with my son, Mr. Norton, and he is perfectly sensible of the services you have rendered him during his tour."

"God forbid, my Lord Cullamore, that I should assume any superiority over poor, kind-hearted, and honorable Dunroe; but as you are his father, my lord, I may—and with pride and satisfaction I do it—put the matter on its proper footing, and say, that Dunroe travelled *with me*. The thing is neither here nor there, of course, nor would I ever allude to it unless as a proof of my regard and affection for him."

"That only enhances your kindness, Mr. Norton."

"Why, my lord, I met Dunroe in Paris—no matter, I took him out of some difficulties, and prevented him from getting into more. He had been *set* by a clique of—but I will not dwell on this, it looks like egotism—I said before, I took a fancy to him—for it frequently happens, my good lord, that you take a fancy to the person you have served."

"True enough, indeed, Mr. Norton."

"I am fond of travelling, and was about to make my fourth or fifth tour, when I met your son, surrounded by a crew of—but I have alluded to this a moment ago. At all events, I saw his danger—a young man exposed to temptation—the most alluring and perilous. Well, my lord, mine was a name of some weight and authority, affording just the kind of countenance and protection your son required. Well, I travelled with him, guarded him, guided him, for as to any inconvenience I may myself have experienced in taking him by the most comprehensive routes, and some other matters, they are not worth naming. Of course I introduced him to some of the most distinguished men of France—to the Marquis De Fogleville, for instance, the Count Rascallion, Baron Snottellin, and some others of the first rank and nobility of the country. The pleasure of his society, however, more than compensated me for all."

"But, pardon me, Mr. Norton, I believe the title and family of De Fogleville have been extinct. The last of them was guillotined not long since for an attempt to steal the crown jewels of France, I think."

"True, my lord, you are perfectly right, the unhappy man was an insane legitimist; but the title and estates have been revived in the person of another member of the family, the present marquis, who is a nobleman of high consideration and honor."

"Oh, indeed! I was not aware of that, Mr. Norton," said his lordship. "I am quite surprised at the extent of your generosity and goodness to my son."

"But, my lord, it is not my intention to give up Dunroe or abandon the poor fellow yet awhile. I am determined to teach him economy in managing his affairs, to make him know the value of time, of money, and of system, in everything pertaining to life and business. Nor do I regret what I have done, nor what I propose to do; far from it, my lord. All I ask is, that he will always look upon me as a friend or an elder brother, and consult me, confide in me, and come to me, in fact, or write to me, whenever he may think I can be of service to him."

"And in his name, of course, I may at least thank you, Mr. Norton," replied the Earl, with a slight irony in his manner, "not only for all you *have* done, but for all you *propose* to do, as you say."

Norton shook his head peremptorily. "Pardon me, my lord, no thanks. I am overpaid by the pleasure of ranking Dunroe among the number of my friends."

"You are too kind, indeed, Mr. Norton; and I trust my son will be duly grateful, as he is duly sensible of all you have done for him. By the way, Mr. Norton, you alluded to Connaught. You are, I presume, an Irishman?"

"I am an Irishman, my lord."

"Of course, sir, I make no inquiry as to your individual family. I am sure from what I have seen of you they must have been, and are, persons of worth and consideration; but I wished to ask if the name be a numerous one in Ireland, or rather, in your part of it—Connaught?"

"Numerous, my lord, no, not very numerous, but of the first respectability."

"Pray, is your father living, Mr. Norton? If he be, why don't you bring him among us? And if you have any brother, I need scarcely say what pleasure it would afford me, having, as you are aware, I presume, some influence with ministers, to do anything I could for him, should he require it; probably in the shape of a foreign appointment, or something that way. Anything, Mr. Norton, to repay a portion of what is due to you by my family."

"I thank your lordship," replied Tom. "My poor father was, as too many other Irish gentlemen have been, what is termed *a hard goer* (the honest man was a horse jockey like myself, thought Tom)—and indeed *ran through* a great deal of property during the latter part of his life (when he was huntsman to Lord Rattlecap, he went through many an estate)."

"Well, but your brother?"

"Deeply indebted, my lord, but I have no brother living. Poor Edward *did* get *a foreign appointment* many years ago (he was transported for horse stealing), by the influence of one of the most eminent of our judges, who strongly *advised* him to accept it, and returned his name to government as a worthy and suitable candidate. He died

there, my lord, in the discharge of his appointed duties. Poor Ned, however, was never fond of public business under government, and, indeed, accepted the appointment in question with great reluctance."

"The reason why I made these inquiries about the name of Norton," said Lord Cullamore, "is this. There was, several years ago, a respectable female of the name, who held a confidential situation in my family; I have long lost sight of her, however, and would be glad to know whether she is living or dead."

("My sister-in-law," thought Tom.) "I fear," he replied, "I can render you no information on that point, my lord; the last female branch of our part of the family was my grandmother, who died about three years ago."

At this moment a servant entered the apartment, bearing in his hand a letter, for which office he had received a bribe of half-a-crown. "I beg pardon, my lord, but there's a woman at the hall-door, who wishes this letter to be handed to that gentleman; but I fear there's some mistake," he added, "it is directed to Barney Bryan. She insists he is here, and that she saw him come into the house."

"Barney Bryan," said Tom, with great coolness; "show me the letter, for I think I know something about it. Yes, I am right. It is an insane woman, my lord, wife to a jockey of mine, who broke his neck riding my celebrated horse, Black and all Black, on the Curragh. The poor creature cannot believe that her husband is dead, and thinks that I enjoy that agreeable privilege. The circumstance, indeed, was a melancholy one; but I have supported her ever since."

Morty O'Flaherty, who had transferred his charge to other hands, fearing that Mister Norton might get into trouble, now came to the rescue.

"Pray," said Tom, quick as lightning, "is that insane creature below still, a poor woman whose husband broke his neck riding a race for me on the Curragh, and she thinks that I stand to her in that capacity?"

"Oh, yes; she says," added the man who brought the letter, "that this gentleman's name is not Norton, but Bryan—Barney Bryan, I think—and that he is her husband, exactly as the gentleman says."

"Just so, my lord," said Tom, smiling; "poor thing! what a melancholy delusion."

"I was present at the accident, Mr. Norton," added Morty, boldly, "and remember the circumstance, in throth, very well. Didn't the poor woman lose her senses by it?"

"Yes," replied Tom, "I have just mentioned the circumstance to his lordship."

"And—beg pardon, Mr. Norton—doesn't she take you for her husband from that day to this?"

"Yes, so I have said."

"Oh, God help her, poor thing! Isn't she to be pitied?" added Morty, with a dry roguish glance at Mr. Norton; "throth, she has a hard fate of it. Howaniver, she is gone. I got her off, an' now the place is clear of the unfortunate creature. The lord look to her!"

The servants then withdrew, and Norton made his parting bow to Lord Cullamore, whom we now leave to his meditations on the subject of this interview.

CHAPTER XXI.

A Spy Rewarded—Sir Thomas Gourlay Charged Home by the Stranger with the Removal and Disappearance of his Brother's Son.

We left the Black Baronet in a frame of mind by no means to be envied by our readers. The disappearance of his daughter and her maid had stunned and so completely prostrated him, that he had not sufficient energy even for a burst of his usual dark and overbearing resentment. In this state of mind, however, he was better able to reflect upon the distressing occurrence that had happened. He bethought him of Lucy's delicacy, of her sense of honor, her uniform propriety of conduct, her singular self-respect, and after all, of the complacent spirit of obedience with which, in everything but her contemplated union with Lord Dunroe, she had, during her whole life, and under the most trying circumstances, accommodated herself to his wishes. He then reflected upon the fact of her maid having accompanied her, and concluded, very naturally, that if she had resolved to elope with this hateful stranger, she would have done so in pursuance of the precedent set by most young ladies who take such steps—that is, unaccompanied by any one but her lover. From this view of the case he gathered comfort, and was beginning to feel his mind somewhat more at ease, when a servant entered to say that Mr. Crackenfudge requested to see him on particular business.

"He has come to annoy me about that confounded magistracy, I suppose," exclaimed the baronet. "Have you any notion what the worthless scoundrel wants, Gibson?"

"Not the least, your honor, but he seems brimful of something."

"Ay, brimful of ignorance, and of imper-

tinence, too, if he durst show it; yes, and of as much pride and oppression as could well be contained in a miserable carcass like his. As he is a sneaking, vigilant rascal, however, and has a great deal of the spy in his composition, it is not impossible that he may be able to give me some information touching the disappearance of Miss Gourlay."

Gibson, after making his bow, withdrew, and the redoubtable Crackenfudge was ushered into the presence of the baronet.

The first thing the former did was to survey the countenance of his patron, for as such he wished to consider him and to find him. There, then, Sir Thomas sat, stern but indifferent, with precisely the expression of a tiger lying gloomily in his den, the natural ferocity "in grim repose" for the time, but evidently ready to blaze up at anything that might disturb or provoke him. Had Crackenfudge been gifted with either tact or experience, or any enlarged knowledge of the human heart, especially of the deep, dark, and impetuous one that beat in the bosom then before him, he would have studied the best and least alarming manner of conveying intelligence calculated to produce such terrific effects upon a man like Sir Thomas Gourlay. Of this, however, he knew nothing, although his own intercourse with him might have well taught him the necessary lesson.

"Well, Mr. Crackenfudge," said the latter, without moving, "what's wrong now? What's the news?"

"There's nothing wrong, Sir Thomas, and a've good news."

The baronet's eye and brow lost some of their gloom; he arose and commenced, as was his custom, to walk across the room.

"Pray what is this good news, Mr. Crackenfudge? Will you be kind enough, without any unnecessary circumlocution, to favor your friends with it?"

"With pleasure, Sir Thomas, because a' know you are anxious to hear it, and it deeply concerns you."

Sir Thomas paused, turned round, looked at him for a moment with an impatient scowl; but in the meaningless and simpering face before him he could read nothing but what appeared to him to be an impudent chuckle of satisfaction; and this, indeed, was no more than what Crackenfudge felt, who had altogether forgotten the nature of the communication he was about to make, dreadful and disastrous as it was, and thought only of the claim upon Sir Thomas's influence which he was about to establish with reference to the magistracy. It was the reflection, then, of this train of little ambition which Sir Thomas read in his countenance, and mistook for some communication that might relieve him, and set his mind probably at ease. The scowl we allude to accordingly disappeared, and Sir Thomas, after the glance we have recorded, said, checking himself into a milder and more encouraging tone:

"Go on, Mr. Crackenfudge, let us hear it at once."

"Well, then, Sir Thomas, a' told you a'd keep my eye on that chap."

"On whom? name him, sir."

"A' can't, Sir Thomas; the fellow in the inn."

"Oh! what about *him?*"

"Why he has taken her off.

"Taken whom off?" shouted the baronet, in a voice of thunder. "You contemptible scoundrel, whom has he taken off?"

"Your daughter, Sir Thomas—Miss Gourlay. They went together in the 'Fly' on Tuesday night last to Dublin; a' followed in the 'Flash of Lightning,' and seen them in conversation. Dandy Dulcimer, who is your friend——For God's sake, Sir Thomas, be quiet. You'll shake me—a-a-ach—Sir—Thom-a-as—w-wi-will you not take my—my—li-life——"

"You lie like a villain, you most contemptible reptile," shouted the other. "My daughter, sirrah, never eloped with an adventurer. She never eloped at all, sir. She durst not elope. She knows what my vengeance would be, sirrah. She knows, you lying whelp of perdition, that I would pursue herself and her paramour to the uttermost ends of the earth; that I would shoot them both dead—that I would trample upon and spurn their worthless carcasses, and make an example of them to all time, and through all eternity. And you—you prying, intermeddling scoundrel—how durst you—you petty, beggarly tyrant—hated and despised by poor and rich—was it to mock me——"

"Sir Thom-a-as, a'm—a'm—I—I—a ach—ur-ur-ur-mur-murd-murd-er-er-err-errr."

"Was it to jeer and sneer at me—to insult me—you miserable knave—to drive me mad—into raging frenzy—that you came, with a smirk of satisfaction on your face, to communicate the disgrace and dishonor of my family—the ruin of my hopes—the frustration of my ambition—of all I had set my heart on, and that I perilled my soul to accomplish? Yes, you villain, your eye was smiling—elate—your heart was glad—for, sirrah, you hate me at heart."

"God! oh, oh! a'm—a'm—ur-urr-urrr—whee-ee-ee-hee-hee-hee. God ha-ha-ha-have mer-mer-mercy on my sinf-sinfu-l sou-so-soul! a'm gone."

"Yes, you hate me, villain, and this is a triumph to you; every one hates me, and every one will rejoice at my shame. I know it, you accursed miscreant, I feel it; and in return I hate, with more than the malignity of the devil, every human creature that God has made. I have been at enmity with them, and in that enmity I shall persist; deep and dark as hell shall it be, and unrelenting as the vengeance of a devil. There," he added, throwing the almost senseless body of Crackenfudge over on a sofa, "there, you may rest on that sofa, and get breath; get breath quickly, and mark, obey me."

"Yes, Sir Thomas, a'will; a'll do anything, provided that you'll let me escape with my life. God! a'm nearly dead, the fire's not out of my eyes yet."

"Silence, you wretched slave!" shouted the baronet, stamping with rage; "not another word of complaint, but listen to me—listen to me, I say: go on, and let me hear, fully and at large, the withering history of this burning and most flagitious disgrace."

"But if a' do, you'll only beat and throttle me to death, Sir Thomas."

"Whether I may or may not do so, go on, villain, and—go on, that quickly, or by heavens I shall tear the venomous heart from your body, and trample the black intelligence out of it. Proceed instantly."

With a face of such distress as our readers may well imagine, and a voice whose quavers of terror were in admirable accordance with it, the unfortunate Crackenfudge related the circumstance of Lucy's visit to Dublin, as *he* considered it, and, in fact, so far as he was acquainted with her motions, as it appeared to him *a decided elopement*, without the possibility of entertaining either doubt or mistake about it.

In the meantime, how shall we describe the savage fury of the baronet, as the trembling wretch proceeded? It is impossible. His rage, the vehemence of his gestures, the spasms that seemed to seize sometimes upon his features and sometimes upon his limbs, as well as upon different parts of his body, transformed him into the appearance of something that was unnatural and frightful. He bit his lips in the effort to restrain these tremendous paroxysms, until the bloody foam fell in red flakes from his mouth, and as portions of it were carried by the violence of his gesticulations over several parts of his face, he had more the appearance of some bloody-fanged ghoul, reeking from the spoil of a midnight grave, than that of a human being.

"Now," said he, "how did it happen that—brainless, worthless, and beneath all contempt, as you are, most execrable scoundrel—you suffered that adroit ruffian, Dulcimer—whom I shall punish, never fear—how came it, you despicable libel on nature and common sense—that you allowed him to humbug you to your face, to laugh at you, to scorn you, to spit upon you, to poke your ribs, as if you were an idiot, as you are, and to kick you, as it were, in every imaginable part of your worthless carcass—how did it come, I say, that you did not watch them properly, that you did not get them immediately arrested, as you ought to have done, or that you did not do more than would merely enable you to chronicle my disgrace and misery?"

"A' did all a' could, Sir Thomas. A' searched through all Dublin for her without success; but as to where he has her, a' can't guess. The first thing a' did, after takin' a sleep, was to come an' tell you to-day; for a' travelled home by last night's coach. You ought to do something, Sir Thomas, for every one has it now. It's through all Ballytrain. 'Deed a' pity you, Sir Thomas."

Now this unfortunate being took it for granted that the last brief silence of the baronet resulted from some reasonable attention to what he (Crackenfudge) had been saying, whereas the fact was, that his terrible auditor had been transfixed into the highest and most uncontrollable fit of indignation by the substance of his words.

"What!" said he, in a voice that made Crackenfudge leap at least a foot from the sofa. "*You* pity me, do you!—*you*, you diabolical eavesdropper, you pity *me*! Sacred heaven! And again, you searched through all Dublin for *my* daughter!—carrying her disgrace and infamy wherever you appeared, and advertising them as you went along, like an emissary of shame and calumny, as you are. Yes," said he, as he foamed with the fury of a raging bull; "'I—I—I,' you might have said, 'a nameless whelp, sprung from the dishonest clippings of a counter—I, I say, am in quest of Miss Gourlay, who has eloped with an adventurer, an impostor—with a brushmaker's clerk."

"A tooth-brush manufacturer, Sir Thomas, and, you know, they are often made of ivory."

"Come, you intermeddling rascal, I must either tear you asunder or my brain will burst; I will not have such a worthless life as yours on my hands, however; you vermin, out with you: I might have borne anything but your compassion, and even *that* too; but to blazon through a gaping metropolis the infamy of my family—of all that was dear to me—to turn the name of my child into a polluted word, which modest lips would feel ashamed to utter; nor, lastly, can I forgive

you the crime of making me suffer this mad and unexampled agony."

Action now took the place of words, and had, indeed, come in as an auxiliary for some time previous. He seized the unfortunate Crackenfudge, and as, with red and dripping lips, he gave vent to the furious eruptions of his fiery spirit, like a living Vesuvius—for we know of no other comparison so appropriate—he kicked and cuffed the wretched and unlucky intelligencer, until he fairly threw him out at the hall-door, which he himself shut after him.

"Begone, villain!" he exclaimed; "and may you never die till you feel the torments which you have kindled, like the flames of hell, within me!"

On entering the room again, he found, however, that with a being even so wretched and contemptible as Crackenfudge, there had departed a portion of his strength. So long as he had an object on which to launch his fury, he felt that he could still sustain the battle of his passions. But now a heavy sense came over him, as if of something which he could not understand or analyze. His heart sank, and he felt a nameless and indescribable terror within him—a terror, he thought, quite distinct from the conduct of his daughter, or of anything else he had heard. He had, in fact, lost all perception of his individual misery, and a moral gloom, black as night, seemed to cover and mingle with those fiery tortures which were consuming him. An apprehension, also, of immediate dissolution came over him—his memory grew gradually weaker and weaker, until he felt himself no longer able to account for the scene which had just taken place; and for a brief period, although he neither swooned nor fainted, nor fell into a fit of any kind, he experienced a stupor that amounted to a complete unconsciousness of being, if we except an undying impression of some great evil which had befallen him, and which lay, like a grim and insatiable monster, tearing up his heart. At length, by a violent effort, he recovered a little, became once more conscious, walked about for some time, then surveyed himself in the glass, and what between the cadaverous hue of his face and the flakes of red foam which we have described, when taken in connection with his thick, midnight brows, it need not be wondered at that he felt alarmed at the state to which he awakened.

After some time, however, he rang for Gibson, who, on seeing him, started.

"Good God, sir!" said he, quite alarmed, "what is the matter?"

"I did not ring for you, sir," he replied, "to ask impertinent questions. Send Gillespie to me."

Gibson withdrew, and in the mean time his master went to his dressing-room, where he washed himself free of the bloody evidences of his awful passions. This being done, he returned to the library, where, in a few minutes, Gillespie attended him.

"Gillespie," he exclaimed, "do you fear God?"

"I hope I do, Sir Thomas, as well as another, at any rate."

"Well, then, begone, for you are useless to me—begone, sirrah, and get me some one that fears neither God nor devil."

"Why, Sir Thomas," replied the ruffian, who, having expected a job, felt anxious to retrieve himself, "as to that matter, I can't say that I ever was overburdened with much fear of either one or other of them. Indeed, I believe, thank goodness, I have as little religion as most people."

"Are you sure, sirrah, that you have no conscience?"

"Why—hem—I have done things for your honor before, you know. As to religion, however, I'll stand upon having as little of it as e'er a man in the barony. I give up to no one in a want of that commodity."

"What proof can you afford me that you are free from it?"

"Why, blow me if I know the twelve commandments, and, besides, I was only at church three times in my life, and I fell asleep under the sermon each time; religion, sir, never agreed with me."

"To blazon my shame!—bad enough; but the ruin of my hopes, d——n you, sir, how durst you publish my disgrace to the world?"

"I, your honor! I'll take my oath I never breathed a syllable of it; and you know yourself, sir, the man was too drunk to be able to speak or remember anything of what happened."

"Sir, you came to mock and jeer at me; and, besides, you are a liar, she has *not* eloped."

"I don't understand you, Sir Thomas," said Gillespie, who saw at once by his master's disturbed and wandering eye, that the language he uttered was not addressed to him.

"What—what," exclaimed the latter, rising up and stretching himself, in order to call back his scattered faculties. "Eh, Gillespie!—what brought you here, sirrah? Are you too come to triumph over the ambitious projector? What am I saying? I sent for you, Gillespie, did I not?"

"You did, Sir Thomas; and with regard

to what we were speaking about—I mean religion—I'll hould a pound note with Charley Corbet, when he comes back, that I have less of it than him; and we'll both leave it to your honor, as the best judge; now, if I have less of it than Charley, I think I deserve the preference."

The baronet looked at him, or rather in the direction where he stood, which induced Gillespie to suppose that he was paying the strictest attention to what he said.

"Besides, I once caught Charley at his prayers, Sir Thomas; but I'd be glad to see the man that ever caught me at them—that's the chat."

Sir Thomas placed his two hands upon his eyes for as good as a minute, after which he removed them, and stared about him like one awakening from a disturbed dream.

"Eh?—Begone, Gillespie; I believe I sent for you, but you may go. I am unwell, and not in a condition to speak to you. When I want you again, you shall be sent for."

"I don't care a d—— about either hell or the devil, Sir Thomas, especially when I'm drunk; and I once, for a wager, outswore Squire Leatherlugs, who was so deaf that I was obliged to swear with my mouth to the end of his ear-trumpet. I was backed for fifty guineas by Colonel Brimstone, who was head of the Hellfire Club."

The baronet signed to him impatiently to begone, and this worthy moralist withdrew, exclaiming as he went:

"Take my word for it, you will find nothing to your hand equal to myself; and if there's anything to be done, curse me but I deserve a preference. I think merit ought to have its reward at any rate."

Sir Thomas, we need not say, felt ill at ease. The tumults of his mind resembled those of the ocean after the violence of the tempest has swept over it, leaving behind that dark and angry agitation which indicates the awful extent of its power. After taking a turn or two through the room, he felt fatigued and drowsy, with something like a feeling of approaching illness. Yielding to this heaviness, he stretched himself on a sofa, and in a few minutes was fast asleep.

All minds naturally vicious, or influenced by the impulses of bad and irregular passions, are essentially vulgar, mean, and cowardly. Our baronet was, beyond question, a striking proof of this truth. Had he possessed either dignity, or one spark of gentlemanly feeling, or self-respect, he would not have degraded himself from what ought to have been expected from a man in his position, by his violence to the worthless wretch, Crackenfudge, who was slight, comparatively feeble, and by no means a match for him in a personal contest. The only apology that can be offered for him is, that it is probable he was scarcely conscious, in the whirlwind and tempest of his passions, that he allowed himself to act such a base and unmanly part to a person who had not willingly offended him, and who was entitled, whilst under his roof, to forbearance, if not protection, even in virtue of the communication he had made.

After sleeping about an hour, he arose considerably refreshed in body; but the agony of mind, although diminished in its strength by its own previous paroxysms, was still intense and bitter. He got up, surveyed himself once more in the glass, adjusted his dress, and helped himself to a glass or two of Madeira, which was his usual specific after these internal conflicts.

This day, however, was destined to be one of trial to him, although by no means his last; neither was it ordained to bring forth the final ordeals that awaited him. He had scarcely time to reflect upon the measures which, under the present circumstances, he ought to pursue, although he certainly was engaged in considering the matter, when Gibson once more entered to let him know that a gentleman requested the favor of a short interview.

"What gentleman? Who is he? I'm not in a frame of mind to see any stranger—I mean, Gibson, that I'm not well."

"Sorry to hear it, sir; shall I tell the gentleman you can't see him?"

"Yes—no—stay; do you know who he is?"

"He is the gentleman, sir, who has been stopping for some time at the Mitre."

"What!" exclaimed the baronet, bouncing to his feet.

"Yes, sir."

If some notorious felon, red with half-a-dozen murders, and who, having broken jail, left an empty noose in the hands of the hangman, had taken it into his head to return and offer himself up for instant execution to the aforesaid hangman, and eke to the sheriff, we assert that neither sheriff nor hangman, nor hangman nor sheriff, arrange them as you may, could feel a thousandth part of the astonishment which seized Sir Thomas Gourlay on learning the fact conveyed to him by Gibson. Sir Thomas, however, after the first natural start, became, if we may use the expression, deadly, fearfully calm It was not poor, contemptible Crackenfudge he had to deal with now, but the prime offender, the great felon himself, the author of his shame, the villain who poured in the fire of perdition upon his

heart, who blasted his hopes, crumbled into ruin all his schemes of ambition for his daughter, and turned her very name into a byword of pollution and guilt. This was the man whom he was now about to get into his power; the man who, besides, had on a former occasion bearded and insulted him to his teeth;—the skulking adventurer afraid to disclose his name—the low-born impostor, living by the rinsings of foul and fetid teeth—the base upstart—the thief—the man who robbed and absconded from his employer; and this wretch, this cipher, so low in the scale of society and life, was the individual who had left him what he then felt himself to be—a thing crushed, disgraced, trodden in the dust—and then his daughter!——

"Gibson," said he, "show him into a room—say I will see him presently, in about ten minutes or less; deliver this message, and return to me."

In a few moments Gibson again made his appearance.

"Gibson," continued his master, "where is Gillespie? Send him to me."

"Gillespie's gone into Ballytrain, sir, to get one of the horses fired."

"Gibson, you are a good and faithful servant. Go to my bedroom and fetch me my pistols."

"My God, Sir Thomas! oh, sir, for heaven's sake, avoid violence! The expression of your face, Sir Thomas, makes me tremble."

Sir Thomas spoke not, but by one look Gibson felt that he must obey him. On returning with the arms, his master took them out of his hands, opened the pans, shook and stirred the powder, examined the flints, saw that they were sharp and firm, and having done so, he opened a drawer in the table at which he usually wrote, and there placed them at full cock. Gibson could perceive that, although unnaturally calm, he was nevertheless in a state of great agitation; for whilst examining the pistols, he observed that his hand trembled, although his voice was low, condensed, and firm.

"For God's sake, Sir Thomas! for the Almighty God's sake—"

"Go, Gibson, and desire the 'gentleman' to walk up—show him the way."

Sir Thomas's mind was, no doubt, in a tumult; but, at the same time, it was the agitation of a man without courage. After Gibson had left the room, he grew absolutely nervous, both in mind and body, and felt as if he were unequal to the conflict that he expected. On hearing the firm, manly tread of the stranger, his heart sank, and a considerable portion of his violence abandoned him, though not the ungenerous purpose which the result of their interview might possibly render necessary. At all events, he felt that he was about to meet the stranger in a much more subdued spirit than he had expected; simply because, not being naturally a brave or a firm man, his courage, and consequently his resentment, cooled in proportion as the distance between them diminished.

Sir Thomas was standing with his back to the fire as the stranger entered. The manner of the latter was cool, but cautious, and his bow that of a perfect gentleman. The baronet, surprised into more than he had intended, bowed haughtily in return—a mark of respect which it was not his intention to have paid him.

"I presume, sir," said he, "that I understand the object of this visit?"

"You and I, Sir Thomas Gourlay," replied the stranger, "have had one interview already—and but one; and I am not aware that anything occurred then between us that could enable you to account for my presence here."

"Well, sir, perhaps so," replied the baronet, with a sneer; "but to what may I attribute the honor of that distinguished presence?"

"I come, Sir Thomas Gourlay, to seek for an explanation on a subject of the deepest importance to the party under whose wishes and instructions I act."

"That party, sir," replied the baronet, who alluded to his daughter, "has forfeited every right to give you instructions on that, or any other subject where I am concerned. And, indeed, to speak candidly, I hardly know whether more to admire her utter want of all shame in deputing you on such a mission, or your own immeasurable effrontery in undertaking it."

"Sir Thomas Gourlay," replied the stranger, with a proud smile on his lips, "I beg to assure you, once for all, that it is not my intention to notice, much less return, such language as you have now applied to me. Whatever you may forget, sir, I entreat you to remember that you are addressing a gentleman, who is anxious in this interview, as well as upon all occasions when we may meet, to treat you with courtesy. And I beg to say now, that I regret the warmth of my language to you, though not unprovoked, on a former occasion."

"Oh, much obliged, sir," replied the baronet, with a low, ironical inclination of the head, indicative of the most withering contempt; "much obliged, sir. Perhaps you would honor me with your patronage, too. I dare say that will be the next courtesy

Well, I can't say but I am a fortunate fellow. Will you have the goodness, however, to proceed, sir, and open your negotiations? unless, in the true diplomatic spirit, you wish to keep me in ignorance of its *real* object."

"It is a task that I enter upon with great pain," replied the other, without noticing the offensive politeness of the baronet, "because I am aware that there are associations connected with it, which you, as a father, cannot contemplate without profound sorrow."

"Don't rest assured of that," said Sir Thomas. "Your philosophy may lead you astray there. A sensible man, sir, never regrets that which is worthless."

The stranger looked a good deal surprised; however, he opened the negotiation, as the baronet said, in due form.

"I believe, Sir Thomas Gourlay," he proceeded, "you remember that the son and heir of your late brother, Sir Edward Gourlay, long deceased, disappeared very mysteriously some sixteen or eighteen years ago, and has been lost to the family ever since."

"Oh, sir," exclaimed the baronet, with no little surprise, "I beg your pardon. Your *exordium* was so singularly clear, that I did not understand you before. Pray proceed."

"I trust, then, you understand me now, sir," replied the stranger; "and I trust you will understand me better before we part."

The baronet, in spite of his *hauteur* and contemptuous sarcasm, began to feel uneasy; for, to speak truth, there was in the stranger's words and manner, an earnestness of purpose, joined to a cool and manly spirit, that could not be treated lightly, or with indifference.

"Sir Thomas Gourlay," proceeded the stranger——

"I beg your pardon, sir," said the other, interrupting him; "plain Thomas Gourlay, if you please. Is not that your object?"

"Truth, sir, is our object, and justice, and the restoration of the defrauded orphan's rights. These, sir, are our objects; and these we shall endeavor to establish. Sir Thomas Gourlay, you know that the son of your brother lives."

"Indeed!"

"Yes, sir; disguise it—conceal it as you will. You know that the son of your brother lives. I repeat that emphatically."

"So I perceive. You are evidently a very emphatic gentleman."

"If truth, sir, constitute emphasis, you shall find me so."

"I attend to you, sir; and I give you notice, that when you shall have exhausted yourself, I have my explanation to demand; and, I promise you, a terrible one you shall find it."

This the wily baronet said, in order, if possible, to confound the stranger, and throw him out of the directness of his purpose. In this, however, he found himself mistaken. The other proceeded:

"You, Sir Thomas Gourlay, did, one night about eighteen years ago, as I said, engage a man, disguised in a mask for the purpose of concealing his features, to kidnap your brother's child from Red Hall—from this very house in which we both stand."

"I beg your pardon," said Sir Thomas, "I forgot that circumstance in the blaze of your eloquence; perhaps you will have the goodness to take a seat;" and in the same spirit of bitter sarcasm, he motioned him with mock courtesy, to sit down. The other, pausing only until he had spoken, proceeded:

"You engaged this man, I repeat, to kidnap your brother's son and heir, under the pretence of bringing him to see a puppet-show. Now, Sir Thomas Gourlay," proceeded the stranger, "suppose that the friends of this child, kidnapped by you, shall succeed in proving this fact by incontestable evidence, in what position will you stand before the world?"

"Much in the same position in which I stand now. In Red Hall, as its rightful proprietor, with my back probably to the fire, as it is at present."

It is undeniable, however, that despite all this haughty coolness of the baronet, the charge involved in the statement advanced by the stranger stunned him beyond belief; not simply because the other made it, for that was a mere secondary consideration, but because he took it for granted that it never *could* have been made unless through the medium of treachery; and we all know that when a criminal, whether great or small, has reason to believe that he has been betrayed, his position is not enviable, inasmuch as all sense of security totters from under him. The stranger, as he proceeded, watched the features of his auditor closely, and could perceive that the struggle then going on between the tumult of alarm within and the effort at calmness without, was more than, with all his affected irony and stoicism, he could conceal.

"But, perhaps," proceeded the baronet, "you who presume to be so well acquainted with the removal of my brother's child, may have it in your power to afford me some information on the disappearance of my own. I wish you, however, to observe this distinction. As the history you have given hap-

pens to be pure fiction, I should wish the other to be nothing but truth."

"The loss of your child I regret, sir" (Sir Thomas bowed as before), "but I am not here to speak of that. You perceive now that we have got a clew to this painful mystery—to this great crime. A portion of the veil is raised, and you may rest assured that it shall not fall again until the author of this injustice shall be fully exposed. I do not wish to use harsher language."

"As to that," replied Sir Thomas, "use no unnecessary delicacy on the subject. Thank God, the English language is a copious one. Use it to its full extent. You will find all its power necessary to establish the pretty conspiracy you are developing. Proceed, sir, I am quite attentive. I really did not imagine I could have felt so much amused. Indeed, I am very fortunate in this respect, for it is not every man who could have such an excellent farce enacted at his own fireside."

"All this language is well, and no doubt very witty, Sir Thomas; but, believe me, in the end you will find this matter anything but a farce. Now, sir, I crave your attention to a proposal which I am about to make to you on this most distressing subject. Restore this young man to his mother—use whatever means you may in bringing this about. Let it appear, for instance, that he was discovered accidentally, or in such a way, at least, that your name or agency, either now or formerly, may in no manner be connected with it. On these terms you shall be permitted to enjoy the title and property during your life, and every necessary guarantee to that effect shall be given you. The heart of Lady Gourlay is neither in your present title nor your present property, but in her child, whom that heart yearns to recover. This, then, Sir Thomas Gourlay, is the condition which I propose; and, mark me, I propose it on the alternative of our using the means and materials already in our hands for your exposure and conviction should you reject it."

"There is one quality about you, sir," replied the baronet, "which I admire extremely, and that is your extraordinary modesty. Nothing else could prompt you to stand up and charge a man of my rank and character, on my own hearth, with the very respectable crime of kidnapping my brother's child. Extremely modest, indeed! But how you should come to be engaged in this vindictive plot, and how *you*, above all men living, should have the assurance to thus insult *me*, is a mystery for the present. Of course, you see, you are aware, that I treat every word you have uttered with the utmost degree of contempt and scorn which the language is capable of expressing. I neither know nor care who may have prompted you, or misled you; be that, however, as it may, I have only simply to state that, on this subject I defy them as thoroughly as I despise you. On another subject, however, I experience toward you a different feeling, as I shall teach you to understand before you leave the room."

"This being your reply, I must discharge my duty fully. Pray mark me, now, Sir Thomas. Did you not give instructions to a certain man to take your brother's child *out of your path—out of your sight—out of your hearing?* And, Sir Thomas, was not that man *very liberally rewarded for that act?* I pray you, sir, to think seriously of this, as I need not say that if you persist in rejecting our conditions, a serious matter you will find it."

Another contemptuous inclination, and "you have my reply, sir," was all the baronet could trust himself to say.

"I now come to a transaction of a more recent date, Sir Thomas."

"Ah!" said the baronet, "I thought *I* should have had the pleasure of introducing the discussion of *that* transaction. You really are, however, quite a universal genius—so clear and eloquent upon all topics, that I suppose I may leave it in your hands."

"A young man, named Fenton, has suddenly disappeared from this neighborhood."

"Indeed! Why, I must surely live at the antipodes, or in the moon, or I could not plead such ignorance of those great events."

"You are aware, Sir Thomas, that the person passing under that name is your brother's son—the legitimate heir to the title and property of which you are in the unjust possession."

Another bow. "I thank you, sir. I really am deriving much information at your hands."

"Now I demand, Sir Thomas Gourlay, in the name of his injured mother, what you have done with that young man?"

"It would be useless to conceal it," replied the other. "As you seem to know everything, of course you know that. To your own knowledge, therefore, I beg most respectfully to refer you."

"I have only another observation to make, Sir Thomas Gourlay. You remember last Tuesday night, when you drove at an unseasonable hour to the town of ——? Now, sir, I use your words, on *that* subject, to *your own knowledge* I beg most respectfully to refer *you*. I have done."

Sir Thomas Gourlay, when effort was necessary, could certainly play an able and adroit part. There was not a charge brought against

him in the preceding conference that did not sink his heart into the deepest dismay; yet did he contrive to throw over his whole manner and bearing such a veil of cold, hard dissimulation as it was nearly impossible to penetrate. It is true, he saw that he had an acute, sensible, independent man to deal with, whose keen eye he felt was reading every feature of his face, and every motion of his body, and weighing, as it were, with a practised hand, the force and import of every word he uttered. He knew that merely to entertain the subject, or to discuss it at all with anything like seriousness, would probably have exposed him to the risk of losing his temper, and thus placed himself in the power of so sharp and impurturbable an antagonist. As the dialogue proceeded, too, a portion of his attention was transferred from the topic in question to the individual who introduced it. His language, his manner, his dress, his *tout ensemble* were unquestionably not only those of an educated gentleman, but of a man who was well acquainted with life and society, and who appeared to speak as if he possessed no unequivocal position in both.

"Who the devil," thought he to himself several times, "can this person be? How does he come to speak on behalf of Lady Gourlay? Surely such a man cannot be a brush manufacturer's clerk—and he has very little the look of an impostor, too."

All this, however, could not free him from the deep and deadly conviction that the friends of his brother's widow were on his trail, and that it required the whole united powers of his faculties for deception, able and manifold as they were, to check his pursuers and throw them off the scent. It was now, too, that his indignation against his daughter and him who had seduced her from his roof began to deepen in his heart. Had he succeeded in seeing her united to Lord Dunroe, previous to any exposure of himself—supposing even that discovery was possible—his end, the great object of his life, was, to a certain extent, gained. Now, however, that that hope was out of the question, and treachery evidently at work against him, he felt that gloom, disappointment, shame, and ruin were fast gathering round him. He was, indeed, every way hemmed in and hampered. It was clear that this stranger was not a man to be either cajoled or bullied. He read a spirit—a sparkle—in his eye, which taught him that the brutality inflicted upon the unfortunate Crackenfudge, and such others as he knew he might trample on, would never do here.

As matters stood, however, he thought the only chance of throwing the stranger off his guard was to take him by a *coup de main*. With this purpose, he went over, and sitting down to his desk before the drawer that contained his pistols, thus placing himself between the stranger and the door, he turned upon him a look as stern and determined as he could possibly assume; and we must remark here, that he omitted no single consideration connected with the subject he was about to introduce that was calculated to strengthen his determination.

"Now, sir," said he, "in the first place, may I take the liberty of asking where you have concealed my daughter? I will have no equivocation, sir," he added, raising his voice—"no evasion, no falsehood, but in one plain word, or in as many as may be barely necessary, say where you have concealed Miss Gourlay."

"Sir Thomas Gourlay," replied the other, "I can understand your feelings upon this subject, and I can overlook much that you may say in connection with it; but neither upon that nor any other, can I permit the imputation of falsehood against myself. You are to observe this, sir, and to forbear the repetition of such an insult. My reply is brief and candid: I know not where Miss Gourlay is, upon my honor as a gentleman."

"Do you mean to tell me, sir, that you and she did not elope in the same coach on Tuesday night last?"

"I do, sir; and I beg to tell you, that such a suspicion is every way unworthy of your daughter."

"Take care, sir; you were seen together in Dublin."

"That is true. I had the honor of travelling in the same coach with her to the metropolis; but I was altogether unconscious of being her fellow-traveller until we arrived in Dublin. A few brief words of conversation I had with her in the coach, but nothing more."

"And you presume to say that you know not where she is—that you are ignorant of the place of her retreat?"

"Yes, I *presume* to say so, Sir Thomas; I have already pledged my honor as a gentleman to that effect, and I shall not repeat it."

"As a gentleman!—but how do I know that you are a man of honor and a gentleman?"

"Sir Thomas, don't allow your passion or prejudice to impose upon your judgment and penetration as a man of the world. I know you *feel* this moment that you are addressing a man who is both; and your own heart tells you that every word I have uttered respecting Miss Gourlay is true."

"You will excuse me there, sir," replied the baronet. "Your position in this neigh-

borhood is anything but a guarantee to the truth of what you say. If you be a gentleman—a man of honor, why live here, *incognito*, afraid to declare your name, or your rank, if you have any?—why lie *perdu*, like a man under disgrace, or who had fled from justice?"

"Well, then, I beg you to rest satisfied that I am *not* under disgrace, and that I have motives for concealing my name that are disinterested, and even honorable to myself, if they were known."

"Pray, will you answer me another question—Do you happen to know a firm in London named Grinwell and Co.? they are tooth-brush manufacturers? Now, mark my words well—I say Grinwell and Co., tooth-brush manufacturers."

"I have until this moment never heard of Grinwell and Co., tooth-brush manufacturers."

"Now, sir," replied Sir Thomas, "all this may be very well and very true; but there is one fact that you can neither deny nor dispute. You have been paying your addresses clandestinely to my daughter, and there is a mutual attachment between you."

"I love your daughter—I will not deny it."

"She returns your affections?"

"I cannot reply to anything involving Miss Gourlay's opinions, who is not here to explain them; nor is it generous in you to force me into the presumptuous task of interpreting her sentiments on such a subject."

"The fact, however, is this. I have for some years entertained other and different views with respect to her settlement in life. You may be a gentleman, or you may be an impostor; but one thing is certain, you have taught her to contravene my wishes—to despise the honors to which a dutiful obedience to them would exalt her—to spurn my affection, and to trample on my authority. Now, sir, listen to me. Renounce her—give up all claims to her—withdraw every pretension, now and forever; or, by the living God! you shall never carry your life out of this room. Sooner than have the noble design which I proposed for her frustrated; sooner than have the projects of my whole life for her honorable exaltation ruined, I could bear to die the death of a common felon. Here, sir, is a proposition that admits of only the one fatal and deadly alternative. You see these pistols; they are heavily loaded; and you know my purpose; —it is the purpose, let me tell you, of a resolved and desperate man."

"I know not how to account for this violence, Sir Thomas Gourlay," replied the stranger with singular coolness; "all I can say is, that on me it is thrown away."

"Refuse the compliance with the proposition I have made, and by heavens you have looked upon your last sun. The pistols, sir, are cocked; if one fails, the other won't."

"This outrage, Sir Thomas, upon a stranger, in your own house, under the protection of your own roof, is as monstrous as it is cowardly."

"My roof, sir, shall never afford protection to a villain," said the baronet, in a loud and furious voice. "Renounce my daughter, and that quickly. No, sir, this roof will afford you no protection."

"Well, sir, I cannot help that," replied the stranger, deliberately taking out of his breast, where they were covered by an outside coat, a case of excellent pistols, which he instantly cocked, and held ready for action: "If your roof won't, these good friends will. And now, Sir Thomas, hear me; lay aside your idle weapons, which, were I even unarmed, I would disregard as much as I do this moment. Our interview is now closed; but before I go, let me entreat you to reflect upon the conditions I have offered you; reflect upon them deeply —yes, and accept them, otherwise you will involve yourself in all the consequences of a guilty but unsuccessful ambition—in contempt—infamy—and ruin."

The baronet's face became exceedingly blank at the exhibition of the fire-arms. Pistol for pistol had been utterly out of the range of his calculations. He looked upon the stranger with astonishment, not unmingled with a considerable portion of that wholesome feeling which begets self-preservation. In fact, he was struck dumb, and uttered not a syllable; and as the stranger made his parting bow, the other could only stare at him as if he had seen an apparition.

CHAPTER XXII.

Lucy at Summerfield Cottage.

On his way to the inn, the stranger could not avoid admiring the excellent sense and prudence displayed by Lucy Gourlay, in the brief dialogue which we have already detailed to our readers. He felt clearly, that if he had followed up his natural impulse to ascertain the place of her retreat, he would have placed himself in the very position which, knowing her father as she did, she had so correctly anticipated. In the meantime, now that the difficulty in this respect, which she had apprehended, was over, his anxiety to know her present residence returned upon him with full force. Not that

he thought it consistent with delicacy to intrude himself upon her presence, without first obtaining her permission to that effect. He was well and painfully aware that a lying report of their elopement had gone abroad, but as he did not then know that this calumny had been principally circulated by unfortunate Crackenfudge, who, however, was the dupe of Dandy Dulcimer, and consequently took the fact for granted.

Lucy, however, to whom we must now return, on arriving at the neat cottage already alluded to, occasioned no small surprise to its proprietor. The family, when the driver knocked, were all asleep, or at least had not arisen, and on the door being opened by a broad-faced, good-humored looking servant, who was desired to go to a lady in the chaise, the woman, after rubbing her eyes and yawning, looked about her as if she were in a dream, exclaiming, "Lord bless us! and divil a sowl o' them out o' the blankets yet!"

"You're nearly asleep," said the driver; "but I'll hould a testher that a tight crapper would soon brighten your eye. Come, come," he added, as she yawned again, "shut your pittaty trap, and go to the young lady in the chaise."

The woman settled her cap, which was awry, upon her head, by plucking it quickly over to the opposite side, and hastily tying the strings of her apron, so as to give herself something of a tidy look, she proceeded, barefooted, but in slippers, to the chaise.

"Will you have the kindness," said Lucy, in a very sweet voice, "to say to Mrs. Norton that a young friend of hers wishes to see her."

"And tell her to skip," added Alley Mahon, "and not keep us here all the blessed mornin'."

"Mrs. Norton!" exclaimed the woman; "I don't know any sich parson as that, Miss."

"Why," said Lucy, putting her head out of the chaise, and re-examining the cottage, "surely this is where my friend Mrs. Norton *did* live, certainly. She must have changed her residence, Alley. This is most unfortunate! What are we to do? I know not where to go."

"Whisht! Miss," said Alley, "we'll put her through her catechiz again. Come here, my good woman; come forrid; don't be ashamed or afeard in the presence of *ladies*. Who *does* live here?"

"Mr. Mainwarin'," replied the servant, omitting the "Miss," notwithstanding that Alley had put in her claim for it by using the plural number.

"This is distressing—most unfortunate!" exclaimed Lucy; "how long has this gentleman—Mr.—Mr.——"

"Mainwarin', Miss," added the woman, respectfully.

"She's a stupid lookin' *sthreel*, at all events," said Alley, half to herself and half to her mistress.

"Yes, Mainwaring," continued Lucy; "how long has he been living here?"

"Troth, and that's more than I can tell you, Miss," replied the woman; "I'm from the county Wexford myself, and isn't more than a month here"

Whilst this little dialogue went on, or rather, we should say, after it was concluded, a tapping was heard at one of the windows, and a signal given with the finger for the servant to return to the house. She did so; but soon presented herself a second time at the chaise door with more agreeable intelligence.

"You're right, Miss," said she; "the mistress desired me to ask you in; she seen you from the windy, and desired me to bring your things too; you're to come in, then, Miss, you, an' the sarvint that's along wid you."

On entering, an intelligent, respectable-looking female, of lady-like manners, shook hands with and even kissed Lucy, who embraced her with much affection.

"My dear Mrs. Norton," she said, "how much surprised you must feel at this abrupt and unseasonable visit."

"How much delighted, you mean, my dear Miss Gourlay; and if I am surprised, I assure you the surprise is an agreeable one."

"But," said the innocent girl, "your servant told me that you did not live here, and I felt so much distressed!"

"Well," replied Mrs. Norton, "she was right, in one sense: if Mrs. Norton *that was* does not live here, Mrs. Mainwaring *that is* certainly does—and feels both proud and flattered at the honor Miss Gourlay does her humble residence."

"How is this?" said Lucy, smiling; "you have then——"

"Yes, indeed, I have changed my condition, as the phrase goes; but neither my heart nor my affections to you, Miss Gourlay. Pray sit down on this sofa. Your maid, I presume, Miss Gourlay?"

"Yes," replied Lucy; "and a faithful creature has she proved to me, Mrs. Nor——, but I beg your pardon, my dear madam; how am I—oh, yes, Mrs. Mainwaring!"

"Nancy," said the latter, "take this young woman with you, and make her comfortable. You seem exhausted, Miss Gourlay; shall I get some tea?"

"Thank you, Mrs. Nor—— Mainwaring, no; we have had a hasty cup of tea in Dublin. But if it will not be troublesome, I should like to go to bed for a time."

Mrs. Mainwaring flew out of the room, and called Nancy Gallaher. "Nancy, prepare a bed immediately for this lady; her maid, too, will probably require rest. Prepare a bed for both."

She was half in and half out of the room as she spoke; then returning with a bunch of keys dangling from her finger, she glanced at Miss Gourlay with that slight but delicate and considerate curiosity which arises only from a friendly warmth of feeling—but said nothing.

"My dear Mrs. Mainwaring," said Lucy, who understood her look, "I feel that I have acted very wrong. I have fled from my father's house, and I have taken refuge with you. I am at present confused and exhausted, but when I get some rest, I will give you an explanation. At present, it is sufficient to say that papa has taken my marriage with that odious Lord Dunroe so strongly into his head, that nothing short of my consent will satisfy him. I know he loves me, and thinks that rank and honor, because they gratify his ambition, will make me happy. I know that that ambition is not at all personal to himself, but indulged in and nurtured on my account, and for my advancement in life. How then can I blame him?"

"Well, my child, no more of that at present; you want rest."

"Yes, Mrs. Mainwaring, I do; but I am very wretched and unhappy. Alas! you know not, my dear friend, the delight which I have always experienced in obeying papa in everything, with the exception of this hateful union; and now I feel something like remorse at having abandoned him."

She then gave a brief account to her kind-hearted friend of her journey to Dublin by the "Fly," in the first instance, suppressing one or two incidents; and of her second to Mrs. Mainwaring's, who, after hearing that she had not slept at all during the night, would permit no further conversation on that or any other subject, but hurried her to bed, she herself acting as her attendant. Having seen her comfortably settled, and carefully tucked her up with her own hands, she kissed the fair girl, exclaiming, "Sleep, my love; and may God bless and protect you from evil and unhappiness, as I feel certain He will, because you deserve it."

She then left her to repose, and in a few minutes Lucy was fast asleep.

Whilst this little dialogue between Lucy and Mrs. Mainwaring was proceeding in the parlor of Summerfield cottage, another was running parallel with it between the two servants in the kitchen.

"God bless me," said Nancy Gallaher, addressing Alley, "you look shockin' bad afther so early a journey! I'll get you a cup o' tay, to put a bloom in your cheek."

"Thank you, kindly, ma'am," replied Alley, with a toss of her head which implied anything but gratitude for this allusion to her complexion: "a good sleep, ma'am, will bring back the bloom—and that's aisy done, ma'am, to any one who has youth on their side. The color will come and go then, but let a wrinkle alone for keepin' its ground."

This was accompanied by a significant glance at Nancy's face, on which were legible some rather unequivocal traces of that description. Honest Nancy, however, although she saw the glance, and understood the insinuation, seemed to take no notice of either—the fact being that her whole spirit was seized with an indomitable curiosity, which, like a restless familiar, insisted on being gratified.

In the case of those who undertake journeys similar to that which Lucy had just accomplished, there may be noticed almost by every eye those evidences of haste, alarm, and anxiety, and even distress, which to a certain extent at least tell their own tale, and betray to the observer that all can scarcely be right. Now Nancy Gallaher saw this, and having drawn the established conclusion that there must in some way be a lover in the case, she sat down in form before the fortress of Alley Mahon's secret, with a firm determination to make herself mistress of it, if the feat were at all practicable. In Alley, however, she had an able general to compete with—a general who resolved, on the other hand, to make a sortie, as it were, and attack Nancy by a series of bold and unexpected manœuvres.

Nancy, on her part, having felt her first error touching Alley's complexion, resolved instantly to repair it by the substitution of a compliment in its stead.

"Throth, an' it'll be many a day till there's a wrinkle in your face, avourneen—an' now that I look at you agin—a pretty an' a sweet face it is. 'Deed it's many a day since I seen two sich faces as yours and the *other* young lady's; but anyway, you had betther let me get you a comfortable cup o' tay—afther your long journey. Oh, then,' but that beautiful creature has a sorrowful look, poor thing."

These words were accompanied by a most insinuating glance of curiosity, mingled up with an air of strong benevolence, to show Alley that it proceeded only from the purest of good feeling.

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"'WELL, SIR, I CANNOT HELP THAT,' REPLIED THE STRANGER, DELIBERATELY TAKING OUT OF HIS BREAST, WHERE THEY WERE COVERED BY AN OUTSIDE COAT, A PAIR OF EXCELLENT PISTOLS, WHICH HE INSTANTLY COCKED, AND HELD READY FOR ACTION."

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"Thank you," replied Alley, "I will take a cup sure enough. What family have you here? if it's a fair question."

"Sorra one but ourselves," replied Nancy, without making her much the wiser.

"But, I mane," proceeded Alley, "have you children? bekase if you have I hate them."

"Neither chick nor child there will be under the roof wid you here," responded Nancy, whilst putting the dry tea into a tin tea-pot that had seen service; "there's only the three of us—that is, myself, the misthress, and the masther—for I am not countin' a slip of a girl that comes in every day to do odd jobs, and some o' the rough work about the house."

"Oh, I suppose," said Alley, indifferently, "the childre's all married off?"

"There's only one," replied Nancy; "and indeed you're right enough—she *is* married, and not long either—and, in truth, I don't envy her the husband she got. Lord save and guard us! I know I wouldn't long keep my senses if I had him."

"Why so?" asked Alley. "Has he two heads upon him?"

"Troth, no," replied the other; "but he's what they call a mad docther, an' keeps a rheumatic asylum—that manes a place where they put mad people, to prevent them from doin' harm. They say it would make the hair stand on your head like nettles even to go into it. However, that's not what I'm thinkin' of, but that darlin' lookin' creature that's wid the misthress. The Lord keep sorrow and cross-fortune from her, poor thing—for she looks unhappy. Avillish! are you and she related? for, as I'm a sinner, there's a resemblance in your faces—and even in your figures—only you're something rounder and fuller than she is."

"Isn't she lovely?" returned Alley, making the most of the compliment. "Sure, wasn't it in Dublin her health was drunk as the greatest toast in Ireland." She then added after a pause, "The Lord knows I wouldn't ——"

"Wouldn't *what*—avourneen?"

"I was just thinkin', that I wouldn't marry a mad docther, if there was ne'er another man in Ireland. A mad docther! Oh, beetha. Then will you let us know the name that's upon him?" she added in a most wheedling tone.

"His name is Scareman, my misthress tells me—he's related by the mother's side to the Moontides of Ballycrazy, in the barony of Quarther Clift—arrah, what's this your name is, avourneen?"

"Alley Mahon I was christened," replied her new friend; "but," she added, with an air of modest dignity that was inimitable in its way—"in regard of my place as maid o' honor to Lady Lucy, I'm usually called Miss Mahon, or Miss Alley. My mistress, for her own sake, in ordher to keep up her consequence, you persave, doesn't like to hear me called anything else than either one or t'other of them."

"And it's all right," replied the other. "Well, as I was going to say, that Mrs. Mainwaring is breakin' her heart about this unforthunate marriage of her daughter to Scareman. It seems—but this is between ourselves—it seems, my dear, that he's a dark, hard-hearted scrub, that 'id go to hell or farther for a shillin', for a penny, ay, or for a farden. An' the servant that was here afore me—a clean, good-natured girl she was, in throth—an' got married to a blacksmith, at the cross-roads beyant—tould me that the screames, an' yells, an' howlins, and roarins—the cursin' and blasphaymin'—an' the laughin', that she said was worse than all—an' the rattlin' of chains—the Lord save us—would make one think themselves more in hell than in any place upon this world. And it appears the villain takes delight in it, an' makes lashins of money by the trade."

"The sorra, give him good of it!" exclaimed Alley; "an' I can tell you, it's Lady Lucy—(divil may care, thought she—I'll make a lady of her at any rate—this ignorant creature doesn't know the 'differ) it's Lady Lucy, I say, that will be sorry to hear of this same marriage—for you must know—what's this *your* name is?"

"Nancy Gallaher, dear."

"And were you ever married, Nancy?"

"If I wasn't the fau't was my own, ahagur! but I'll tell you more about that some day. No, then, I was not, thank God!"

"Thank God! Well, throth, it's a quare thing to thank God for that, at any rate." This, of course, was parenthetical. "Well, my dear," proceeded Alley, "you must know that Mrs. Scareman before her marriage—of course, she was then Miss Norton—acted in the kippacity of tutherer general to Lady Lucy, except durin' three months that she was ill, and had to go to England to thry the wathers."

"What wathers?" asked Nancy. "Haven't we plenty o' wather, an' as good as they have, at home?"

"Not at all," replied Alley, who sometimes, as the reader may have perceived, drew upon an imagination of no ordinary fertility; "in England they have spakin' birds, singin' trees, and goolden wather. So, as I was sayin', while she went to thry the goolden wather ——"

"Troth, if ever I get poor health, I'll go

there myself," observed Nancy, with a gleam of natural humor in her clear blue eye."

"Well, while she went to thry this goolden wather, her mother, Mrs. Norton, came in her place as tutherer general, an' that's the way they became acquainted—Lady Lucy and her. But, my dear, I want to tell you a saicret."

We are of opinion, that if Nancy's cap had been off at the moment, her two ears might have been observed to erect themselves on each side of her head with pure and unadulterated curiosity.

"Well, Miss Alley, what is it, ahagur?"

"Now, you won't breathe this to any human creature?"

"Is it me? Arrah! little you know the woman you're spakin' to. Divil a mortal could beat me at keepin' a saicret, at any rate; an' when you tell me this, maybe I'll let you know one or two that'll be worth hearin'."

"Well," continued Alley, "it's this—Never call my mistress Lady Lucy, because she doesn't like it."

This was an apple from the shores of the Dead Sea. Nancy's face bore all the sudden traces of disappointment and mortification; and, from a principle of retaliation, she resolved to give her companion a morsel from the same fruit.

"Now, Nancy," continued the former, "what's this you have to tell us?"

"But you swear not to breathe it to man, woman, or child, boy or girl, rich or poor, livin' or dead?"

"Sartainly I do."

"Well, then, it's this. I understand that Docthor Scareman isn't likely to have a family. Now, ahagur, if you spake, I'm done, that's all."

Having been then called away to make arrangements necessary to Lucy's comfort, their dialogue was terminated before she could worm out of Alley the cause of her mistress's visit.

"She's a cunnin' ould hag," said the latter, when the other had gone. "I see what she wants to get out o' me; but it's not for nothing Miss Lucy has trusted me, an' I'm not the girl to betray her secrets to them that has no right to know them."

This, indeed, was true. Poor Alley Mahon, though a very neat and handsome girl, and of an appearance decidedly respectable, was nevertheless a good deal vulgar in her conversation. In lieu of this, however, notwithstanding a large stock of vanity, she was gifted with a strong attachment to her mistress, and had exhibited many trying proofs of truthfulness and secrecy under circumstances where most females in her condition of life would have given way. As a matter of course, she was obliged to receive her master's bribes, otherwise she would have been instantly dismissed, as one who presumed to favor Lucy's interest and oppose his own. Her fertility of fancy, however, joined to deep-rooted affection for his daughter, enabled her to return as a recompense for Sir Thomas's bribes, that description of one-sided truth which transfuses fiction into its own character and spirit, just as a drop or two of any coloring fluid will tinge a large portion of water with its own hue. Her replies, therefore, when sifted and examined, always bore in them a sufficient portion of truth to enable her, on the strong point of veracity on which she boldly stood, to bear herself out with triumph; owing, indeed, to a slight dash in her defence of the coloring we have described. Lucy felt that the agitation of mind, or rather, we should say, the agony of spirit which she had been of late forced to struggle with, had affected her health more than she could have anticipated. That and the unusual fatigue of a long journey in a night coach, eked out by a jolting drive to Wicklow at a time when she required refreshment and rest, told upon her constitution, although a naturally healthy one. For the next three or four days after her arrival at Summerfield Cottage, she experienced symptoms of slight fever, apparently nervous. Every attention that could be paid to her she received at the hands of Mrs. Mainwaring, and her own maid, who seldom was a moment from her bedside. Two or three times a day she was seized with fits of moping, during which she deplored her melancholy lot in life, feared she had offended her kind hostess by intruding, without either notice or announcement, upon the quiet harmony of her family, and begged her again and again to forgive her; adding, "That as soon as her recovery should be established, she would return to her father's house to die, she hoped, and join mamma; and this," she said, "was her last and only consolation."

Mrs. Mainwaring saw at once that her complaint was principally on the nerves, and lost no time in asking permission to call in medical advice. To this, Lucy, whose chief object was to remain unknown and in secrecy for the present, strongly objected; but by the mild and affectionate remonstrances of Mrs. Mainwaring, as well as at the earnest entreaties of Alley, she consented to allow a physician to be called in.

This step was not more judicious than necessary. The physician, on seeing her, at once pronounced the complaint a nervous

fever, but hoped that it would soon yield to proper treatment. He prescribed, and saw her every second day for a week, after which she gave evident symptoms of improvement. Her constitution, as we have said, was good; and nature, in spite of an anxious mind and disagreeable reflections, bore her completely out of danger.

It was not until the first day of her appearance in the parlor subsequent to her illness, that she had an opportunity of seeing Mr. Mainwaring, of whom his wife spoke in terms of great tenderness and affection. She found him to be a gentlemanly person of great good sense and delicacy of feeling.

"I regret," said he, after the usual introduction had taken place, "to have been deprived so long of knowing a young lady of whose goodness and many admirable qualities I have heard so much from the lips of Mrs. Mainwaring. It is true I knew her affectionate nature," he added, with a look of more than kindness at his wife, "and I allowed something for high coloring in your case, Miss Gourlay, as well as in others, that I could name; but I now find, that with all her good-will, she sometimes fails to do justice to the original."

"And, my dear John, did I not tell you so?" replied his wife, smiling; "but if you make *other* allusions, I am sure Miss Gourlay can bear me out."

"She has more than borne you out, my dear," he replied, purposely misunderstanding her. "She has more than borne you out; for, truth to tell, you have in Miss Gourlay's case fallen far short of what I see she is."

"But, Mr. Mainwaring," said Lucy, smiling in her turn, "it is certainly very strange that she can please neither of us. The outline she gave me of your character was quite shocking. She said you were—what's this you said of him, Mrs. Mainwaring—oh, it was very bad, sir. I think we must deprive her of all claim to the character of an artist. Do you know I was afraid to meet the original, in consequence of the gloomy colors in which she sketched what she intended, I suppose, should be the likeness."

"Well, my dear Miss Gourlay," observed Mrs. Mainwaring, "now that I have failed in doing justice to the portraits of two of my dearest friends, I think I will burn my palette and brushes, and give up portrait painting in future."

Mr. Mainwaring now rose up to take his usual stroll, but turning to Lucy before he went, he said,

"At all events, my dear Miss Gourlay, what between her painting and the worth of the original, permit me to say that this house is your home just as long as you wish. Consider Mrs. Mainwaring and me as parents to you; willing, nay, most anxious, in every sense, to contribute to your comfort and happiness. We are not poor, Miss Gourlay; but, on the contrary, both independent and wealthy. You must, therefore, want for nothing. I am, for as long as may be necessary, your parent, as I said, and your banker; and if you will permit me the honor, I would wish to add, your friend. Good-by, my dear child, I am going to take my daily ramble; but I am sure you are in safe hands when I leave you in my dear Martha's. Good-by, my love."

The amiable man took his golden-headed cane, and sauntered out to amuse himself among the fields, occasionally going into the town of Wicklow, taking a glance at the papers in the hotel, to which he generally added a glass of ale and a pipe.

It was not until he had left them that Lucy enjoyed an opportunity of pouring out, at full length, to her delicate-minded and faithful friend, the cause of her flight from home. This narrative, however, was an honorable proof of the considerate forbearance she evinced when necessarily alluding to the character and conduct of her father. Were it not, in fact, that Mrs. Mainwaring had from personal opportunity been enabled to thoroughly understand the temper, feelings, and principles of the worthy baronet, she would have naturally concluded that Lucy was a disobedient girl, and her father a man who had committed no other error than that of miscalculating her happiness from motives of excessive affection.

Mrs. Mainwaring heard it all with a calm and matronly benignity that soothed poor Lucy; for it was for the first time she had ever disclosed the actual state of her feelings to any one, with the exception of her late mother.

"Now, my dear Miss Gourlay——"

"Call me Lucy, Mrs. Mainwaring," said the affectionate girl, wiping her eyes, for we need not assure our readers that the recital of her sufferings, no matter how much softened down or modified, cost her many a bitter tear.

"I will indeed, my love, I will, Lucy," she replied, kissing her cheek, "if it gratifies you. Why should I not? But you know the distance there is between us."

"Oh, no, my dear Mrs. Mainwaring, no. What are the cold forms of the world but disguises and masks, under which the hardened and heartless put themselves in a position of false eminence over the humble and the good. The good are all equal over the earth, no matter what their relative situations may be; and on this account, not

withstanding my rank, I am scarcely worthy to sit at your feet."

Mrs. Mainwaring, with a kind of affectionate enthusiasm, put her hand upon the beautiful girl's hand, and was about to speak; but she paused for more than half a minute, during which space her serene and benevolent face assumed an expression of profound thought and seriousness. At length she sighed rather deeply, and said,

"My dear Lucy, it is too bad that the happiness of such a girl as you should be wrecked; but, worst of all, that it should be wrecked upon a most unprincipled profligate. You know the humbleness of my birth; the daughter of a decent farmer, wh. felt it a duty to give his children the only boon, except his blessing, that he had to bestow upon them—a good education. Well, my dear child, I beg that you will not be disheartened, nor suffer your spirits to droop. You will look surprised when I tell you that I think it more than probable, if I am capable of judging your father's heart aright, that I shall be able by a short interview with him to change the whole current of his ambition, and to bring about such a revulsion of feeling against Lord Dunroe, as may prevent him from consenting to your union with that nobleman under any circumstances. Nay, not to stop here; but that I shall cause him to look upon the breaking up of this contemplated marriage as one of the greatest blessings that could befall his family."

"Such an event might be possible," replied Lucy, "were I not unfortunately satisfied that papa is already aware of Dunroe's loose habits of life, which he views only as the giddiness of a young and buoyant spirit that marriage would reform. He says Dunroe is only sowing his wild oats, as, with false indulgence, he is pleased to term it. Under these circumstances, then, I fear he would meet you with the same arguments, and as they satisfy himself so you will find him cling to the dangerous theory they establish."

"But, Lucy, my dear child, you are quite mistaken in your estimate of the arguments which I should use, because you neither can know nor suspect their import. They apply not at all to Lord Dunroe's morals, I assure you. It is enough to say, at present, that I am not at liberty to disclose them; and, indeed, I never intended to do so; but as a knowledge of the secret I possess may not only promote your happiness, but relieve you from the persecution and misery you endure on this young nobleman's account, I think it becomes my duty to have an interview with your father on the subject."

"Before you do so, my dear madam," replied Lucy, "it is necessary that I should put you in possession of—of—" there was here a hesitation, and a blush, and a confusion of manner, that made Mrs. Mainwaring look at her with some attention.

"Take care, Lucy," she said smiling; "a previous engagement, I'll warrant me. I see you blush."

"But not for its object, Mrs. Mainwaring," she replied. "However, you are right; and papa is aware of it."

"I see, Lucy; and on that account he wishes to hurry on this hated marriage?"

"I think so."

"And what peculiar dislike has papa against the object of your choice?—are you aware?"

"The same he would entertain against any choice but his own—his great ambition The toil and labor of all his thoughts, hopes, and calculations, is to see me a countess before he dies. I know not whether to consider this as affection moved by the ambition of life, or ambition stimulated by affection."

"Ah, my dear Lucy, I fear very much that if your papa's heart were analyzed it would be found that he is more anxious to gratify his own ambition than to promote your happiness, and that, consequently, his interest in the matter altogether absorbs yours. But we need not discuss this now. You say he is aware of your attachment?"

"He is; I myself confessed it to him."

"Is he aware of the name and condition in life of your lover?"

"Alas, no! Mrs. Mainwaring. He has seen him, but that is all. He expressed, however, a fierce and ungovernable curiosity to know who and what he is; but, unfortunately, my lover, as you call him, is so peculiarly circumstanced, that I could not disclose either the one or the other."

"But, my dear Lucy, is not this secrecy, this clandestime conduct, on the part of your lover, wrong? Ought you, on the other hand, to entertain an attachment for any person who feels either afraid or ashamed to avow his name and rank? Pardon me, my love."

Lucy rose up, and Mrs. Mainwaring felt somewhat alarmed at the length she had gone, especially on observing that the lovely girl's face and neck were overspread with a deep and burning blush.

"Pardon you, my dear madam! Is it for uttering sentiments worthy of the purest friendship and affection, and such only as I would expect to proceed from your lips? But it is necessary to state, in my own defence, that beloved mamma was aware of, and sanctioned our attachment. A mystery there is, unquestionably, about my lover;

but it is one with which *she* was acquainted, for she told me so. It is not, however, upon this mystery or that mystery—but upon the truth, honor, delicacy, disinterestedness, of him to whom I have yielded my heart, that I speak. In true, pure, and exalted love, my dear Mrs. Mainwaring, there is an intuition of the heart which enables the soul to see into and comprehend its object, with a completeness of success as certain and effectual as the mission of an angel. When such love exists—and such only—all is soon known—the spirit is satisfied; and, except those lessons of happiness and delight that are before it, the heart, on that subject, has nothing more to learn. This, then, is my reply; and as for the mystery I speak of, every day is bringing us nearer and nearer to its disclosure, and the knowledge of his worth."

Mrs. Mainwaring looked on with wonder. Lucy's beauty seemed to brighten, as it were with a divine light, as she uttered these glowing words. In fact, she appeared to undergo a transfiguration from the mortal state to the angelic, and exemplified, in her own person—now radiant with the highest and holiest enthusiasm of love—all that divine purity, all that noble pride and heroic devotedness of heart, by which it is actuated and inspired. Her eyes, as she proceeded, filled with tears, and on concluding, she threw herself, weeping, into her friend's arms, exclaiming,

"Alas! my dear, dear Mrs. Mainwaring, I am not worthy of him."

Mrs. Mainwaring kissed, and cherished, and soothed her, and in a short time she recovered herself, and resumed an aspect of her usual calm, dignified, yet graceful beauty.

"Alas!" thought her friend, as she looked on her with mingled compassion and admiration, "this love is either for happiness or death. I now see, after all, that there is much of the father's character stamped into her spirit, and that the same energy with which he pursues ambition actuates his daughter in love. Each will have its object, or die."

"Well, my love," she exclaimed aloud, "I am sorry we permitted our conversation to take such a turn, or to carry us so far. You are, I fear, not yet strong enough for anything calculated to affect or agitate you."

"The introduction of it was necessary, my dear madam," replied Lucy; "for I need not say that it was my object to mention the subject of our attachment to you before the close of our conversation."

"Well, at all events," replied Mrs. Mainwaring, "we shall go and have a walk through the fields. The sun is bright and warm; the little burn below, and the thousand larks above, will give us their melody; and Cracton's park—our own little three-cornered paddock—will present us with one of the sweetest objects in the humble landscape—a green field almost white with daisies—pardon the little blunder, Lucy—thus constituting it a poem for the heart, written by the hand of nature herself."

Lucy, who enjoyed natural scenery with the high enthusiasm that was peculiar to her character, was delighted at the proposal, and in a few minutes both the ladies sauntered out through the orchard, which was now white and fragrant with blossoms.

As they went along, Mrs. Mainwaring began to mention some particulars of her marriage; a circumstance to which, owing to Lucy's illness, she had not until then had an opportunity of adverting.

"The truth is, my dear Lucy," she proceeded, "I am naturally averse to lead what is termed a solitary life in the world. I wish to have a friend on whom I can occasionally rest, as upon a support. You know that I kept a boarding-school in the metropolis for many years after my return from the Continent. That I was successful and saved some money are facts which, perhaps, you don't know. Loss of health, however, caused me to resign the establishment to Emily, your former governess; but, unfortunately, her health, like mine, gave way under the severity of its duties. She accordingly disposed of it, and accepted the important task of superintending the general course of your education, aided by all the necessary and usual masters. To this, as you are aware, she applied herself with an assiduity that was beyond her yet infirm state of health. She went to Cheltenham, where she recovered strength, and I undertook her duties until her return. I then sought out for some quiet, pretty, secluded spot, where I could, upon the fruits of my own industry, enjoy innocently and peacefully the decline of, I trust, a not unuseful life. Fortunately, I found our present abode, which I purchased, and which has been occasionally honored by your presence, as well as by that of your beloved mamma. Several years passed, and the widow was not unhappy; for my daughter, at my solicitation, gave up her profession as a governess, and came to reside with me. In the meantime, we happened to meet at the same party two individuals—gentlemen—who had subsequently the honor of carrying off the mother and daughter with flying colors. The one was Dr. Scareman, to whom Emily—my dear, unfortunate girl, had the misfortune to get married. He was a dark-faced, but handsome man—that is to say, he could bear a first glance or two, but

was incapable of standing anything like a close scrutiny. He passed as a physician in good practice, but as the marriage was—what no marriage ought to be—a hasty one—we did not discover, until too late, that the practice he boasted of consisted principally in the management of a mad-house. He is, I am sorry to say, both cruel and penurious—at once a miser and a tyrant—and if his conduct to my child is not kinder and more generous, I shall feel it my duty to bring her home to myself, where, at all events, she can calculate upon peace and affection. The doctor saw that Emily was beautiful—knew that she had money—and accordingly hurried on the ceremony.

"Such is the history of poor Emily's marriage. Now for my own.

"Mr. Mainwaring was, like myself, a person who had been engaged in educating the young. For many years he had conducted, with great success, a boarding-school that soon became eminent for the number of brilliant and accomplished men whom it sent into society and the institutions of the country. Like me, he had saved money—like me he lost his health, and like me his destiny conducted him to this neighborhood. We met several times, and looked at each other with a good deal of curiosity; he anxious to know what kind of animal an old schoolmistress was, and I to ascertain with what tribe an old school-master should be classed. There was something odd, if not comical, in this scrutiny; and the best of it all was, that the more closely we inspected and investigated, the more accurately did we discover that we were counterparts—as exact as the two sides of a tally, or the teeth of a rat-trap—with pardon to dear Mr. Mainwaring for the nasty comparison, whatever may have put it into my head. He, in fact, was an old school-master and a widower; I an old school-mistress and a widow; he wanted a friend and companion, so did I. Each finding that the other led a solitary life, and only required that solace and agreeable society, which a kind and rational companion can most assuredly bestow, resolved to take the other, as the good old phrase goes, for better for worse; and accordingly here we are, thank God, with no care but that which proceeds from the unfortunate mistake which poor Emily made in her marriage. The spirit that cemented our hearts was friendship, not love; but the holiness of marriage has consecrated that friendship into affection, which the sweet intercourse of domestic life has softened into something still more agreeable and tender. My girl's marriage, my dear Lucy, is the only painful thought that throws its shadow across our happiness."

"Poor Emily," sighed Lucy, "how little did that calm, sweet-tempered, and patient girl deserve to meet such a husband. But perhaps he may yet improve. If gentleness and affection can soften a heart by time and perseverance, his may yet become human."

Such was the simple history of this amiable couple, who, although enjoying as much happiness as is usually allotted to man and woman, were not, however, free from those characteristic traces that enabled their friends to recognize without much difficulty the previous habits of their lives.

"Mrs. Mainwaring," said Lucy, "I must write to my father. I cannot bear to think of the anguish he will feel at my sudden and mysterious disappearance. It will set him distracted, perhaps cause illness."

"Until now, my dear child, you know you had neither time, nor health, nor strength to do so; but I agree with you, and think without doubt you ought to make his mind as easy upon this point as possible. At the same time I do not see that it is necessary for you to give a clew to your present residence. Perhaps it would be better that I should see him before you think of returning; but of that we will speak in the course of the evening, or during to-morrow, when we shall have a little more time to consider the matter properly, and determine what may be the best steps to take."

CHAPTER XXIII.

A Lunch in Summerfield Cottage.

The little spot they strolled in was beautiful, from the natural simplicity of the sweet but humble scenery around them. They traversed it in every direction; sat on the sunny side of grassy eminences, gathered wild flowers, threw pebbles into the little prattling stream that ran over its stony bed before them; listened to and talked of and enjoyed the music of the birds as they turned the very air and hedges into harmony. Lucy thought how happy she could be in such a calm and delightful retreat, with the society of the man she loved, far from the intrigue, and pride, and vanity, and ambition of life; and she could scarcely help shuddering when she reflected upon the track of criminal ambition and profligacy into which, for the sake of an empty and perhaps a painful title, her father wished to drag her.

This train of thought, however, was dissipated by the appearance of Mr. Mainwaring, who had returned from his stroll, and came out to seek for them, accompanied by a young

officer of very elegant and gentlemanly appearance, whom he introduced as Captain Roberts, of the 33d, then quartered in Dublin.

As an apology for the fact of Mr. Mainwaring having introduced a stranger to Lucy, under circumstances where privacy was so desirable, it may be necessary to say here, that Mrs. Mainwaring, out of delicacy to Lucy, forbore to acquaint him even with a hint at the cause of her visit, so far as Lucy, on the morning of her arrival, had hastily and briefly communicated it to her. This she was resolved not to do without her express permission.

"Allow me, ladies, to present to you my friend, Captain Roberts, of the 33d—or, as another older friend of mine, his excellent father, terms it, the three times eleven—by the way, not a bad paraphrase, and worthy of a retired school-master like myself. It is turning the multiplication table into a vocabulary and making it perform military duty."

After the usual formalities had been gone through, Mr. Mainwaring, who was in peculiarly excellent spirits, proceeded:

"Of course you know, every officer when introduced or travelling is a captain—Captain—*a good travelling name!*—Vide the playbooks, *passim*. My young friend, however, is at the present—you remember *as in presenti*, Edward—only an ensign, but, please God, old as some of us are, Mrs. M. to wit—ahem! we will live to shake hands with him as captain yet."

"You mean, of course, my dear," said his wife, "that I will live to do so; the youngest, as the proverb has it, lives longest. No man, Mr. Roberts, will more regret the improbability of verifying his own wishes than Mr. Mainwaring."

"Ah, Martha! you're always too hard for me," he replied, laughing. "But you must know that this young officer, of whom I feel so proud, is an old pupil of mine, and received his education at my feet. I consequently feel a more than usual interest in him. But come, we lose time. It is now past two o'clock, and, if I don't mistake, there's a bit of cold ham and chicken to be had, and my walk has prepared me for lunch, as it usually does, and besides, Martha, there's an old friend of mine, his father, waiting for our return, to whom I must introduce you both, ladies, as a sample of the fine old soldier, who is a capital version of human nature."

On reaching the cottage they found our worthy friend, old Sam Roberts, in the garden, throwing crumbs of bread to a busy little flock of sparrows, behind one of the back windows that opened into it. His honest but manly face was lit up with all the eager and boisterous enjoyment of a child whilst observing with simple delight the fierce and angry quarrels of the parents, as they fought on behalf of their young, for the good things so providentially cast in their way.

"Come, now," said Sam. "I'm commissary-general for this day, and, for a miracle, an honest one—fight fair, you wretches—but I don't wonder at the spunk you show, for the rations, I can tell you, are better, poor things, than you are accustomed to. Hello, there! you, sir—you big fellow—you hulk of a cock—what business have you here? This is a quarrel among the ladies, sirrah, who are mothers, and it is for their young ones—on behalf of their children—they are showing fight; and you, sir, you overgrown glutton, are stuffing yourself, like many another 'foul bird' before you, with the public property. Shame, you little vulture! Don't you see they fly away when they have gotten an allowance, and give it to their starving children? D—— your principle, sir, it's a bad one. You think the strongest ought to take most, do you? Bravo! Well done, my little woman. Go on, you have right and nature on your side—that's it, peck the glutton—he's a rascal—a public officer—a commissary-general that—lay on him—well done—never mind military discipline—he's none of your officer—he's a robber—a bandit—and neither a soldier nor a gentleman—by fife and drum, that's well done. But it's all nature—all the heart of man."

"Well, old friend," said he, "and so this is your good lady. How do you do, ma'am? By fife and drum, Mr. Mainwaring, but it's a good match. You were made for one another. And this young lady your daughter, ma'am? How do you do, Miss Mainwaring?"

"My dear Mr. Roberts," said Mainwaring, "we are not so happy as to claim this young lady as a daughter. She is Miss Gourlay, daughter to Sir Thomas Gourlay, of Red Hall, now here upon a visit for the good of her health."

"How do you do, Miss Gourlay? I am happy to say that I have seen a young lady that I have heard so much of—so much, I ought to say, that was good of."

Lucy, as she replied, blushed deeply at this unintentional mention of her name, and Mrs. Mainwaring, signing to her husband, by putting her finger on her lips, hinted to him that he had done wrong.

Old Sam, however, on receiving this intelligence, looked occasionally, with a great deal

of interest, from Lucy to the young officer, and again from the young officer to Lucy; and as he did it, he uttered a series of ejaculations to himself, which were for the most part inaudible to the rest. "Ha!—dear me!—God bless me!—very strange!—right, old Corbet—right for a thousand—nature will prove it—not a doubt of it—God bless me!—how very like they are!—perfect brother and sister!—bless me—it's extraordinary—not a doubt of it. Bravo, Ned!"

"Come, ladies," said Mr. Mainwaring; "come, my friend, old Sam, as you like to be called, and you, Edward, come one, come all, till we try the cold ham and chicken. Miss Gou—ehem—come, Lucy, my dear, the short cut through the window; you see it opens, and now, Martha, your hand; but there is old Sam's. Well done, Sam; your soldier's ever gallant. Help Miss—help the young lady up the steps, Edward. Good! he has anticipated me."

In a few minutes they were enjoying their lunch, during which the conversation became very agreeable, and even animated. Young Roberts had nothing of the military puppy about him whatsoever. On the contrary, his deportment was modest, manly, and unassuming. Sensible of his father's humble, but yet respectable position, he neither attempted to swagger himself into importance by an affectation of superior breeding or contempt for his parent, nor did he manifest any of that sullen taciturnity which is frequently preserved, as a proof of superiority, or a mask for conscious ignorance and bad breeding; the fact being generally forgotten that it is an exponent of both.

"So, Edward, you like the army, then?" inquired Mr. Mainwaring.

"I do, sir," replied young Roberts; "it's a noble profession."

"Right, Ned—a noble profession—that's the word," said old Sam; "and so it is, my boy, and a brave and a generous one."

Lucy Gourlay and the young soldier had occasionally glanced at each other; and it might have been observed, that whenever they did so, each seemed surprised, if not actually confused.

"Is it difficult, Edward," asked Mainwaring, after they had taken wine together, "to purchase a commission at present?"

"It is not very easy to procure commissions just now," replied the other; "but you know, Mr. Mainwaring, that I had the honor to be raised from the ranks."

"Bravo, Ned!" exclaimed old Sam, slapping him on the back; "I am glad to see that you take that honor in its true light. Thousands may have money to buy a commission, but give me the man that has merit to deserve it; especially, Ned, at so young an age as yours."

"You must have distinguished yourself, sir," observed Lucy, "otherwise it is quite unusual, I think, to witness the promotion from the ranks of so young a man."

"I only endeavored to do my duty, madam," replied Roberts, bowing modestly, whilst something like a blush came over his cheek.

"Never mind him, Miss Gourlay," exclaimed Sam—"never mind; he *did* distinguish himself, and on more than one occasion, too, and well deserved his promotion. When one of the British flags was seized upon and borne off, after the brave fellow whose duty it was to defend it with his life had done so, and was cut down by three French soldiers, our gentleman here, for all so modest as he looks, pursued them, fought single-handed against the three, rescued the flag, and, on his way back, met the general, who chanced to be a spectator of the exploit; when passing near him, bleeding, for he had been smartly wounded, the general rides over to him. 'Is the officer who bore that flag killed?' he asked. 'He is, general,' replied Ned.—'You have rescued it?'—'I have, sir.'—'What is your name?'—He told him.—'Have you received an education?'—'A good education, general.'—'Very good,' proceeded the general. 'You have recovered the flag, you say?'—'I considered it my duty either to die or to do so, general,' replied Ned.—'Well said, soldier,' returned the general, 'and well done, too: as for the flag itself, you must only keep it for your pains. Your commission, young man, shall be made out. I will take charge of that myself.'—There, now, is the history of his promotion for you."

"It is highly honorable to him in every sense," observed Lucy. "But it was an awful risk of life for one man to pursue three."

"A soldier, madam," replied Roberts, bowing to her for the compliment, "in the moment of danger, or when the flag of his sovereign is likely to be sullied, should never remember that he has a life; or remember it only that it may be devoted to the glory of his country and the maintenance of her freedom."

"That's well said, Edward," observed Mr. Mainwaring; "very well expressed indeed. The clauses of that sentence all follow in a neat, consecutive order. It is, indeed, as well put together as if it were an exercise."

Edward could not help smiling at this unconscious trait of the old school-master peeping out.

"That general is a fine old fellow,"

said Sam, "and knew how to reward true courage. But you see, Mr. Mainwaring and ladies, it's all natural, all the heart of man."

"There's Mr. Mitchell, our clergyman," observed Mrs. Mainwaring, looking out of the window; "I wish he would come in. Shall I call him, dear?"

"Never mind now, my love," replied her husband. "I like the man well enough; he is religious, they say, and charitable, but his early education unfortunately was neglected. His sermons never hang well together; he frequently omits the *exordium*, and often winds them up without the peroration at all. Then he mispronounces shockingly, and is full of false quantities. It was only on last Sunday that he laid the accent on *i* in Dalilah. Such a man's sermons, I am sorry to say, can do any educated man little good. Here's a note, my love, from Mrs. Fletcher. I met the servant coming over with it, and took it from him. She wishes to hear from you in an hour or two: it's a party, I think."

He threw the note over to his wife, who, after apologizing to the company, opened, and began to read it.

Honest old Mainwaring was an excellent man, and did a great deal of good in a quiet way, considering his sphere of life. In attending to the sermon, however, when at church, he laid himself back in his pew, shut his eyes, put the end of his gold-headed cane to his lips, and set a criticising. If all the rhetorical rules were duly observed, the language clear, and the parts of the sermon well arranged, and if, besides, there was neither false accent, nor false quantity, nor any bad grammar, he pronounced it admirable, and praised the preacher to the skies. Anything short of this, however, he looked upon not only as a failure, but entertained strong doubts of the man's orthodoxy, as well as of the purity of his doctrine.

"Yes, my dear," replied Mrs. Mainwaring, after having glanced over the note, "you are right; it is a party; and we are both asked; but I wonder, above all things, that Miss Fletcher should never cross her t's; then the tails of her letters are so long that they go into the line below them, which looks so slovenly, and shows that her writing must have been very much neglected. I also know another fair neighbor of ours who actually puts '*for*' before the infinitive mood, and flourishes her large letters like copper-plate capitals that are only fit to appear in a merchant's books."

"But you know, my dear," said her husband, "that she is a grocer's widow, and, it is said, used to keep his accounts."

"That is very obvious, my dear; for, indeed, most of her invitations to tea are more like bills duly furnished than anything else. I remember one of them that ran to the following effect:

"'Mrs. Allspice presents compliments to Messrs. Mainwaring & Co.—to wit, Miss Norton'—this was my daughter—'begs to be favored, per return of post, as to whether it will suit convenience *for* to come on next Tuesday evening, half-past seven, to take a cup of the best flavored souchong, 7*s*. 6*d*. per lb., and white lump, Jamaica, 1*s*. per ditto, with a nice assortment of cakes, manufactured by ourselves. Punctuality to appointment expected.'"

"Well, for my part," said Sam, "I must say it's the entertainment I'd look to both with her and the parson, and neither the language nor the writing. Mrs. Mainwaring, will you allow me to propose a toast ma'am? It's for a fine creature, in her way; a lily, a jewel."

"With pleasure, Mr. Roberts," said that lady, smiling, for she knew old Sam must always have his own way.

"Well, then, fill, fill, each of you. Come, Miss Gourlay, if only for the novelty of the thing; for I dare say you never drank a toast before. Ned, fill for her. You're an excellent woman, Mrs. Mainwaring: and he was a lucky old boy that got you to smooth down the close of his respectable and useful life—at least, it was once useful—but we can't be useful always—well, of his harmless life—ay, that is nearer the thing. Yes, Mrs. Mainwaring, by all accounts you are a most excellent and invaluable woman, and deserve all honor."

Mrs. Mainwaring sat with a comely simper upon her good-natured face, looking down with a peculiar and modest appreciation of the forthcoming compliment to herself.

"Come now," Sam went on, "to your legs. You all, I suppose, know who I mean. Stand, if you please, Miss Gourlay. Head well up, and shoulders a little more squared, Mainwaring. Here now, are you all ready?"

"All ready," responded the gentlemen, highly amused.

"Well, then, here's my Beck's health! and long life to her! She's the pearl of wives, and deserves to live forever!"

A fit of good-humored laughter followed old Sam's toast, in which Mrs. Mainwaring not only came in for an ample share, but joined very heartily herself; that worthy lady taking it for granted that old Sam was about to propose the health of the hostess, sat still, while the rest rose; even Lucy stood up, with her usual grace and good-nature, and put the glass to her lips; and as it was the impression that the compli-

ment was meant for Mrs. Mainwaring, the thing seemed very like what is vulgarly called a bite, upon the part of old Sam, who in the meantime, had no earthly conception of anything else than that they all thoroughly understood him, and were aware of the health he was about to give.

"What!" exclaimed Sam, on witnessing their mirth; "by fife and drum, I see nothing to laugh at in anything connected with my Beck. I always make it a point to drink the old girl's health when I'm from home; for I don't know how it happens, but I think I'm never half so fond of her as when we're separated."

"But, Mr. Roberts," said Mrs. Mainwaring, laughing, "I assure you, from the compliments you paid me, I took it for granted that it was *my* health you were about to propose."

"Ay, but the compliments I paid you, ma'am, were all in compliment to old Beck; but next to her, by fife and drum, you deserve a bumper. Come, Mainwaring, get to legs, and let us have her health. Attention, now; head well up, sir; shoulders square; eye on your wife."

"It shall be done," replied Mainwaring, entering into the spirit of the joke. "If it were *ambrosia*, she is worthy of a brimmer. Come, then, fill your glasses. Edward, attend to Miss Gourlay. Sam, help Mrs. Mainwaring. Here, then, my dear Martha; like two winter apples, time has only mellowed us. We have both run parallel courses in life; you, in instructing the softer and more yielding sex; I, the nobler and more manly."

"Keep strictly to the toast, Matthew," she replied, "or I shall rise to defend our sex. You yielded first, you know. Ha, ha, ha!"

"As the stronger yields to the weaker, from courtesy and compassion. However, to proceed. We have both conjugated *amo* before we ever saw each other, so that our recurrence to the good old verb seemed somewhat like a Saturday's repetition. As for *docco*, we have been both engaged in enforcing it, and successfully, Martha"—here he shook his purse—"during the best portion of our lives; for which we have made some of the most brilliant members of society our debtors. *Lego* is now one of our principal enjoyments; sometimes under the shadow of a spreading tree in the orchard, during the serene effulgence of a summer's eve; or, what is still more comfortable, before the cheering blaze of the winter's fire, the blinds down, the shutters closed, the arm-chair beside the table—on that table an open book and a warm tumbler—and Martha, the best of wives—

"Attention, Mainwaring; my Beck's excepted."

"Martha, the best of wives—old Sam's Beck always excepted—sitting at my side. As for *audio*, the truth is, I have been forced to experience the din and racket of that same verb during the greater portion of my life, in more senses than I am willing to describe. I did not imagine, in my bachelor days, that the fermenting tumult of the school-room could be surpassed by a single instrument; but, alas!—well, it matters not now; all I can say is, that I never saw her—*heard* I mean, for I am on *audio*—that the performance of that same single instrument did not furnish me with a painful praxis of the nine parts of speech all going together; for I do believe that nine tongues all at work could not have matched her. But peace be with her! she is silent at last, and cannot *hear* me now. I thought I myself possessed an extensive knowledge of the languages, but, alas I was nothing; as a linguist she was without a rival. However, I pass that over, and return to the subject of my toast. Now, my dear Martha, since heaven gifted me with you——"

"Attention, Mainwaring! Eyes up to the ceiling, sir, and thank God!"

Mainwaring did so; but for the life of him could not help throwing a little comic spirit into the action, adding in an undertone that he wished to be heard. "Ah, my dear Sam, how glad I am that you did not bid me go farther. However, to proceed—No, my dear Martha, ever since our most felicitous conjugation, I hardly know what the exemplary verb *audio* means. I could scarcely translate it. Ours is a truly grammatical union. Not the nominative case with verb—not the relative with the antecedent—not the adjective with the substantive—affords a more appropriate illustration of conjugal harmony, than does our matrimonial existence. Peace and quietness, however, are on *your* tongue—affection and charity in your heart—benevolence in your hand, which is seldom extended empty to the poor—and, altogether, you are worthy of the high honor to which,"—this he added with a bit of good-natured irony—"partly from motives of condescension, and partly, as I said, from motives of compassion, I have, in the fulness of a benevolent heart, exalted you." The toast was then drank.

"Attention, ladies!" said Sam, who had been looking, as before, from the young officer to Lucy, and *vice versa*—"Mainwaring, attention! Look upon these two—upon Miss Gourlay, here, and upon Ned Roberts—and tell me if you don't think there's a strong likeness."

The attention of the others was instantly directed to an examination of the parties in question, and most certainly they were struck with the extraordinary resemblance.

"It is very remarkable, indeed, Mr. Roberts," observed their hostess, looking at them again; "and what confirms it is the fact, that I noticed the circumstance almost as soon as Mr. Roberts joined us. It is certainly very strange to find such a resemblance in persons not at all related."

Lucy, on finding the eyes of her friends upon her, could not avoid blushing; nor was the young officer's complexion without a somewhat deeper tinge.

"Now," said Mrs. Mainwaring, smiling, "the question is, which we are to consider complimented by this extraordinary likeness."

"The gentleman, of course, Mrs. Mainwaring," replied Sam.

"Unquestionably," said Edward, bowing to Lucy; "I never felt so much flattered in my life before, nor ever can again, unless by a similar comparison with the same fair object."

Another blush on the part of Lucy followed this delicate compliment, and old Sam exclaimed:

"Attention, Mainwaring! and you, ma'am," —addressing Mrs. Mainwaring. "Now did you ever see brother and sister more like? eh!"

"Very seldom ever saw brother and sister *so* like," replied Mainwaring. "Indeed, it is most extraordinary."

"Wonderful! upon my word," exclaimed his wife.

"Hum!—Well," proceeded Sam, "it is, I believe, very odd—very—and may be not, either—may be not so odd. Ahem!—and yet, still—however, no matter, it's all natural; all the heart of man—eh! Mainwaring?"

"I suppose so, Mr. Roberts; I suppose so."

After old Sam and his son had taken their departure, Lucy once more adverted to the duty as well as the necessity of acquainting her father with her safety, and thus relieving his mind of much anxiety and trouble. To this her friend at once consented. The baronet, in the meantime, felt considerably the worse for those dreadful conflicts which had swept down and annihilated all that ever had any tendency to humanity or goodness in his heart. He felt unwell—that is to say, he experienced none of those symptoms of illness which at once determine the nature of any specific malady. The sensation, however, was that of a strong man, who finds his frame, as it were, shaken—who is aware that something of a nameless apprehension connected with his health hangs over him, and whose mind is filled with a sense of gloomy depression and restlessness, for which he neither can account nor refer to any particular source of anxiety, although such in reality may exist. It appeared to be some terrible and gigantic hypochondriasis —some waking nightmare—coming over him like the shadow of his disappointed ambition, blighting his strength, and warning him, that when the heart is made the battle-field of the passions for too long a period, the physical powers will ultimately suffer, until the body becomes the victim of the spirit.

Yet, notwithstanding this feeling, Sir Thomas's mind was considerably relieved. Lucy had *not* eloped; but then, the rumor of her elopement had gone abroad. This, indeed, was bitter; but, on the other hand, time—circumstances—the reappearance of this most mysterious stranger—and most of all, Lucy's high character for all that was great and good, delicate and honorable, would ere long, set her right with the world. Nothing, he felt, however, would so quickly and decidedly effect this as her return to her father's roof; for this necessary step would at once give the lie to calumny.

In order, therefore, to ascertain, if possible, the place of her present concealment, he resolved to remove to his metropolitan residence, having taken it for granted that she had sought shelter there with some of her friends. Anxious, nervous, and gloomy, he ordered his carriage, and in due time arrived in Dublin.

Thither the stranger had preceded him. The latter, finding that Ballytrain could no longer be the scene of his operations, also sought the metropolis. Fenton had disappeared—Lucy was no longer there. His friend Birney was also in town, and as in town his business now lay, to town therefore he went.

In the meantime, we must turn a little to our friend Crackenfudge, who, after the rough handling he had received from the baronet, went home, if not a sadder and a wiser, at least a much sorer man. The unfortunate wretch was sadly basted. The furious baronet, knowing the creature he was, had pitched into him in awful style. He felt, however, when cooled down, that he had gone too far; and that, for the sake of Lucy, and in order to tie up the miserable wretch's babbling tongue, it was necessary that he should make some apology for such an unjustifiable outrage. He accordingly wrote him the following letter before he went to town:

"Dear Sir,—The nature of the communication which, I am sure from kind feelings,

you made to me the other day, had such an effect upon a temper naturally choleric, that I fear I have been guilty of some violence toward you. I am, unfortunately, subject to paroxysms of this sort, and while under their influence feel utterly unconscious of what I do or say. In your case, will you be good enough to let me know—whether I treated you kindly or otherwise; for the fact is, the paroxysm I speak of assumes an affectionate character as well as a violent one. Of what I did or said on the occasion in question I have no earthly recollection. In the meantime, I have the satisfaction to assure you that Miss Gourlay has not eloped, but is residing with a friend, in the metropolis. I have seen the gentleman to whom you alluded, and am satisfied that their journey to town was purely accidental. He knows not even where she is; but I do, and am quite easy on the subject. Have the kindness to mention this to all your friends, and to contradict the report of her elopement wherever and whenever you hear it.

"Truly yours,

THOMAS GOURLAY.

"Periwinkle Crackenfudge, Esq.

"P. S.—In the meantime, will you oblige me by sending up to my address in town a list of your claims for a seat on the magisterial bench. Let it be as clear and well worded as you can make it, and as authentic. You may color a little, I suppose, but let the groundwork be truth—if you can; if not truth—then that which comes as near it as possible. Truth, you know, is always better than a lie, unless where a lie happens to be better than truth.

"T. G."

To this characteristic epistle our bedrubbed friend sent the following reply:

"MY DEAR SIR THOMAS,—A' would give more than a'll mention to be gifted with your want of memory respecting what occurred the other day. Never man had such a memory of that dreadful transaction as a' have; from head to heel a'm all memory; from heel to head a'm all memory—up and down—round—about—across—here and there, and everywhere—a'm all memory; but in one particular place, Sir Thomas—ah! there's where a' suffer—however, it doesn't make no matter; a' only say that you taught me the luxury of an easy chair and a soft cushion ever since, Sir Thomas.

"Your letter, Sir Thomas, has given me great comfort, and has made me rejoice, although it is with groans a' do it, at the whole transaction. If you succeed in getting me the magistracy, Sir Thomas, it will be the most blessed and delightful basting that ever a lucky man got. If a' succeed in being turned into a bony fidy live magistrate, to be called 'your worship,' and am to have the right of fining and flogging and committing the people, as a' wish and hope to do, then a'll say that the hand of Providence was in it, as well as your foot, Sir Thomas. Now, that you have explained the circumstance, a' feel very much honored by the drubbing a' got, Sir Thomas; and, indeed, a' don't doubt, after all, but it was meant in kindness, as you say, Sir Thomas; and a'm sure besides, Sir Thomas, that it's not every one you'd condescend to drub, and that the man you would drub, Sir Thomas, must be a person of some consequence. A' will send you up my claims as a magistrate some of these days—that is, as soon as a' can get some long-headed fellow to make them out for me.

"And have the honor to be, my dear Sir Thomas, your much obliged and favored humble servant.

"PERIWINKLE CRACKENFUDGE.

"Sir Thomas Gourlay, Bart."

CHAPTER XXIV.

An Irish Watchhouse in the time of the "Charlies."

ANOTHER subject which vexed the baronet not a little was the loss of his money and pistols by the robbery; but what he still felt more bitterly, was the failure of the authorities to trace or arrest the robber. The vengeance which he felt against that individual lay like a black venomous snake coiled round his heart. The loss of the money and the fire-arms he might overlook, but the man, who, in a few moments, taught him to know himself as he was—who dangled him, as it were, over the very precipice of hell—with all his iniquities upon his head, the man who made him feel the crimes of a whole life condensed into one fearful moment, and showed them to him darkened into horror by the black lightning of perdition; such a man, we say, he could never forgive. It was in vain that large rewards were subscribed and offered, it was in vain that every effort was made to discover the culprit. Not only was there no trace of him got, but other robberies had been committed by a celebrated highwayman of the day, named Finnerty, whom neither bribe nor law could reach.

Our readers may remember, with reference to the robbery of the baronet, the fact of

Trailcudgel's having met the stranger on his way to disclose all the circumstances to the priest, and that he did not proceed farther on that occasion, having understood that Father M'Mahon was from home. Poor Trailcudgel, who, as the reader is aware, was not a robber either from principle or habit, and who only resorted to it when driven by the agonizing instincts of nature, felt the guilt of his crime bitterly, and could enjoy rest neither night nor day, until he had done what he conceived to be his duty as a Christian, and which was all he or any man could do: that is, repent for his crime, and return the property to him from whom he had taken it. This he did, as it is usually done, through the medium of his pastor; and on the very day after the baronet's departure both the money and pistols were deposited in Father M'Mahon's hands.

In a few days afterwards the worthy priest, finding, on inquiry, that Sir Thomas had gone to Dublin, where, it was said, he determined to reside for some time, made up his mind to follow him, in order to restore him the property he had lost. This, however, was not the sole purpose of his visit to the metropolis. The letter he had given the stranger to Corbet, or Dunphy, had not, he was sorry to find, been productive of the object for which it had been written. Perhaps it was impossible that it could; but still the good priest, who was as shrewd in many things as he was benevolent and charitable in all, felt strongly impressed with a belief that this old man was not wholly ignorant, or rather unconnected with the disappearance of either one or the other of the lost children. Be this, however, as it may, he prepared to see the baronet for the purpose already mentioned.

He accordingly took his place—an inside one—in the redoubtable "Fly," which, we may add, was the popular vehicle at the time, and wrapping himself up in a thick frieze cloak, or great coat, with standing collar that buttoned up across his face to the very eyes, and putting a shirt or two, and some other small matters, into a little bundle—tying, at the same time, a cotton kerchief over his hat and chin—he started on his visit to the metropolis, having very much the appearance of a determined character, whose dress and aspect were not, however, such as to disarm suspicion. He felt much more careful of the baronet's pocket-book than he did of his own, and contrived to place it in an inside pocket, which being rather small for it, he was obliged to rip a little in order to give it admittance. The case of pistols he slipped into the pockets of his jock, one in each, without ever having once examined them, or satisfied himself—simple man—as to whether they were loaded or not. His own pocket-book was carelessly placed in the right-hand pocket of the aforesaid jock, along with one of the pistols.

The night was agreeable, and nothing worth recording took place until they had come about five miles on the side of ——, when a loud voice ordered the coachman to stop.

"Stop the coach, sir!" said the voice, with a good deal of reckless and bitter expression in it; "stop the coach, or you are a dead man."

Several pistols were instantly leveled at both coachman and guard, and the same voice, which was thin, distinct, and wiry, proceeded—"Keep all steady now, boys, and shoot the first that attempts to move. I will see what's to be had inside."

He went immediately to the door of the "Fly," and opening it, held up a dark lantern, which, whilst it clearly showed him the dress, countenances, and condition of the passengers, thoroughly concealed his own.

The priest happened to be next him, and was consequently the first person on whom this rather cool demand was made.

"Come, sir," said the highwayman, "fork out, if you please; and be quick about it, if you're wise."

"Give a body time, if *you* plaise," responded the priest, who at that moment had about him all the marks and tokens of a farmer, or, at least, of a man who wished to pass for one. "I think," he added, "if you knew who you had, you'd not only pass me by, but the very coach I'm travelin' in. Don't be unaisy, man alive," he proceeded; "have patience—for patience, as everybody knows, is a virtue—do, then, have patience, or, maybe—oh! ay!—here it is—here is what you want—the very thing, I'll be bound—and you must have it, too." And the poor man, in the hurry and alarm of the moment, pulled out one of the baronet's pistols.

The robber whipped away the lantern, and instantly disappeared. "By the tarn, boys," said he, "it's Finnerty himself, disguised like a farmer. But he's mad to travel in a public coach, and the beaks on the lookout for him. Hello! all's right, coachman; drive on, we won't disturb you *this* night, at all events. Gee hup!—off you go; and off we go—with empty pockets."

It happened that this language, which the robber did not intend to have reached the ears of the passengers, was heard nevertheless, and from this moment until they changed horses at —— there was a dead silence in the coach.

On that occasion one gentleman left it, and he had scarcely been half a minute gone when a person, very much in the garb and bearing of a modern detective, put in his head, and instantly withdrew it, exclaiming,

"Curse me, it's a hit—he's inside as snug as a rat in a trap. Up with you on top of the coach, and we'll pin him when we reach town. 'Gad, this is a windfall, for the reward is a heavy one.—If we could now manage the baronet's business, we were made men."

He then returned into the coach, and took his seat right opposite the priest, in order the better to watch his motions, and keep him completely under his eye.

"Dangerous traveling by night, sir," said he, addressing the priest, anxious to draw his man into conversation.

"By night or by day, the roads are not very safe at the present time," replied his reverence.

"The danger's principally by night, though," observed the other. "This Finnerty is playing the devil, they say; and is hard to be nabbed by all accounts."

The observation was received by several hums, and hems, and has, and very significant ejaculations, whilst a fat, wealthy-looking fellow, who sat beside the peace-officer—for such he was—in attempting to warn him of Finnerty's presence, by pressing on his foot, unfortunately pressed upon that of the priest in mistake, who naturally interpreted the hems and has aforesaid to apply to the new-corner instead of himself. This cannot be matter of surprise, inasmuch as the priest had his ears so completely muffled up with the collar of his jock and a thick cotton kerchief, that he heard not the allusions which the robber had made outside the coach, when he mistook him for Finnerty. He consequently peered very keenly at the last speaker, who to tell the truth, had probably in his villanous features ten times more the character and visage of a highwayman and cutthroat than the redoubtable Finnerty himself.

"It's a wonder," said the priest, "that the unfortunate man has not been taken."

"Hum!" exclaimed the officer; "*unfortunate man.* My good fellow, that's very mild talk when speaking of a robber. Don't you know that all robbers deserve the gallows, eh?"

"I know no such thing," replied the priest. "Many a man has lived by robbing, in his day, that now lives by catching them; and many a poor fellow, as honest as e'er an individual in this coach——"

"That's very shocking language," observed a thin, prim, red-nosed lady, with a vinegar aspect, who sat erect, and apparently fearless, in the corner of the coach—"very shocking language, indeed. Vhy, my good man, should you form any such wile kimparison?"

"Never mind, ma'am; never mind," said the officer, whose name was Darby; "let him proceed; from what he is about to say, I sha'n't be surprised if he justifies robbery—not a bit—but will be a good deal, if he don't. Go on, my good fellow."

"Well," proceeded the priest, "I was going to say, that many a poor wretch, as honest as e'er an individual, man or woman——"

Here there was, on the part of the lady, an indignant toss of the head, and a glance of supreme scorn leveled at the poor priest; whilst Darby, like a man who had generously undertaken the management of the whole discussion, said, with an air of conscious ability, if not something more, "never mind him, ma'am; give him tether."

"As honest," persisted the priest, "as e'er an individual, man or woman, in this coach—and maybe, if the truth were known, a good deal honester than some of them."

"Good," observed the officer; "I agree with you in *that*—right enough there."

The vinegar lady, now apprehensive that her new ally had scandalously abandoned her interests, here dropped her eyes, and crossed her hands upon her breast, as if she had completely withdrawn herself from the conversation.

"I finds," said she to herself, in a contemptuous soliloquy, "as how there aint no gentleman in this here vehicle."

"Just pay attention, ma'am," said the officer—"just pay attention, that's all."

This, however, seemed to have no effect—at least the lady remained in the same attitude, and made no reply.

"Suppose now," proceeded the priest, "that an unfortunate father, in times of scarcity and famine, should sit in his miserable cabin, and see about him six or seven of his family, some dying of fever, and others dying from want of food; and suppose that he was driven to despair by reflecting that unless he forced it from the rich who would not out of their abundance prevent his children from starving, he can procure them relief in no other way, and they must die in the agonies of hunger before his face. Suppose this, and that some wealthy man, without sympathy for his fellow-creatures, regardless of the cries of the poor—heartless, ambitious, and oppressive; and suppose besides that it was this very heartless and oppressive man of wealth who, by his pride and tyranny, and unchristian vengeance, drove that poor

man and his wretched family to the state I have painted them for you, in that cold and dreary hovel; suppose all this, I say, and that that wretched poor man, his heart bursting, and his brain whirling, stimulated by affection, goaded by hunger and indescribable misery; suppose, I say, that in the madness of despair he sallies out, and happens to meet the very individual who brought him and his to such a dreadful state —do you think that he ought to let him pass——"

"I see," interrupted the officer, "without bleeding him; I knew you would come to that—go along."

"That he ought to let that wealthy oppressor pass, and allow the wife of his bosom and his gasping little ones to perish, whilst he knows that taking that assistance from him by violence which he ought to give freely would save them to society and him? Mark me, I'm not justifying robbery. Every general rule has its exception; and I'm only supposing a case where the act of robbery may be more entitled to compassion than to punishment—but, as I said, I'm not defending it."

"Ain't you, faith?" replied the officer; "it looks devilish like it, though. Don't you think so, ma'am?"

"I never listens to no nonsense like that ere," replied the lady. "All I say is, that a gentleman as I've the honor of being acquainted with, 'as been robbed the other night of a pocket-book stuffed with banknotes, and a case of Hirish pistols that he kept to shoot robbers, and sich other wulgar wretches as is to be found nowhere but in Hireland."

"Stuffed!" exclaimed the priest, disdainfully; "as much stuffed, ma'am, as you are."

The officer's very veins tingled with delight on hearing the admission which was involved in the simple priest's exclamation. He kept it, however, to himself, on account of the large reward that lay in the background.

"I stuffed!" exclaimed the indignant lady, whose thin face had for a considerable time been visible, for it was long past dawn; "I defy you, sir," she replied, "you large, nasty, Hirish farmer, as feeds upon nothing but taters. I stuffed!—no lady—you nasty farmer —goes without padding, which is well known to any man as is a gentleman. But stuffed! I defy you, nasty Paddy; I was never stuffed. Those as stuff use 'oss 'air; now I never uses 'oss 'air."

"If you weren't stuffed, then," replied the priest, who took a natural disrelish to her affectation of pride and haughtiness, knowing her as he now did—"many a better woman was. If you weren't, ma'am, it wasn't your own fault. Sir Thomas Gourlay's English cook need never be at a loss for plenty to stuff herself with."

This was an extinguisher. The heaven of her complexion was instantly concealed by a thick cloud in the shape of a veil. She laid herself back in the corner of the carriage, and maintained the silence of a vanquished woman during the remainder of the journey.

On arriving in town the passengers, as is usual, betook themselves to their respective destinations. Father M'Mahon, with his small bundle under his arm, was about to go to the Brazen Head Tavern, when he found himself tapped on the shoulder by our friend Darby, who now held a pistol in his hand, and said:

"There are eight of us, Mr. Finnerty, and it is useless to shy Abraham. You're bagged at last, so come off quietly to the office."

"I don't understand you," replied the priest, who certainly felt surprised at seeing himself surrounded by so many constables, for it was impossible any longer to mistake them. "What do you mean, my friend? or who do you suppose me to be?"

The constable gave him a knowing wink, adding with as knowing an air—"It's no go here, my lad—safe's the word. Tramp for the office, or we'll clap on the wrist-buttons. We know you're a shy cock, Mr. Finnerty, and rather modest, too—that's the cut. Simpson, keep the right arm fast, and, you, Gamble, the left, whilst we bring up the rear. In the meantime, before he proceeds a step, I, as senior, will take the liberty to—just—see—what—is—here," whilst, suiting the word to the action, he first drew a pistol from the left pocket, and immediately after another from the right, and—shades of Freney and O'Hanlon!—the redoubtable pocket-book of Sir Thomas Gourlay, each and all marked not only with his crest, but his name and title at full length.

The priest was not at a moment's loss how to act. Perceiving their mistake as to his identity, and feeling the force of appearances against him, he desired to be conducted at once to the office. There he knew he could think more calmly upon the steps necessary to his liberation than he could in a crowd which was enlarging every moment, on its being understood that Finnerty, the celebrated highwayman, had been at length taken. Not that the crowd gave expression to any feeling or ebullition that was at all unfriendly to him. So far from that, it gathered round him with strong expressions of sympathy and compassion for his unhappy fate. Many were the anecdotes reported to each other by the spectators of his humanity—his charity—his benevolence to the

poor; and, above all, of his intrepidity and courage; for it may be observed here—and we leave moralists, metaphysicians, and political economists to draw whatever inferences they please from the fact—but fact it is—that in no instance is any man who has violated the law taken up publicly, on Irish ground, whether in town or country, that the people do not uniformly express the warmest sympathy for him, and a strong manifestation of enmity against his captors. Whether this may be interpreted favorably or otherwise of our countrymen, we shall not undertake to determine. As Sir Roger de Coverly said, perhaps much might be advanced on both sides.

On entering the watch-house, the heart of the humane priest was painfully oppressed at the scenes of uproar, confusion, debauchery, and shameless profligacy, of which he saw either the present exhibition or the unquestionable evidences. There was the lost and hardened female, uttering the wild screams of intoxication, or pouring forth from her dark, filthy place of confinement torrents of polluted mirth; the juvenile pickpocket, ripe in all the ribald wit and traditional slang of his profession; the ruffian burglar, with strong animal frame, dark eyebrows, low forehead, and face full of coarseness and brutality; the open robber, reckless and jocular, indifferent to consequences, and holding his life only in trust for the hangman, or for some determined opponent who may treat him to cold lead instead of pure gold; the sneaking thief, cool and cowardly, ready-witted at the extricating falsehood—for it is well known that the thief and liar are convertible terms—his eye feeble, cunning, and circumspective, and his whole appearance redolent of duplicity and fraud; the receiver of stolen goods, affecting much honest simplicity; the good creature, whether man or woman, apparently in great distress, and wondering that industrious and unsuspecting people, struggling to bring up their families in honesty and decency, should be imposed upon and taken in by people that one couldn't think of suspecting. There, too, was the servant out of place, who first a forger of discharges, next became a thief, and heroically adventuring to the dignity of a burglar for which he had neither skill nor daring, was made prisoner in the act; and there he sits, half drunk, in that corner, repenting his failure instead of his crime, forgetting his cowardice, and making moral resolutions with himself, that, should he escape now, he will execute the next burglary in a safe and virtuous state of sobriety. But we need not proceed: there was the idle and drunken mechanic, or, perhaps, the wife, whose Saturday night visits to the tap-room in order to fetch him home, or to rescue the wages of his industry from the publican, had at length corrupted herself.

Two other characters were there which we cannot overlook, both of whom had passed through the world with a strong but holy scorn for the errors and failings of their fellow-creatures. One of them was a man of gross, carnal-looking features, trained, as it seemed to the uninitiated, into a severe and sanctified expression by the sheer force of religion. His face was full of godly intolerance against everything at variance with the one thing needful, whatever that was, and against all who did not, like himself, travel on fearlessly and zealously Zionward. He did not feel himself justified in the use of common and profane language; and, consequently, his vocabulary was taken principally from the Bible, which he called "the Lord's word." Sunday was not Sunday with him, but "the Lord's day;" and he never went to church in his life, but always to "service." Like most of his class, however, he seemed to be influenced by that extraordinary anomaly which characterizes the saints—that is to say, as great a reverence for the name of the devil as for that of God himself; for in his whole life and conversation he was never known to pronounce it as we have written it. Satan—the enemy—the destroyer, were the names he applied to him: and this, we presume, lest the world might suspect that there subsisted any private familiarity between them. His great ruling principle, however, originated in what he termed a godless system of religious liberality; in other words, he attributed all the calamities and scourges of the land to the influence of Popery, and its toleration by the powers that be. He was a big-boned, coarse man, with black, greasy hair, cut short; projecting cheek-bones, that argued great cruelty; dull, but lascivious eyes; and an upper lip like a dropsical sausage. We forget now the locality in which he had committed the offence that had caused him to be brought there. But it does not much matter; it is enough to say that he was caught, about three o'clock, perambulating the streets, considerably the worse for liquor, and not in the best society. Even as it was, and in the very face of those who had detected him so circumstanced, he was railing against the ungodliness of our "rulers," the degeneracy of human nature, and the awful scourges that the existence of Popery was bringing on the land.

As it happened, however, this worthy representative of his class was not without a

counterpart among the moral inmates of the watch-house. Another man, who was known among his friends as a Catholic voteen, or devotee, happened to have been brought to the same establishment, much in the same circumstances, and for some similar offence. When compared together, it was really curious to observe the extraordinary resemblance which these two men bore to each other. Each was dressed in sober clothes, for your puritan of every creed must, like his progenitors the Pharisees of old, have some peculiarity in his dress that will gain him credit for religion. Their features were marked by the same dark, sullen shade which betokens intolerance. The devotee was thinner, and not so large a man as the other; but he made up in the cunning energy which glistened from his eyes for the want of physical strength, as compared with the Protestant saint; not at all that he was deficient in it *per se*, for though a smaller man, he was better built and more compact than his brother. Indeed, so nearly identical was the expression of their features—the sensual Milesian mouth, and naturally amorous temperament, hypocrisized into formality, and darkened into bitterness by bigotry—that on discovering each other in the watch-house, neither could for his life determine whether the man before him belonged to idolatrous Rome on the one hand, or the arch heresy on the other.

There they stood, exact counterparts, each a thousand times more anxious to damn the other than to save himself. They were not long, however, in discovering each other, and in a moment the jargon of controversy rang loud and high amidst the uproar and confusion of the place. The Protestant saint attributed all the iniquity by which the land, he said, was overflowed, and the judgments under which it was righteously suffering, to the guilt of our rulers, who forgot God, and connived at Popery.

The Popish saint, on the other hand, asserted that so long as a fat and oppressive heresy was permitted to trample upon the people, the country could never prosper. The other one said, that idolatry—Popish idolatry—was the cause of all; and that it was the scourge by which "the Lord" was inflicting judicial punishment upon the country at large. If it were not for that he would not be in such a sink of iniquity at that moment. Popish idolatry it was that brought him there; and the abominations of the Romish harlot were desolating the land.

The other replied, that perhaps she was the only harlot of the kind he would run away from; and maintained, that until all heresy was abolished, and rooted out of the country, the curse of God would sit upon them, as the corrupt law church does now in the shape of an overgrown nightmare. What brought him, who was ready to die for his persecuted church, here? He could tell the heretic;—it was Protestant ascendancy, and he could prove it;—yes, Protestant ascendancy, and nothing else, was it that brought him to that house, its representative, in which he now stood. He maintained that it resembled a watch-house; was it not full of wickedness, noise, and blasphemy; and were there any two creeds in it that agreed together, and did not fight like devils?

How much longer this fiery discussion might have proceeded it is difficult to say. The constable of the night, finding that the two hypocritical vagabonds were a nuisance to the whole place, had them handcuffed together, and both placed in the black hole to finish their argument.

In short, there was around the good man—vice, with all her discordant sounds and hideous aspects, clanging in his ear the multitudinous din that arose from the loud and noisy tumult of her brutal, drunken, and debauched votaries.

The priest, who respected his cloth and character, did not lay aside his jock, nor expose himself to the coarse jests and ruffianly insolence with which the vagabond minions of justice were in those days accustomed to treat their prisoners. He inquired if he could get a person to carry a message from him to a man named Corbet, living at 25 Constitution Hill; adding, that he would compensate him fairly. On this, one of those idle loungers or orderlies about such places offered himself at once, and said he would bring any message he wished, provided he forked out in the first instance.

"Go, then," said the priest, handing him a piece of silver, "to No. 25 Constitution Hill, where a man named Corbet—what am I saying—Dunphy, lives, and tell him to come to me immediately."

"Ha!" said Darby, laying his finger along his nose, as he spoke to one of his associates, "I smell an *alias* there. Good; first Corbet and then Dunphy. What do you call that? That chap is one of the connection. Take the message, Skipton; mark him well, and let him be here, if possible, before we bring the prisoner to Sir Thomas Gourlay's."

The fellow winked in reply, and approaching the priest, asked,

"What message have you to send, Mr. Finnerty?"

"Tell him—but stay; oblige me with a slip of paper and a pen, I will write it down."

"Yes, that's better," said Darby. "Nothing like black and white, you know," he added, aside to Skipton.

Father M'Mahon then wrote down his office only; simply saying, "The parish priest of Ballytrain wishes to see Anthony Dunphy as soon as he can come to him."

This description of himself excited roars of laughter throughout the office; nor could the good-natured priest himself help smiling at the ludicrous contrast between his real character and that which had been affixed upon him.

"Confound me," said Darby, "but that's the best *alias* I have heard this many a day. It's as good as Tom Green's that was hanged, and who always stuck to his name, no matter how often he changed it. At one time it was Ivy, at another Laurel, at another Yew, and so on, poor fellow, until he swung." Skipton, the messenger, took the slip of paper with high glee, and proceeded on his embassy to Constitution Hill.

He had scarcely been gone, when a tumult reached their ears from outside, in which one voice was heard considerably louder and deeper than the rest; and almost immediately afterwards an old acquaintance of the reader's, to wit, the worthy student, Ambrose Gray, in a very respectable state of intoxication, made his appearance, charged with drunkenness, riot, and a blushing reluctance to pay his tavern reckoning. Mr. Gray was dragged in at very little expense of ceremony, it must be confessed, but with some prospective damage to his tailor, his clothes having received considerable abrasions in the scuffle, as well as his complexion, which was beautifully variegated with tints of black, blue, and yellow.

"Well, Mr. Gray," said Darby, "back once more I see? Why, you couldn't live without us, I think. What's this now?"

"A deficiency of assets, most potent," replied Gray, with a hiccough—"unable to meet a rascally tavern reckoning;" and as Mr. Gray spoke he thrust his tongue into his cheek, intimating by this significant act his high respect for Mr. Darby.

"You had better remember, sir, that you are addressing the senior officer here," said the latter, highly offended.

"Most potent, grave, and reverend senior, I don't forget it; nor that the grand senior can become a most gentlemanly ruffian whenever he chooses. No, senior, I respect your ruffianship, and your ruffianship ought to respect me; for well you wot that many a time before now I've greased that absorbing palm of yours."

"Ah," replied Darby, "the hemp is grown for you, and the rope is purchased that will soon be greased for your last tug. Why didn't you pay your bill, I say?"

"I told you before, most potent, that that fact originated in a deficiency of assets."

"I rather think, Mr. Gray," said Darby, "that it originated in a very different kind of deficiency—a deficiency of inclination, my buck."

"In both, most reverend senior, and I act on scriptural principles; for what does patient Job say? 'Base is the slave that pays.'"

"Well, my good fellow, if you don't pay, you'll be apt to receive, some fine day, that's all," and here he made a motion with his arm, as if he were administering the cat-o'-nine-tails; "however, this is not my business. Here comes Mrs. Mulroony to make her charge. I accordingly shove you over to Ned Nightcap, the officer for the night."

"Ah!" exclaimed Gray, "I see, most potent, you have operated before. Row-de-dow-de-dow, my boy. There was a professional touch in that jerk that couldn't be mistaken: that quiver at the wrist was beautiful, and the position of the arm a perfect triangle. It must have been quite a pleasure to have suffered from such a scientific hand as yours. How do you do again, Mrs. Mulroony? Mrs. Mulroony, I hope you did not come without some refreshment. And you'll withdraw the charge, for the sake of futurity, Mrs. Mulroony."

"If you do, Mrs. Mulroony," said Darby, "I'm afraid you'll have to look to futurity for payment. I mean to that part of it commonly called 'to-morrow comenever.'—Make your charge, ma'am."

Here a pale-faced, sinister-looking old fellow, in a red woollen nightcap, with baggy protuberances hanging under his red bleared eyes, now came to a little half door, inside of which stood his office for receiving all charges against the various delinquents that the Charlies, or watchmen of the period, had conducted to him.

"Here," said he, in a hoarse, hollow voice, "what's this—what's this? Another charge against you, Mr. Gray? Garvy," said he, addressing a watchman, "tell them vagabones that if they don't keep quiet I'll put them in irons."

This threat was received with a chorus of derision by those to whom it was addressed, and the noise was increased so furiously, that it resembled the clamor of Babel.

"Here, Garvy," said honest Ned, "tickle some of them a bit. Touch up that bullet-headed house-breaker that's drunk—Sam Stancheon, they call him—lave a nate impression of the big kay on his head; he'll undherstand it, you know; and there's

Molly Brady, or Emily Howard, as she calls herself, give her a clink on the noddle to stop her jinteelity. Blast her pedigree; nothing will serve her but she must be a lady on our hands. Tell her I'll not lave a copper ring or a glass brooch on her body if she's not quiet."

The watchman named Garvy took the heavy keys, and big with the deputed authority, swept, like the destroying angel upon a small scale, through the tumultuous crew that were assembled in this villanous pandemonium, thrashing the unfortunate vagabonds on the naked head, or otherwise, as the case might be, without regard to age, sex, or condition, leaving bumps, welts, cuts, oaths, curses, and execrations, *ad infinitum*, behind him. Owing to this distribution of official justice a partial calm was restored, and the charge of Mrs. Mulroony was opened in form.

"Well, Mrs. Mulroony, what charge is this you have against Misther Gray?"

"Because," replied Ambrose, "I wasn't in possession of assets to pay her own. Had I met her most iniquitous charge at home, honest Ned, I should have escaped the minor one here. You know of old, Ned, how she lost her conscience one night, about ten years ago; and the poor woman, although she put it in the 'Hue and Cry,' by way of novelty, never got it since. None of the officers of justice knew of such a commodity; *ergo*, Ned, I suffer."

Here Mr. Ambrose winked at Ned, and touched his breeches pocket significantly, as much as to say, "the bribe is where you know."

Ned, however, was strictly impartial, and declined, with most commendable virtue, to recognize the signal, until he saw whether Mrs. Mulroony did not understand "generosity" as well as Mr. Gray.

"Misther Gray, I'll thank you to button your lip, if you plaise. It's all very right, I suppose; but in the manetime let daicent Mrs. Mulroony tell her own story. How is it, ma'am?"

"Faith, plain enough," she replied; "he came in about half past five o'clock, with three or four skips from college——"

"Scamps, Mrs. Mulroony. Be just, be correct, ma'am. We were all gentlemen scamps, Ned, from college. Everybody knows that a college scamp is a respectable character, especially if he be a divinity student, a class whom we are proud to place at our head. You are now corrected, Mrs. Mulroony—proceed."

"Well; he tould me to get a dinner for five; but first asked to see what he called 'the bill of hair.'"

"In your hands it is anything but a bill of rights, Mrs. Mulroony."

"I tould him not to trouble himself; that my dinner was as good as another's, which I thought might satisfy him; but instead o' that, he had the assurance to ask me if I could give them hair soup. I knew very well what the skip was at."

"Scamp, ma'am, and you will oblige me."

"For if grief for poor Andy (weeping), that suffered mainly for what he was as innocent of as the unborn child—if grief, an every one knows it makes the hair to fall; an' afther all it's only a bit of a front I'm wearin';—ah, you villain, it was an ill-hearted cut, that."

"It wasn't a cut did it, Mrs. Mulroony; it fell off naturally, and by instalments—or rather it *was* a cut, and that was what made you feel it; that youthful old gentleman, Time, gave it a touch with a certain scythe he carries. No such croppy as old Time, Mrs. Mulroony." On concluding, he winked again at old Ned, and touched his pocket as before.

"Mr. Amby, be quiet," said Ned, rather complacently though, "an' let daicent Mrs. Mulroony go on."

"'Well, then,' says he, 'if you haven't 'hair-soup,' which was as much as to say—makin' his own fun before the strangers—that I ought to boil my very wig to plaise him—my front, I mane, 'maybe,' says he, 'you have oxtail.' Well, flesh and blood could hardly bear that, and I said it was a scandal for him to treat an industrious, unprojected widow in such a way; 'if you want a dinner, Mr. Gray,' says I, 'I can give you and your friends a jacketful of honest corned beef and greens.' Well, my dear——"

At this insinuating expression of tenderness, old Ned, aware, for the first time, that she was a widow, and kept that most convenient of establishments, an eating-house, cocked his nightcap, with great spirit and significance, and with an attempt at a leer, which, from the force of habit, made him look upon her rather as the criminal than the accuser, he said—"It was scandalous, Mrs. Mulroony; and it is a sad thing to be unprotected, ma'am; it's a pity, too, to see sich a woman as you are without somebody to take care of her, and especially one that id undherstand swindlin'. But what happened next, ma'am?"

"Why, my dear—indeed, I owe you many thanks for your kindness—you see, my dear,"—the nightcap here seemed to move and erect itself instinctively—"this fellow turns round, and says to the other four skips—'Gentlemen,' says he, 'could you conde—condescend,' I think it was—yes—'could you condescend to dine upon corned beef

and greens? They said, not unless it would oblige him; and then he said it wasn't to oblige him, but to save the house he did it. So, to make a long story short, they filled themselves with my victuals, drank seven tumblers of punch each, kept playin' cards the whole night, and then fell a fightin'—smashed glass, delft, and everything; and when it was mornin', slipped out, one by one, till I caught my skip here, the last of them——"

"Scamp, Mrs. Roony; a gentleman scamp, known to every one as a most respectable character on town."

"When I caught him going off without payment, he fairly laughed in my face, and offered to toss me."

"Oh, the villain!" said Ned; "I only wish I had been there, Mrs. Mulroony, and you wouldn't have wanted what I am sorry to see you do want—a protector. The villain, to go to toss such a woman—to go to take such scandalous liberties! Go on, ma'am—go on, my dear Mrs. Mulroony."

"Well, my dear, he offered, as I said, to toss me for it—double or quits—and when I wouldn't stand that, he asked me if I would allow him to kiss it in, at so many kisses a-day; but I told him that coin wouldn't pass wid me."

"He's a swindler, ma'am; no doubt of it, and you'll never be safe till you have some one to protect you that understands swindlin' and imposition. Well, ma'am—well, my dear ma'am, what next?"

"Why, he then attempted to escape; but as I happened to have a stout ladle in my hand, I thought a good basting wouldn't do him any harm, and while I was layin' on him two sailors came in, and they took him out of my hands."

"Out of the frying-pan into the fire, you ought to say, Mrs. Mulroony."

"So he and they fought, and smashed another lot of glass, and then I set out and charged him on the watch. Oh, murdher sheery—to think the way my beautiful beef and greens went!"

Here Mr. Ambrose, approaching Mrs. Mulroony, whispered—"My dear Mrs. Mulroony, remember one word—FUTURITY; heir apparent—heir direct; so be moderate, and a short time will place you in easy circumstances. The event that's coming will be a stunner."

"What's that he's sayin' to you, my dear Mrs. Mulroony?" asked Ned; "don't listen to him, he'll only soodher and palaver you. I'll take your charge, and lock him up."

"Darby," said Mr. Gray, now approaching that worthy, "a single word with you—we understand one another—I intended to bribe old Ned, the villain; but you shall have it."

"Very good, it's a bargain," replied the virtuous Darby; "fork out."

"Here, then, is ten shillings, and bring me out of it."

Darby privately pocketed the money, and moving toward Ned, whispered to him—"Don't take the charge for a few minutes. I'll fleece them both. Amby has given me half-a-crown; another from her, and then half and half between us. Mrs. Mulroony, a word with you. Listen—do you wish to succeed in this business?"

"To be sure I do; why not?"

"Well, then, if you do, slip me five shillings, or you're dished, like one of your own dinners, and that Amby Gray will slice you to pieces. Ned's his friend at heart, I tell you."

"Well, but you'll see me rightified?"

"Hand the money, ma'am; do you know who you're speaking to? The senior of the office."

On receiving the money, the honest senior whispers to the honest officer of the night—"A crown from both, that is, half from each; and now act as you like; but if you take the widow's charge, we'll have a free plate, at all events, whenever we call to see her, you know."

Honest Ned, feeling indignant that he was not himself the direct recipient of the bribes, and also anxious to win favor in the widow's eyes, took the charge against Mr. Gray, who was very soon locked up, with the "miscellanies," in the black hole, until bail could be procured.

On finding that matters had gone against him, Gray, who, although unaffected in speech, was yet rather tipsy, assumed a look of singular importance, as if to console himself for the degradation he was about to undergo; he composed his face into an expression that gave a ludicrous travesty of dignity.

"Well," said he, with a solemn swagger, nodding his head from side to side as he spoke, in order to impress what he uttered with a more mysterious emphasis—"you are all acting in ignorance, quite so; little you know who the person is that's before you; but it doesn't signify—I am somebody, at all events."

"A gentleman in disguise," said a voice from the black hole. "You'll find some of your friends here."

"You are right, my good fellow—you are perfectly right;" said Ambrose, nodding with drunken gravity, as before; "high blood runs in my veins, and time will soon tell that; I shall stand and be returned for

the town of Ballytrain, as soon as there comes a dissolution; I'm bent on that."

"Bravo! hurra! a very proper member you'll make for it," from the black hole.

"And I shall have the Augean stables of these corrupt offices swept of their filth. Ned, the scoundrel, shall be sent to the right about; Mr. Darby, for his honesty, shall have each wrist embraced by a namesake."

Here he was shoved by Garvy, the watchman, head foremost into the black hole, after having received an impulse from behind, kindly intended to facilitate his ingress, which, notwithstanding his drunken ambition, the boast of his high blood, and mighty promises, was made with extraordinary want of dignity.

Although we have described this scene nearly in consecutive order, without the breaks and interruptions which took place whilst it proceeded, yet the reader should imagine to himself the outrage, the yelling, the clamor, the by-battles, and scurrilous contests in the lowest description of blackguardism with which it was garnished; thus causing it to occupy at least four times the period we have ascribed to it. The simple-minded priest, who could never have dreamt of such an exhibition, scarcely knew whether he was asleep or awake, and sometimes asked himself whether it was not some terrible phantasm by which he was startled and oppressed. The horrible impress of naked and hardened villany—the light and mirthful delirium of crime—the wanton manifestations of vice, in all its shapes, and the unblushing front of debauchery and profligacy—constituted, when brought together in one hideous group, a sight which made his heart groan for human nature on the one hand, and the corruption of human law on the other.

"The contamination of vice here," said he to himself, "is so concentrated and deadly, that innocence or virtue could not long resist its influence. Alas! alas!"

Old Dunphy now made his appearance; but he had scarcely time to shake hands with the priest, when he heard himself addressed from between the bars of Gray's *limbo*, with the words,

"I say, old Corbet, or Dunphy, or whatever the devil they call you; here's a relation of yours by the mother's side only, you old dog—mark that; here I am, Ambrose Gray, a gentleman in disguise, as you well know; and I want you to bail me out."

"An' a respectable way you ax it," said Dunphy, putting on his spectacles, and looking at him through the bars.

"Respect! What, to a beggarly old huckster and kidnapper! Why, you penurious slicer of musty bacon—you iniquitous dealer in light weights—what respect are you entitled to from *me?* You know who I am—and you must bail me. Otherwise never expect, when the time comes, that I shall recognize you as a base relative, or suffer you to show your ferret face in my presence."

"Ah!" exclaimed the old man, bitterly; "the blood is in you."

"Right, my old potatomonger; as true as gospel, and a great deal truer. The blood *is* in me."

"Ay," replied the other, "the blood of the oppressor—the blood of the villain—the blood of the unjust tyrant is in you, and nothing else. If you had his power, you'd be what he is, and maybe, worse, if the thing was possible. Now, listen; I'll make the words you just said to me the bitterest and blackest to yourself that you ever spoke. That's the last information I have for you; and as I know that you're just where you ought to be, among the companions you are fit for, there I leave you."

He then turned toward the priest, and left Gray to get bail where he might.

When Skipton, the messenger, who returned with Dunphy, or Corbet, as we shall in future call him, entered the watch-house, he drew Darby aside, and held some private conversation with him, of which it was evident that Corbet was the subject, from the significant glances which each turned upon him from time to time.

In the meantime, the old man, recognizing the priest rather by his voice than his appearance, lost no time in acquainting the officers of justice that they were completely mistaken in the individual. The latter had briefly mentioned to him the circumstance and cause of his arrest.

"I want you," said the priest, "to go to Sir Thomas Gourlay directly, and tell him that I have his money and pistols quite safe, and that I was on my way up to town with them, when this unpleasant mistake took place."

"I will, your reverence," said he, "without loss of time. I see," he added, addressing Darby and the others, "that you have made a mistake here."

"What mistake, my good man?" asked Darby.

"Why, simply, that instead of a robber, you have been sharp enough to take up a most respectable Catholic clergyman from Ballytrain."

"What," said Darby, "a Popish priest! Curse me, but that's as good, if not better, than the other thing. No Papist is allowed, under the penalty of a felony, to carry arms, and here is a Popish priest travelling with

pistols. The other thing, Skipton, was only for the magistrates, but this is a government affair."

"He may be Finnerty, after all," replied Skipton, aside; "this old fellow is no authority as to his identity, as you may guess from what I told you."

"At all events," replied Darby, "we shall soon know which he is—priest or robber; but I hope, for our own sakes, he'll prove a priest on our hands. At any rate the magistrates are now in the office, and it's full time to bring his reverence up."

Corbet, in the meantime, had gone to Sir Thomas Gourlay's with his reverence's message, and in a few minutes afterwards the prisoner, strongly guarded, was conducted to the police office.

CHAPTER XXV.

The Police Office—Sir Spigot Sputter and Mr. Coke—An Unfortunate Translator—Decision in "a Law Case."

It is not our intention to detail the history of occurrences that are calculated to fill the mind with sorrow, not unmingled with disgust, or to describe scenes that must necessarily lower our estimate of both man and woman. On the bench sat two magistrates, of whom we may say that, from ignorance of law, want of temper, and impenetrable stupidity, the whole circle of commercial or professional life could not produce a pair more signally unqualified for the important offices they occupied. One of them, named Sputter, Sir Spigot Sputter, was an old man, with a red face and perpetual grin, whose white hair was cropped close; but in compensation for this he wore powder and a queue, so that his head, except in vivacity of motion, might not inappropriately be compared to an overgrown tadpole struggling to get free from his shoulders, and escape to the nearest marsh. He also wore a false eye, which gave him a perennial blink that was sadly at variance with magisterial dignity. Indeed the consequences of it were sometimes ludicrous enough. When, for instance, one of those syrens who perambulate our fashionable streets after the sun has gone down, happened to be brought up to answer some charge that came under his jurisdiction, Sir Spigot's custom always was to put his glass to the safe eye, and peer at her in the dock; which act, when taken in connection with the grin and the droop of the glass eye, seemed to the spectators as if he and she understood each other, and that the wink in question was a kind of telegraphic dispatch sent to let her know that she had a friend on the bench. Sir Spigot was deaf, too, a felicitous circumstance, which gave him peculiar facility in the decision of his cases.

The name of his brother on the bench was Coke, who acted in the capacity of what is termed a law magistrate. It is enough, however, to say, that he was a thin man, with a long, dull face, a dull eye, a dull tongue, a dull ear, and a dull brain. His talents for ambiguity were surprising, and it always required a hint from the senior of the office, Darby, to enable him to understand his own decisions. This, however, was not without some beneficial consequences to the individuals before him; as it often happened, that when he seemed to have committed some hardened offender, after the infliction of a long, laborious, obscure harangue, he has immediately ordered him to be discharged. And, on the contrary, when some innocent individual heard with delight the sentence of the court apparently in his favor, judge of what he must have felt on finding himself sent off to Newgate, Kilmainham, or the Penitentiary. In this instance, however, the advantage to the public was nearly equal; for if the guilty escaped in one case, so did the innocent in another. Here now is where Darby became useful; for Darby, who was well acquainted with his style, and with his meaning, when he had any, always interpreted his decisions to him, and told him in a whisper, or on a slip of paper, whether he had convicted the prisoner, or not.

We shall detail one case which occurred this morning. It happened that an amiable and distinguished literary gentleman, an LL.D., and a barrister, had lost from his library a book on which he placed great value, and he found this book on a stall not very far from the office. On seeing the volume he naturally claimed it, and the woman who had received it from the thief, who was a servant, refused to give it up, unless the money she had paid for it were returned to her. Neither would the wretch disclose the name of the thief, but snapped her fingers in Dr. A——'s face, saying she defied him, and that he could only bring her before Mr. Coke, who, she knew very well, would see justice done her. She lived by buying books, she said, and by selling books; and as he lived by writing books, she thought it wasn't handsome of him to insult the profession by bringing such a blackguard charge against them in *her* name.

He summoned her, however, and the case was one of the first called on the morning in question. The receiver of the stolen book

came forward, with much assurance, as defendant, and modest Dr. A—— as plaintiff; when Sir Spigot, putting his glass to his eye, and looking from the one to the other with his wink and grin as usual, said to Darby:

"What is this man here for?"

"It's a law case, your worship," replied the senior officer.

Coke, who sat solemn and silent, looked at the doctor, and said:

"Well, sir, what is your case? Please to state it."

The case, being a very plain and brief one, was soon stated, the woman's reply was then heard, after which Mr. Coke looked graver than before, and proceeded somewhat to the following effect:

"This is a case of deep interest to that important portion of the bibliopolist profession who vend their wares on stalls."

"Thank your worship," said the woman, with a courtesy.

"This most respectable body of persons, the booksellers—[another courtesy from the woman]—are divided into several classes; first, those who sell books in large and splendid shops; next, those who sell them in shops of less pretension; thirdly, those who sell them on stalls in thoroughfares, and at the corners of streets; fourthly, those who carry them in baskets, and who pass from place to place, and combine with the bookselling business that of flying stationer; and fifthly, those who do not sell them at all, but only read them; and as those who read, unless they steal or borrow, must purchase, I accordingly class them as booksellers indirectly, inasmuch as if they don't sell books themselves, they cause others to do so. For this reason it is evident that every man living, and woman too, capable of reading a book, is a bookseller; so that society at large is nothing but one great bookselling firm.

"Having thus established the immense extent and importance of the business, I now proceed to the consideration of the case before us. To steal a book is not in every case an offence against the law of libel, nor against the law of arson, nor against the law of insurrection, nor against the law of primogeniture; in fact, it is only against the law of theft—it offends only one law—and is innocent with respect to all the others. A person stealing a book could not be indicted under the statute of limitations, for instance; except, indeed, in so far as he may be supposed to limit the property of the person from whom he stole it. But on this point the opinion of the learned Folderol would go pretty far, were it not for the opinion of another great man, which I shall presently quote. Folderol lays it down as a fixed principle in an able treatise upon the law of weathercocks, that if property be stolen from an individual, without the aggregate of that property suffering reduction or diminution, he is not robbed, and the crime of theft has not been committed. The other authority that I alluded to, is that of his great and equally celebrated opponent, Tolderol, who lays it down on the other hand, that when a thief, in the act of stealing, leaves more behind him than he found there at first, so that the man stolen from becomes richer by the act of theft than he had been before it, the crime then becomes *duplicis delicti*, or one of harum-scarum, according to Doodle, and the thief deserves transportation or the gallows. And the reason is obvious if the property of the person stolen from, under the latter category, were to be examined, and that a larger portion of it was found there than properly had belonged to him before the theft, he might be suspected of theft himself, and in this case a double conviction of the parties would ensue; that is, of him who did not take what he ought, and of him who had more than he was entitled to. This opinion, which is remarkable for its perspicuity and soundness, is to be found in the one hundred and second folio of Logerhedius, tome six hundred, page 9763.

"There is another case bearing strongly upon the present one, in 'Snifter and Snivell's Reports,' vol. 86, page 1480, in which an old woman, who was too poor to purchase a Bible, stole one, and was prosecuted for the theft. The counsel for the prosecution and the defence were both equally eminent and able. Counsellor Sleek was for the prosecution and Rant for the defence. Sleek, who was himself a religious barrister, insisted that the *locus delicti* aggravated the offence, inasmuch as she had stolen the Bible out of a church; but Rant maintained that the *locus delicti* was a *prima facie* evidence of her innocence, inasmuch as she only complied with a precept of religion, which enjoins all sinners to seek such assistance toward their spiritual welfare as *the church* can afford them.

"Sleek argued that the principle of theft must have been innate and strong, when the respect due to that sacred edifice was insufficient to restrain her from such an act—an act which constituted sacrilege of a very aggravated kind.

"Rant replied, that the motive and not the act constituted the crime. There was *prima facie* proof that she stole it for pious purposes—to wit, that she might learn therefrom a correct principle for the conduct of

her life. It was not proved that the woman had sold the book, or pledged it, or in any other way disposed of it for her corporal or temporal benefit; the inference, therefore, was, that the motive, in the first place, justified the act, which was *in se* a pious one; and, besides, had the woman been a thief, she would have stolen the plate and linen belonging to the altar; but she did not, therefore there existed on her part no consciousness nor intention of wrong.

"Sleek rejoined, that if the woman had felt any necessity for religious advice and instruction, she would have gone to the minister, whose duty it was to give it.

"Rant replied, that upon Sleek's own principles, if the minister had properly discharged *his* duty, the woman would have been under no necessity for taking the Bible at all; and that, consequently, in a strict spirit of justice, the theft, if theft it could be called, was not the theft of the old woman, but that of the minister himself, who had failed to give her proper instructions. It was the duty of the minister to have gone to the old woman, and not that of the old woman to have gone to the minister; but, perhaps, had the woman been young and handsome, the minister might have administered consolation.

"I find that Sleek here made a long speech about religion, which he charged Rant with insulting; he regretted that a false humanity had repealed some of those stringent but wholesome laws that had been enacted for the preservation of holy things, and was truly sorry that this sacrilegious old wretch could not be brought to the stake. He did not envy his learned friend the sneering contempt for religion that ran through his whole argument.

"Rant bowed and smiled, and replied that, in his opinion, the only stake the poor woman ought to be brought to was a beefsteak; for he always wished to see the law administered with mercy.

"Sleek was not surprised at hearing such a carnal argument brought to the defence of such a crime, and concluded by pressing for the severest punishment the law could inflict against this most iniquitous criminal, who—and he dared even Rant himself to deny the fact—came before that court as an *old* offender; he therefore pressed for a conviction against a person who had acted so flagrantly *contra bonos mores*.

"Rant said, she could not or ought not to be convicted. This Bible was not individual property; it was that of a parish that contained better than eighteen thousand inhabitants. Now, if any individual were to establish his right of property in the Bible, and she herself was a proprietress as well as any of them the amount would be far beneath any current coin of the realm, consequently there existed no legal symbol of property for the value of which a conviction could be had.

"As I perceive, however," added Mr. Coke, "that the abstract of the arguments in this important case runs to about five hundred pages, I shall therefore recapitulate Judge Nodwell's charge, which has been considered a very brilliant specimen of legal acumen and judicial eloquence.

"'This, gentlemen of the jury,' said his lordship, 'is a case of apparently some difficulty, and I cannot help admiring the singular talent and high principles displayed by the learned counsel on both sides, who so ably argued it. Of one thing I am certain, that no consciousness of religious ignorance, no privation of religious knowledge, could ever induce my learned friend Sleek to commit such a theft. Rather than do so, I am sure he would be conscientious enough to pass through the world without any religion at all. As it is, we all know that he is a great light in that respect——'

"'He would be a burning light, too, my lord,' observed Rant.

"No; his reverence for the Bible is too great, too sincere to profane it by such vulgar perusal as it may have received at the hands of that destitute old woman, who probably thumbed it day and night, without regard either to dog-ears or binding, or a consideration of how she was treating the property of the parish. The fact, however, gentlemen, seems to be, that the old woman either altogether forgot the institutions of society, or resolved society itself in her own mind into first principles. Now, gentlemen, we cannot go behind first principles, neither can we go behind the old woman. We must keep her before us, but it is not necessary to keep the Bible so. It has been found, indeed, that she did not sell, pledge, bestow, or otherwise make the book subservient to her temporal or corporal wants, as Mr. Rant very ingeniously argued. Neither did she take it to place in her library—for she had no library; nor for ostentation in her hall—for she had no hall, as my pious friend Counsellor Sleek has. But, gentlemen, even if this old woman by reading the Bible learned to repent, and felt conversion of heart, you are not to infer that the act which brought her to grace and repentance may not have been a *hardened violation of the law*. Beware of this error, gentlemen. The old woman by stealing this Bible may have repented her of her sins, it is true; but it is your business, gentlemen, to make her repent of the law also. The law

is as great a source of repentance as the Bible any day, and, I am proud to say, has caused more human tears to be shed, and bitterer ones, too, than the Word of God ever did. Even although justified in the sight of heaven, it does not follow that this woman is to escape here. It is the *act*, and not the *heart*, that the law deals with. The purity of her motives, her repentance, are nothing to the law; but the law is everything to the person in whom they operate; because, although the heart may be innocent, the individual person must be punished. A penitent heart, or a consciousness of the pardon of God, are not fit considerations for a jury-box. You are, therefore, to exclude the motive, and to take nothing into consideration but the act; for it is only that by which the law has been violated.

"'But is there no such thing as mercy, my lord?' asked a juror.

"In the administration of the law there is such a fiction—a beautiful negation, indeed—but we know that Justice always holds the first place, and when she is satisfied, then we call in Mercy. Such, at least, is the wholesome practice and constitutional spirit of British law. I have now, gentlemen, rendered you every assistance in my power. If you think this old woman guilty, you will find accordingly; if not, you will give her the benefit of any doubt in her favor which you may entertain.

"The woman," continued Coke, "was convicted, and here follows the sentence of the judge.

"Martha Dotinghed—you have been convicted by the verdict of twelve as intelligent and respectable gentlemen as I ever saw in a jury-box; convicted, I am sorry to say, very properly, of a most heinous crime, that of attempting to work out your salvation in an improper manner—to wit, by making illegally free with the Word of God.

"'In troth, my lord,' replied the culprit, 'the Word of God is become so scarce nowadays, that unless one steals it, they have but a poor chance of coming by it honestly, or hearing it at all."

"You have been convicted, I say, notwithstanding a most able defence by your counsel, who omitted no argument that could prove available for your acquittal; and I am sorry to hear from your own lips, that you are in no degree penitent for the crime you have committed. You say, the Word of God is scarce nowadays—but that fact, unhappy woman, only aggravates your guilt—for in proportion to the scarcity of the Word of God, so is its value increased—and we all know that the greater the value of that which is stolen, the deeper, in the eye of the law, is the crime of the thief. Had you not given utterance to those impenitent expressions, the court would have been anxious to deal mercifully with you. As it is, I tell you to prepare for the heaviest punishment it can inflict, which is, that you be compelled to read some one of the Commentaries upon the Book you have stolen, once, at least, before you die, should you live so long, and may God have mercy on you!

"Here the prisoner fell into strong hysterics, and was taken away in a state of insensibility from the dock.

"Now," proceeded Coke, closing the ponderous tome, "I read this case from a feeling that it bears very strongly upon that before us. Saponificus, the learned and animated civilian, in his reply to the celebrated treatise of 'Rigramarolius de Libris priggatis,' commonly called his Essay on Stolen Books, asserts that there never yet was a book printed but was more or less stolen; and society, he argues, in no shape, in none of its classes—neither in the prison, lockup, blackhole, or penitentiary—presents us with such a set of impenitents and irreclaimable thieves as those who write books. Theft is their profession, and gets them the dishonest bread by which they live. These may always read the eighth commandment by leaving the negative out, and then take it in an injunctive sense. Such persons, in prosecuting another for stealing a book, cannot come into court with clean hands. Felons in literature, therefore, appear here with a very bad grace in prosecuting others for the very crime which they themselves are in the habit of committing."

"But, your worship," said Dr. A——, "this charge against authors cannot apply to me; the book in question is a translation."

"Pooh!" exclaimed Coke, "*only* a translation! But even so, has it notes or comments?"

"It has, your worship; but they——"

"And, sir, could you declare solemnly, that there is nothing stolen in the notes and comments, or introduction, if there is any?"

The doctor, "Ehem! hem!"

"But in the meantime," proceeded Coke, "here have I gone to the trouble of giving such a profound decision upon a mere translation!!! Who is the translator?"

"I am myself, your worship; and in this case I am both plaintiff and translator."

"That, however," said Coke, shaking his head solemnly, "makes the case against you still worse."

"But, your worship, there is no case against me. I have already told you that I

am plaintiff and translator; and, with great respect, I don't think you have yet given any decision whatever."

"I have decided, sir," replied Coke, "and taken the case I read for you as a precedent."

"But in that case, your worship, the woman was convicted."

"And so she is in this, sir," replied Coke. "Officer, put Biddy Corcoran forward. Biddy Corcoran, you are an old woman, which, indeed, is evident from the nature of your offence, and have been convicted of the egregious folly of purchasing a translation, which this gentleman says was compiled or got up by himself. This is conduct which the court cannot overlook, inasmuch as if it were persisted in, we might, God help us, become inundated with translations. I am against translations—I have ever been against them, and I shall ever be against them. They are immoral in themselves, and render the same injury to literature that persons of loose morals do to society. In general, they are nothing short of a sacrilegious profanation of the dead, and I would almost as soon see the ghost of a departed friend as the translation of a defunct author, for they bear the same relation. The regular translator, in fact, is nothing less than a literary ghoul, who lives upon the mangled carcasses of the departed—a mere sack-'em-up, who disinters the dead, and sells their remains for money. You, sir, might have been better and more honestly employed than in wasting your time upon a translation. These are works that no men or class of men, except bishops, chandlers, and pastrycooks, ought to have anything to do with; and as you, I presume, are not a bishop, nor a chandler, nor a pastrycook, I recommend you to spare your countrymen in future. Biddy Corcoran, as the court is determined to punish you severely, the penalty against you is, that you be compelled to read the translation in question once a week for the next three months. I had intended to send you to the treadmill for the same space of time: but, on looking more closely into the nature of your offence, I felt it my duty to visit you with a much severer punishment."

"That, your worship," replied the translator, "is no punishment at all; instead of that, it will be a pleasure to read my translation, and as you have pronounced her to be guilty, it goes in the very teeth of your decision."

"What—what—what kind of language is this, sir?" exclaimed Sir Spigot Sputter. "This is disrespect to the court, sir. In the teeth of his decision! His worship's decision, sir, has no teeth."

"Indeed, on second thoughts, I think not, sir," replied the indignant wit and translator; "it is indeed a very toothless decision, and exceedingly appropriate in passing sentence upon an old woman in the same state."

"Eh—eh," said Sir Spigot, "which old woman? who do you mean, sir? Yourself or the culprit? Eh? eh?"

"Your worship forgets that there are four of us," replied the translator.

"Well, sir! well, sir! But as to the culprit—*that* old woman there—having no teeth, that is not her fault," replied Sir Spigot; "if she hasn't teeth, she has gum enough—eh! eh! you must admit that, sir."

"You all appear to have gum enough," replied the wit, "and nothing *but* gum, only it is *gum arabic* to me, I know."

"You have treated this court with disrespect, sir," said Coke, very solemnly; "but the court will uphold its dignity. In the meantime you are fined half-a-crown."

"But, your worship," whispered Darby, "this is the celebrated Dr. A——, a very eminent man."

"I have just heard, sir," proceeded Coke, "from the senior officer of the court, that you are a very eminent man; it may be so, and I am very sorry for it. *I* have never heard your name, however, nor a syllable of your literary reputation, before; but as it seems you are an eminent man, I take it for granted that it must be in a private and confidential way among your particular friends. I will fine you, however, another half-crown for the eminence."

"Well, gentlemen," replied the doctor. "I have heard of many 'wise saws and modern instances,' but——"

"What do you mean, sir?" said Sir Spigot. "Another insult! You asserted, sir, already, that Mr. Coke's decision had teeth——"

"But I admitted my error," replied the other.

"And now you mean to insinuate, I suppose, that his worship's saws are handsaws. You are fined another half-crown, sir, for the handsaw."

"And another," said Coke, "for the *gum arabic*."

The doctor fearing that the fines would increase thick and threefold, forthwith paid them all, and retired indignantly from the court.

And thus was the author of certainly one of the most beautiful translations in any language, at least in his own opinion, treated by these two worthy administrators of the law. *

* A fact.

CHAPTER XXVI.

The Priest Returns Sir Thomas's Money and Pistols —A Bit of Controversy—A New Light Begins to Appear.

Very fortunately for the priest he was not subjected to an examination before these worthies. Sir Thomas Gourlay, having heard of his arrest and the cause of it, sent a note with his compliments, to request that he might be conducted directly to his residence, together with his pocket-book and pistols, assuring them, at the same time, that their officers had committed a gross mistake as to his person.

This was quite sufficient, and ere the lapse of twenty minutes Father M'Mahon, accompanied by Skipton and another officer, found himself at the baronet's hall-door. On entering the hall, Sir Thomas himself was in the act of passing from the breakfast parlor to his study above stairs, leaning upon the arm of Gibson, the footman, looking at the same time pale, nervous, and unsteady upon his limbs. The moment Skipton saw him, he started, and exclaimed, as if to himself, but loud enough for the priest to hear him:

"'Gad! I've seen *him* before, once upon a time; and well I remember the face, for it is not one to be forgotten."

The baronet, on looking round, saw the priest, and desired him to follow them to his study.

"I beg your pardon, Sir Thomas," said the officer, "we now place his reverence safely in your hands; here, too, is your pocket-book and pistols."

"Hand them to him, sir," replied the baronet, nodding toward the priest; "and that is enough."

"But, Sir Thomas——"

"What is it, sir? Have you not done your duty?"

"I hope so, sir; but if it would not be troublesome, sir, perhaps you would give us a receipt; an acknowledgment, sir."

"For what?"

"For the priest's body, sir, in the first place, and then for the pocket-book and pistols."

"If I were a little stronger," replied the baronet, in an angry voice, "I would write the receipt upon your own body with a strong horsewhip; begone, you impudent scoundrel!"

Skipton turned upon him a bitter and vindictive look, and replied, "Oh, very well, sir—come, Tom, you are witness that I did my duty."

Sir Thomas on entering the study threw himself listlessly on a sofa, and desired Gibson to retire.

"Take a seat, sir," said he, addressing Father M'Mahon. "I am far from well, and must rest a little before I speak to you; I know not what is the matter with me, but I feel all out of sorts."

He then drew a long breath, and laid his head upon his hand, as if to recover more clearly the powers of his mind and intellect. His eyes, full of thought not unmingled with anxiety, were fixed upon the carpet, and he seemed for a time wrapped in deep and painful abstraction. At length he raised himself up, and drawing his breath apparently with more freedom began the conversation.

"Well, sir," said he, in a tone that implied more of authority and haughtiness than of courtesy or gentlemanly feeling; "it seems the property of which I have been robbed has come into your possession."

"It is true, sir: and allow me to place it in your own hands exactly as I got it. I took the precaution to seal the pocket-book the moment it was returned to me, and although it was for a short time in possession of the officers of justice, yet it is untouched, and the seal I placed on it unbroken."

The baronet's hand, as he took the pocket-book, trembled with an agitation which he could not repress, although he did everything in his power to subdue it; his eye glittered with animation, or rather with delight, as he broke the seal.

"It was very prudently and correctly done of you, sir, to seal up the pocket-book; very well done, indeed: and I am much obliged to you so far, although we must have some conversation upon the matter immediately."

"I only did what, as a Catholic clergyman, Sir Thomas, and an honest man, I conceived to be my duty."

"What—what—what's this?" exclaimed the baronet, his eye blazing with rage and disappointment. "In the name of hell's fire, sir, what is this? My money is not all here! There is a note, sir, a one pound note wanting; a peculiar note, sir; a marked note; for I always put a marked note among my money, to provide against the contingency of such a robbery as I sustained. Pray, sir, what has become of that note? I say, priest, the whole pocket-book ten times multiplied, was not worth a fig compared with the value I placed upon that note."

"How much did you lose, Sir Thomas?" asked the priest calmly.

"I lost sixty-nine pounds, sir"

"Well, then," continued the other, "would it not be well to see whether that sum is in

the pocket-book. You have not yet reckoned the money."

"The note I speak of was in a separate compartment; in a different fold of the book; apart from the rest."

"But perhaps it has got among them? Had you not better try, sir?"

"True," replied the other; and with eager and trembling hands he examined them note by note; but not finding that for which he sought, he stamped with rage, and dashing the pocket-book, notes and all, against the floor, he ground his teeth, and approaching the priest with the white froth of passion rising to his lips, exclaimed, "Hark you, priest, if you do not produce the missing note, I shall make you bitterly repent it! You know where it is, sir! You could understand from the note itself——" He paused, however, for he felt at once that he might be treading dangerous ground in entering into particulars. "I say, sir," he proceeded, with a look of menace and fury, "if you refuse to produce the note I speak of, or to procure it for me, I shall let you know to your cost what the power of British law can effect."

The priest rose up with dignity, his cheek heightened with that slight tinge, which a sense of unmerited insult and a consciousness of his own integrity render natural to man—so long as he is a man.

"Sir Thomas Gourlay," he proceeded, "upon your conduct and want of gentlemanly temper since I have entered this apartment it is not my intention to make any comment; but I need not tell you that the minister of God is received in Christian society with the respect due to his sacred office."

"Minister of the devil, sir," thundered the baronet; "do you think that I shall be influenced by this slavish cant? Where is the note I speak of? If you do not produce it, I shall consider you an accomplice after the fact, and will hold you responsible as such. Remember, you are but a Popish priest."

"That is a fact, sir, which I shall always recollect with an humble sense of my own unworthiness; but so long as I discharge its duties conscientiously and truly, I shall also recollect it with honor. Of the note you allude to in such unbecoming words, I know nothing; and as to your threats, I value them not."

"If you know nothing of the note, sir, you do certainly of the robber."

"I do, Sir Thomas; I know who the man is that robbed you."

"Well, sir," replied the other, triumphantly, "I am glad you have acknowledged so much. I shall force you to produce him. At least I shall take care that the law will make you do so."

"Sir Thomas Gourlay, I beg you to understand that there is a law beyond and above your law—the law of God—the law of Christian duty; and *that* you shall never force me to transgress. The man who robbed you in a moment of despair and madness, repented him of the crime; and the knowledge of that crime, and its consequent repentance were disclosed to me in one of the most holy ordinances of our religion."

"Is it one of the privileges of your religion to throw its veil over the commission of crime? If so, the sooner your religion is extirpated out of the land the better for society."

"No, sir, our religion does not throw its veil over the criminal, but over the penitent. We leave the laws of the land to their own resources, and aid them when we can; but in the case before us, and in all similar cases, we are the administrators of the laws of God to those who are truly penitent, and to none others. The test of repentance consists in reformation of life, and in making restitution to those who have been injured. The knowledge of this comes to us in administering the sacred ordinance of penance in the tribunal of confession; and sooner than violate this solemn compact between the mercy of God and a penitent heart, we would willingly lay down our lives. It is the most sacred of all trusts."

"Such an ordinance, sir, is a bounty and provocative to crime."

"It is a bounty and provocative to repentance, sir; and society has gained much and lost nothing by its operation. Remember, sir, that those who do not repent, never come to us to avow their crimes, in which case we are ignorant both of the crime and criminal. Here there is neither repentance, on the one hand, nor restitution, on the other, and society, of course, loses everything and gains nothing. In the other case, the person sustaining the injury gains that which he had lost, and society a penitent and reformed member. If, then, this sacred refuge for the penitent—not for the criminal, remember—had no existence, those restitutions of property which take place in thousands of cases, could never be made."

"Still, sir, you shield the criminal from his just punishment."

"No, sir; we never shield the criminal from his just punishment. God has promised mercy to him who repents, and we merely administer it without any reference to the operation of the law. It often happens, Sir Thomas Gourlay, that a person

who has repented and made restitution, is taken hold of by the law and punished. This ordinance, therefore, does *not* stand between the law and its victim; it only deals between him and his God, leaving him, like any other offender, to the law he has violated."

"I am no theologian, sir; but without any reference to your priestly cant, I simply say, that the man who is cognizant of another's crime against the law, either of God or man, and who will shield him from justice, is *particeps criminis*, and I don't care a fig what your obsolete sacerdotal dogmas may assert to the contrary. You say you know the man who unjustly deprived me of my property; if then, acknowledging this, you refuse to deliver him up to justice, I hold you guilty of his crime. Suppose he had taken my life, as he was near doing, how, pray, would you have made restitution? Bring me to life again, I suppose, by a miracle. Away, sir, with this cant, which is only fit for the barbarity of the dark ages, when your church was a mass of crime, cruelty, and ignorance; and when a cunning and rapacious priesthood usurped an authority over both soul and body, ay, and property too, that oppressed and degraded human nature."

"I will reason no longer with you, sir," replied the priest; "because you talk in ignorance of the subject we are discussing—but having now discharged an important duty, I will take my leave."

"You may of me," replied the other; "but you will not so readily shift yourself out of the law."

"Any charge, sir, which either law or justice may bring against me, I shall be ready to meet; and I now, for your information, beg to let you know that the law you threaten me with affords its protection to me and the class to which I belong, in the discharge of this most sacred and important trust. Your threats, Sir Thomas, consequently, I disregard."

"The more shame for it if it does," replied the baronet; "but, hark you, sir, I do not wish, after all, that you and I should part on unfriendly terms. You refuse to give up the robber?"

"I would give up my life sooner."

"But could you not procure me the missing note?"

"Of the missing note, Sir Thomas Gourlay, I know nothing. I consequently neither can nor will make any promise to restore it."

"You may tell the robber from me," pursued the baronet, "that I will give him the full amount of his burglary, provided he restores me that note. The other sixty-nine pounds shall be his on that condition, and no questions asked."

"I have already told you, sir, that it was under the seal of confession the knowledge of the crime came to me. Out of that seal I cannot revert to the subject without betraying my trust; for, if he acknowledged his guilt to me under any other circumstances, it would become my duty to hand him over to the law."

"Curse upon all priests!" said the other indignantly; "they are all the same; a crew of cunning scoundrels, who attempt to subjugate the ignorant and the credulous to their sway; a pack of spiritual swindlers, who get possession of the consciences of the people through pious fraud, and then make slavish instruments of them for their own selfish purposes. In the meantime I shall keep my eye upon you, Mr. M'Mahon, and, believe me, if I can get a hole in your coat I shall make a rent of it."

"It is a poor privilege, sir, that of insulting the defenceless. You know I am doubly so—defenceless from age, defenceless in virtue of my sacred profession; but if I am defenceless against your insults, Sir Thomas Gourlay, I am not against your threats, which I despise and defy. The integrity of my life is beyond your power, the serenity of my conscience beyond your vengeance. You are not of my flock, but if you were, I would say, Sir Thomas, I fear you are a bold, bad man, and have much to repent of in connection with your past and present life—much reparation to make to your fellow-creatures. Yes; I would say, Sir Thomas Gourlay, the deep tempest of strong passions within you has shaken your powerful frame until it totters to its fall. I would say, beware; repent while it is time, and be not unprepared for the last great event. That event, Sir Thomas, is not far distant, if I read aright the foreshadowing of death and dissolution that is evident in your countenance and frame. I speak these words in, I trust, a charitable and forgiving spirit. May they sink into your heart, and work it to a sense of Christian feeling and duty!

"This I would say were you *mine*—this I do say, knowing that you are not; for my charity goes beyond my church, and embraces my enemy as well as my friend;" and as he spoke he prepared to go.

"You may go, sir," replied the baronet, with a sneer of contempt, "only you have mistaken your man. I am no subject for your craft—not to be deceived by your hypocrisy—and laugh to scorn your ominous but impotent croaking. Only *before* you go, remember the conditions I have offered the scoundrel who robbed me; and if the theo-

logical intricacies of your crooked creed will permit you, try and get him to accept them. It will be better for him, and better for you too. Do this, and you may cease to look upon Sir Thomas Gourlay as an enemy."

The priest bowed, and without returning any reply left the apartment and took his immediate departure.

Sir Thomas, after he had gone, went to the glass and surveyed himself steadily. The words of the priest were uttered with much solemnity and earnestness; but withal in such a tone of kind regret and good feeling, that their import and impressiveness were much heightened by this very fact.

"There is certainly a change upon me, and not one for the better," he said to himself; "but at the same time the priest, cunning as he is, has been taken in by appearances. I am just sufficiently changed in my looks to justify and give verisimilitude to the game I am playing. When Lucy hears of my illness, which must be a serious one, nothing on earth will keep her from me; and if I cannot gain any trace to her residence, a short paragraph in the papers, intimating and regretting the dangerous state of my health, will most probably reach her, and have the desired effect. If she were once back, I know that, under the circumstances of my illness, and the impression that it has been occasioned by her refusal to marry Dunroe, she will yield; especially as I shall put the sole chances of my recovery upon her compliance. Yet why is it that I urge her to an act which will probably make her unhappy during life? But it will not. She is not the fool her mother was; and yet I am not certain that her mother was a fool either. We did not agree; we could not. She always refused to coincide with me almost in everything; and when I wished to teach Lucy the useful lessons of worldly policy, out came her silly maxims of conscience, religion, and such stuff. But yet religious people are the best. I have always found it so. That wretched priest, for instance, would give up his life sooner than violate what he calls—that is, what he thinks—his duty. There must be some fiction, however, to regulate the multitude; and that fiction must be formed by, and founded on, the necessities of society. That, unquestionably, is the origin of all law and all religion. Only religion uses the stronger and the wiser argument, by threatening us with another world. Well done, religion! You acted upon a fixed principle of nature. The force of the enemy we see not may be magnified and exaggerated; the enemy we see not we fear, especially when described in the most terrible colors by men who are paid for their misrepresentations, although these same impostors have never seen the enemy they speak of themselves. But the enemy we see we can understand and grapple with; *ergo*, the influence of religion over law; *ergo*, the influence of the priest, who deals in the imaginary and ideal, over the legislator and the magistrate, who deal only in the tangible and real. Yes, this indeed is the principle. How we do fear a ghost! What a shiver, what a horror runs through the frame when we think we see one; and how different is this from our terror of a living enemy. Away, then, with this imposture. I will none of it. Yet hold: what was that I saw looking into the window of the carriage that contained my brother's son? What was it? Why a form created by my own fears. That credulous nurse, old mother Corbet, stuffed me so completely with superstition when I was young and cowardly, that I cannot, in many instances, shake myself free from it yet. Even the words of that priest alarmed me for a moment. This, however, is merely the weakness of human nature—the effect of unreal phantasms that influence the reason while we are awake, just as that of dreams does the imagination while we are asleep. Away, then, ye idle brood! I will none of you."

He then sat himself down on the sofa, and rang for Gibson, but still the train of thought pursued him.

"As to Lucy, I think it is still possible to force her into the position for which I destined her—quite possible. She reasons like a girl, of course, as I told her. She reasons like a girl who looks upon that silly nonsense called love as the great business of life; and acts accordingly. Little she thinks, however, that love—*her* love—*his* love—*both* their loves—will never meet twelve months after what is termed the honey-moon. No, they will part north and south. And yet the honey-moon has her sharp ends, as well as every other moon. When love passes away, she will find that the great business of life is, to make as many as she can feel that she is above them in the estimation of the world; to impress herself upon her equals, until they shall be forced to acknowledge her superiority. And although this may be sometimes done by intellect and principle, yet, in the society in which she must move, it is always done by rank, by high position, and by pride, that jealous vindictive pride which is based upon the hatred of our kind, and at once smiles and scorns. What would I be if I were not a baronet? Sir Thomas Gourlay passes where Mr. Gourlay would be spurned. This is the game of life, and we shall play it

with the right weapons. Many a cringing scoundrel bows to the baronet who despises the man; and for this reason it is that I have always made myself to be felt to some purpose, and so shall Lucy, if I should die for it. I hate society, because I know that society hates me; and for that reason I shall so far exalt her, that she will have the base compound at her feet, and I shall teach her to scorn and trample upon it. If I thought there were happiness in any particular rank of life, I would not press her; but I know there is not, and for that reason she loses nothing, and gains the privilege—the power—of extorting homage from the proud, the insolent, and the worthless. This is the triumph she shall and must enjoy."

Gibson then entered, and the baronet, on hearing his foot, threw himself into a languid and invalid attitude.

"Gibson," said he, "I am very unwell; I apprehend a serious attack of illness."

"I trust not, sir."

"If any person should call, I am ill, observe, and not in a condition to see them."

"Very well, sir."

"Unless you should suspect, or ascertain, that it is some person on behalf of Miss Gourlay; and even then, mark, I am very ill indeed, and you do not think me able to speak to any one; but will come in and see."

"Yes, sir; certainly sir."

"There, then, that will do."

The priest, on leaving the baronet's residence, was turning his steps toward the hotel in which the stranger had put up, when his messenger to Constitution Hill approaching put his hand to his hat, and respectfully saluted him.

"I beg your pardon, sir," said he, "and I am sorry, now that I know who you are, for the trouble you got into."

"Thank you, my friend," said the priest; "I felt it wouldn't signify, knowing in my conscience that I was no robber. In the meantime, I got one glimpse of your metropolitan life, as they call it, and the Lord knows I never wish to get another. Troth, I was once or twice so confounded with the noise and racket, that I thought I had got into purgatory by mistake."

"Tut, sir, that's nothing," replied Skipton; "we were very calm and peaceable *this* morning; but with respect to that baronet, he's a niggardly fellow. Only think of him, never once offering us the slightest compensation for bringing him home his property! There's not another man in Ireland would send us off empty-handed as he did. The thing's always usual on recovering property."

"Speak for yourself, in the singular number, if you plaise; you don't imagine that I wanted compensation."

"No, sir, certainly not; but I'm just thinking," he added, after curiously examining Father M'Mahon's face for some time, "that you and I met before somewhere."

"Is that the memory you have?" said the priest, "when you ought to recollect that we met this morning, much against my will, I must say."

"I don't mean that," said the man; "but I think I saw you once in a lunatic asylum."

"Me, in a lunatic asylum?" exclaimed the good priest, somewhat indignantly. "The thing's a bounce, my good man, before you go farther. The little sense I've had has been sufficient, thank goodness, to keep me free from such establishments."

"I don't mean that, sir," replied the other, smiling, "but if I don't mistake, you once brought a clergyman of our persuasion to the lunatic asylum in——."

"Ay, indeed," returned the priest; "poor Quin. His was a case of monomania; he imagined himself a gridiron, on which all heretics were to be roasted. That young man was one of the finest scholars in the three kingdoms. But how do you remember that?"

"Why for good reasons; because I was a servant in the establishment at the time. Well," he added, pausing, "it is curious enough that I should have seen this very morning three persons I saw in that asylum."

"If I had been much longer in that watch-house," replied the other, "I'm not quite certain but I'd soon be qualified to pay a permanent visit to some of them. Who were the three persons you saw there, in the mane time?"

"That messenger of yours was one of them, and that niggardly baronet was the other; yourself, as I said, making the third."

The priest looked at him seriously; "you mane Corbet," said he, "or Dumpy as he is called?"

"I do. He and the baronet brought a slip of a boy there; and, upon my conscience, I think there was bad work between them. At all events, poor Mr. Quin and he were inseparable. The lad promised that he would allow himself to be roasted, the very first man, upon the reverend gridiron;—and for that reason Quin took him into hand; and gave him an excellent education."

"And no one," replied the priest, "was better qualified to do it. But what bad work do you suspect between Corbet and the baronet?"

"Why, I have my suspicions," replied the man. "It's not a month since I heard that

the son of that very baronet's brother, who was heir to the estate and titles, disappeared, and has never been heard of since. Now, all the water in the sea wouldn't wash the pair of them clear of what I suspect, which is—that both had a hand in removing that boy. The baronet was a young man at the time, but he has a face that no one could ever forget. As for Corbet, I remember him well, as why shouldn't I? he came there often. I'll take my oath it would be a charity to bring the affair to light."

"Do you think the boy is there still?" asked the priest, suppressing all appearance of the interest which he felt.

"No," replied the other, "he escaped about two or three years ago; but, poor lad, when it was discovered that he led too easy a life, and had got educated, his treatment was changed; a straight waistcoat was put on him, and he was placed in solitary confinement. At first he was no more mad than I am; but he *did* get occasionally mad afterwards. I know he attempted suicide, and nearly cut his throat with a piece of glass one day that his hands got loose while they were changing his linen. Old Rivet died, and the establishment was purchased by Tickleback, who, to my own knowledge, had him regularly scourged."

"And how did he escape, do you know?" inquired the priest.

"I could tell you that, too, maybe," replied Skipton; "but I think, sir, I have told you enough for the present. If that young man is living, I would swear that he ought to stand in Sir Thomas Gourlay's shoes. And now do you think, sir," he inquired, coming at last to the real object of his communication, "that if his right could be made clear, any one who'd help him to his own mightn't expect to be made comfortable for life?"

"I don't think there's a doubt about it," replied the priest. "The property is large, and he could well afford to be both generous and grateful."

"I know," returned the man, "that he is both one and the other, if he had it in his power."

"Well," said the priest, seriously; "mark my words—this may be the most fortunate day you ever saw. In the mane time, keep a close mouth. The friends of that identical boy are on the search for him this moment. They had given him up for dead; but it is not long since they discovered that he was living. I will see you again on this subject."

"I am now a constable," said the man, "attached to the office you were in to-day, and I can be heard of any time."

"Very well," replied the priest, "you shall hear either from me or from some person interested in the recovery of the boy that's lost."

CHAPTER XXVII.

Sir Thomas, who shams Illness, is too sharp for Mrs. Mainwaring, who visits Him—Lucy calls upon Lady Gourlay, where she meets her Lover—Affecting interview between Lucy and Lady Gourlay.

Lucy Gourlay, anxious to relieve her father's mind as much as it was in her power to do, wrote to him the day after the visit of Ensign Roberts and old Sam to Summerfield Cottage. Her letter was affectionate, and even tender, and not written without many tears, as was evident by the blots and blisters which they produced upon the paper. She fully corroborated the stranger's explanation to her father; for although ignorant at the time that an interview had taken place between them, she felt it to be her duty toward all parties to prevent, as far as her testimony could go, the possibility of any misunderstanding upon the subject. This letter was posted in Dublin, from an apprehension lest the local post-office might furnish a clew to her present abode. The truth was, she feared that if her father could trace her out, he would claim her at once, and force her home by outrage and violence. In this, however, she was mistaken; he had fallen upon quite a different and far more successful plan for that purpose. He knew his daughter well, and felt that if ever she might be forced to depart from those strong convictions of the unhappiness that must result from a union between baseness and honor, it must be by an assumption of tenderness and affection toward her, as well as by a show of submission, and a concession of his own will to hers. This was calculating at once upon her affection and generosity. He had formed this plan before her letter reached him, and on perusing it, he felt still more determined to make this treacherous experiment upon her very virtues—thus most unscrupulously causing them to lay the groundwork of her own permanent misery.

In the meantime, Mrs. Mainwaring, having much confidence in the effect which a knowledge of her disclosure must, as she calculated, necessarily produce on the ambitious baronet, resolved to lose no time in seeing him. On the evening before she went, however, the following brief conversation took place between her and Lucy:

"My dear Lucy," said she, "a thought has

just struck me. Your situation, excepting always your residence with us, is one of both pain and difficulty. I am not a woman who has ever been much disposed to rely on my own judgment in matters of importance."

"But there, my dear Mrs. Mainwaring, you do yourself injustice."

"No, my dear child."

"But what is your thought?" asked Lucy, who felt some unaccountable apprehension at what her friend was about to say.

"You tell me that neither you nor your aunt, Lady Gourlay, have ever met."

"Never, indeed," replied Lucy; "nor do I think we should know each other if we did."

"Then suppose you were, without either favor or ceremony, to call upon her—to present yourself to her in virtue of your relationship—in virtue of her high character and admirable principles—in virtue of the painful position in which you are placed—to claim the benefit of her experience and wisdom, and ask her to advise you as she would a daughter."

Lucy's eyes glistened with delight, and, stooping down, she imprinted a kiss upon the forehead of her considerate and kind friend.

"Thank you, my dear Mrs. Mainwaring," she exclaimed: "a thousand thanks for that admirable suggestion. Many a time has my heart yearned to know that extraordinary woman, of whose virtues the world talks so much, and whose great and trusting spirit even sorrow and calamity cannot prostrate. Yes, I will follow your advice; I will call upon her; for, even setting aside all selfish considerations, I should wish to know her for her own worth."

"Very well, then; I am going in to see your father to-morrow—had you not better come with me? I shall leave you at her house, and can call for you after my interview with him shall have been concluded. I shall order a chaise from the hotel to be with us in the morning, so that you may run little or no risk of being seen or known."

"That will be delightful," replied Lucy; "for I am sure Lady Gourlay will be a kind and affectionate friend to me. In seeking her acquaintance—may I hope, her friendship—I am not conscious of violating any command or duty. Ever since I recollect, it was a well-known fact, that the families, that is to say, my father and uncle, never met, nor visited—mamma knew, of course, that to keep up an intimacy, under such circumstances, would occasion much domestic disquietude. This is all I know about it; but I never remember having heard any injunction *not* to visit."

"No," replied Mrs. Mainwaring; "such an injunction would resemble that of a man who should desire his child not to forget to rise next morning, or, to be sure to breathe through his lungs. I can very well understand why such a prohibition was never given in that case. Well, then, we shall start pretty early in the morning, please God; but remember that you must give me a full detail of your reception and interview."

The next day, about the hour of two o'clock, a chaise drew up at the residence of Lady Gourlay, and on the hall-door being opened, a steady, respectable-looking old footman made his appearance at the chaise door, and, in reply to their inquiries, stated, "that her ladyship had been out for some time, but was then expected every moment."

"What is to be done?" said Lucy, in some perplexity; "or how am I to bestow myself if she does not return soon?"

"We expect her ladyship every moment, madam," replied the man; "and if you will have the goodness to allow me to conduct you to the drawing-room, you will not have to wait long—I may assure you of that."

"You had better go in, my dear," said Mrs. Mainwaring, "and I shall call for you in about an hour, or, perhaps, a little better."

It was so arranged, and Lucy went in accordingly.

We must now follow Mrs. Mainwaring, who, on inquiring if she could see Sir Thomas Gourlay, was informed by Gibson, who had got his cue, that he was not in a condition to see any one at present.

"My business is somewhat important," replied Mrs. Mainwaring, with a good deal of confidence in the truth of what she said.

Gibson, however, approached her, and, with the air of a man who was in possession of the secrets of the family, said, "Perhaps, ma'am, you come on behalf of Miss Gourlay?"

"Whatever my business may be," she replied, indignantly, "be it important or otherwise, I never communicate it through the medium of a servant; I mean you no offence," she proceeded; "but as I have already stated that it is of importance, I trust that will be sufficient for the present."

"Excuse me, ma'am," replied Gibson, "I only put the question by Sir Thomas's express orders. His state of health is such, that unless upon that subject he can see no one. I will go to him, however, and mention what you have said. He is very ill, however, exceedingly ill, and I fear will not be able to see you; but I shall try."

Sir Thomas was seated upon a sofa reading some book or other when Gibson reappeared.

"Well, Gibson, who is this?"

"A lady, sir; and she says she wishes to see you on very important business."

"Hum!—do you think it anything connected with Miss Gourlay?"

"I put the question to her, sir," replied the other, "and she bridled a good deal—I should myself suppose it is."

"Well, then, throw me over my dressing-gown and nightcap; here, pull it up behind, you blockhead;—there now—how do I look?"

"Why, ahem, a little too much in health, Sir Thomas, if it could be avoided."

"But, you stupid rascal, isn't that a sign of fever? and isn't my complaint fulness about the head—a tendency of blood there? That will do now; yes, the plethoric complexion to a shade; and, by the way, it is no joke either. Send her up now."

When Mrs. Mainwaring entered, the worthy invalid was lying incumbent upon the sofa, his head raised high upon pillows, with his dressing-gown and night-cap on, and his arms stretched along by his sides, as if he were enduring great pain.

"Oh, Mrs. Norton," said he, after she had courtesied, "how do you do?"

"I am sorry to see you ill, Sir Thomas," she replied, "I hope there is nothing serious the matter."

"I wish I myself could hope so, Mrs. Norton."

"Excuse me, Sir Thomas, I am no longer Mrs. Norton; Mrs. Mainwaring, at your service."

"Ah, indeed! Then you have changed your condition, as they say. Well, I hope it is for the better, Mrs. Mainwaring; I wish you all joy and happiness!"

"Thank you, Sir Thomas, it *is* for the better; I am very happily married."

"I am glad to hear it—I am very glad to hear it; that is to say, if I can be glad at anything. I feel very ill, Mrs. Mainwaring, very ill, indeed; and this blunt, plain-spoken doctor of mine gives me but little comfort. Not that I care much about any doctor's opinion—it is what I feel myself that troubles me. You are not aware, perhaps, that my daughter has abandoned me—deserted me—and left me solitary—sick—ill; without care—without attendance—without consolation;—and all because I wished to make her happy."

"This, Sir Thomas," replied Mrs. Mainwaring, avoiding a direct reply as to her knowledge of Lucy's movements, "is, I presume, with reference to her marriage with Lord Dunroe."

"Oh yes; young women will not, now-a-days, allow a parent to form any opinion as to what constitutes their happiness; but I cannot be angry with Lucy now; indeed, I am not. I only regret her absence from my sick bed, as I may term it; for, indeed, it is in bed I ought to be."

"Sir Thomas, I came to speak with you very seriously, upon the subject of her union with that young nobleman."

"Ah, but I am not in a condition, Mrs. Mainwaring, to enter upon such a topic at present. The doctor has forbidden me to speak upon any subject that might excite me. You must excuse me, then, madam; I really cannot enter upon it. I never thought I loved Lucy so much;—I only want my child to be with me. She and I are all that are left together now; but she has deserted me at the last moment, for I fear I am near it."

"But, Sir Thomas, if you would only hear me for a few minutes, I could satisfy you that——"

"But I cannot hear you, Mrs. Mainwaring; I cannot hear you; I am not in a state to do so; I feel feverish, and exceedingly ill."

"Five minutes would do, Sir Thomas."

"Five minutes! five centuries of torture! I must ring the bell, Mrs. Mainwaring, if you attempt to force this subject on me. I should be sorry to treat you rudely, but you must see at once that I am quite unable to talk of anything calculated to disturb me. I have a tendency of blood to the head—I am also nervous and irritable. Put it off, my dear madam. I trust you shall have another and a better opportunity. Do ring, and desire Lucy to come to me."

Mrs. Mainwaring really became alarmed at the situation of the baronet, and felt, from this request to have his daughter sent to him, which looked like delirium, that he was not in a state to enter upon or hear anything that might disappoint or disturb him. She consequently rose to take her leave, which she did after having expressed her sincere regret at his indisposition, as she termed it.

"I wish it was only indisposition, Mrs. Mainwaring, I wish it was. Present my respects to your husband, and I wish you and him all happiness;" and so with another courtesy, Mrs. Mainwaring took her leave.

After she had gone, Gibson once more attended the bell.

"Well, Gibson," said his master, sitting up and flinging his nightcap aside, "did you see that old grindress? Zounds and the devil, what are women? The old mantrap has got married at these years! Thank heaven, my grandmother is dead, or God knows what the devil might put into her old noddle."

"Women are very strange cattle, certainly, sir," replied Gibson, with a smirk, "and not age itself will keep them from a husband."

"Lucy—Miss Gourlay, I mean—is with her; I am certain of it. The girl was always very much attached to her, and I know the sly old devil has been sent to negotiate with me, but I declined. I knew better than to involve myself in a controversy with an old she prig who deals in nothing but maxims, and morals, and points of duty. I consequently sent her off in double quick time, as they say. Get me some burgundy and water. I really am not well. There is something wrong, Gibson, whatever it is; but I think it's nothing but anxiety. Gibson, listen. I have never been turned from my purpose yet, and I never shall. Miss Gourlay must be Countess of Cullamore, or it is a struggle for life and death between her and me; either of us shall die, or I shall have my way. Get me the burgundy and water," and Gibson, with his sleek bow, went to attend his orders.

Mrs. Mainwaring having some purchases to make and some visits to pay, and feeling that her unexpectedly brief visit to Sir Thomas had allowed her time for both, did not immediately return to call upon Lucy, fearing that she might only disturb the interview between her and Lady Gourlay.

Lucy, as the servant said, was shown up to the drawing-room, where she amused herself as well as she could, by examining some fine paintings, among which was one of her late uncle. The features of this she studied with considerable attention, and could not help observing that, although they resembled collectively those of her father, the deformity of the one eye only excepted, yet the general result was strikingly different. All that was harsh, and coarse, and repulsive in the countenance of her father, was here softened down into an expression of gentleness, firmness, and singular candor, whilst, at the same time, the family likeness could not for a moment be questioned or mistaken.

Whilst thus occupied, a foot was heard, as if entering the drawing-room, and naturally turning round, she beheld the stranger before her. The surprise of each was mutual, for the meeting was perfectly unexpected by either. A deep blush overspread Lucy's exquisite features, which almost in a moment gave way to a paleness that added a new and equally delightful phase to her beauty.

"Good heavens, my dear Lucy," exclaimed the stranger, "do I find you here! I had heard that the families were estranged; but on that very account I feel the more deeply delighted at your presence under Lady Gourlay's roof. This happiness comes to me with a double sense of enjoyment, from the fact of its being unexpected."

The alternations of red and white still continued as Lucy replied, her sparkling eye chastened down by the veil of modesty as she spoke: "I am under Lady Gourlay's roof for the first time in my life. Indeed, I have come here to make an experiment, if I may use the expression, upon the goodness of her heart. The amiable lady with whom I now reside suggested to me to do so, a suggestion which I embraced with delight. I have been here only a few minutes, and await her ladyship's return, which they tell me may be expected immediately."

"It would indeed be unfortunate," replied the stranger, "that two individuals so nearly connected by family, and what is more, the possession of similar virtues, should not be known to each other."

This compliment brought a deeper tinge of color to Lucy's cheek, who simply replied, "I have often wished most sincerely for the pleasure—the honor, I should say—of her acquaintance; but unfortunately the ill-feeling that has subsisted between the families, or rather between a portion of them, has hitherto prevented it. If I were now under my father's roof a visit here were out of the question; but you know, Charles, I cannot, and I ought not, to inherit his resentments."

"True, my dear Lucy, and I am glad to see you here for many, many reasons. No, your father's resentments would perish for want of nurture in a heart like yours. But, Lucy, there is a subject in which I trust we both feel a dearer and a deeper interest than that of family feud. I am aware of this hateful union which your father wishes to bring about between you and this Lord Dunroe. I have been long aware of it, as you know; but need I say that I place every reliance, all honorable confidence, in your truth and attachment?"

He had approached, and gently taking her hand in his as he spoke, he uttered these words in a tone so full at once of tenderness and that sympathy to which he knew her sufferings on this point had entitled her, that Lucy was considerably affected, although she restrained her emotions as well as she could.

"If it were not so," she replied, in a voice whose melody was made more touchingly beautiful by the slight tremor which she endeavored to repress, "if it were not so, Charles, I would not now be a fugitive from my father's roof."

The stranger's eye sparkled with the rapturous enthusiasm of love, as the gentle girl, all blushes, gave expression to an assurance so gratifying, so delicious to his heart.

"Dearest Lucy," said he, "I fear I am unworthy of you. Oh, could you but know

how those words of yours have made my heart tremble with an excess of transport which language fails to express, you would also know that the affection with which I love you is as tender, as pure, as unselfish, as ever warmed the heart of man. And yet, as I said, I fear it is unworthy of you. I know your father's character, his determination, the fierce force of his will, and the energy with which he pursues every object on which he sets his heart or ambition. I say I know all this, and I sometimes fear the consequences. What can the will of only one pure, gentle, and delicate heart avail against the united powers of ambition, authority, persuasion, force, determination, perhaps violence? What, I repeat, can a gentle heart like yours ultimately avail against such a host of difficulties? And it is for this reason that I say I am unworthy of you, for *I fear*—and you know that perfect love casteth out all fear."

"My dear Charles, if love were without fear it would lose half its tenderness. An eternal sunshine, would soon sicken the world. But as for your apprehensions of my solitary heart failing against such difficulties as it must encounter, you seem to omit one slight element in calculating your terrors, and that simple element is a host in itself."

"Which is?"

"Love for you, dear Charles. I know you may probably feel that this avowal ought to be expressed with more hesitation, veiled over by the hypocrisy of language, disguised by the hackneyed forms of mere sentiment, uttered like the assertions of a coquette, and degraded by that tampering with truth which makes the heart lie unto itself. Oh, yes!—perhaps, Charles, you may think that because I fail to express what I feel in that spirit of ambiguity which a love not confident in the truth, purity, and rectitude of its own principles must always borrow—that because my heart fails to approach yours by the usual circuitous route with which ordinary hearts *do* approach—yes, you may imagine for all these reasons that my affection is not—but——" and here she checked herself—"why," she added, with dignity, whilst her cheeks glowed and her eyes sparkled, "why should I apologize for the avowal of a love of which I am not ashamed, and which has its strongest defence in the worth and honor of its object?"

Tears of enthusiasm rushed down her cheeks as she spoke, and her lover could only say, "Dearest Lucy, most beloved of my heart, your language, your sentiments, your feelings—so pure, so noble, so far above those commonplaces of your sex, only cause me to shrink almost into nothing when I compare or contrast myself with you. Let, however, one principle guide us—the confidence that our love is mutual and cannot be disturbed. I am for the present placed in circumstances that are exceedingly painful. In point of fact, I am wrapped in obscurity and shadow, and there exists, besides, a possibility that I may not become, in point of fortune, such a man as you might possibly wish to look upon as your husband."

"If you are now suffering your fine mind, Charles, to become unconsciously warped by the common prejudices of life, I beseech you to reflect upon the heart to which you address yourself. Society presents not a single prejudice which in any degree aids or supports virtue, and truth, and honor, that I do not cherish, and wish you to cherish; but if you imagine that you will become less dear to me because you may fail to acquire some of the artificial dignities or honors of life, then it is clear that you know not how to estimate the spirit and character of Lucy Gourlay."

"I know you will be severely tried, my dear Lucy."

"Know me aright, Charles. I *have* been severely tried. Many a girl, I am sorry to say, would forget Dunroe's profligacy in his rank. Many a girl, in contemplating the man, could see nothing but the coronet; for ambition—the poorest, the vainest, and the most worthless of all kinds of ambition—that of rank, title, the right of precedence—is unfortunately cultivated as a virtue in the world of fashion, and as such it is felt. Be it so, Charles; let me remain unfashionable and vulgar. Perish the title if not accompanied by worth; fling the gaudy coronet aside if it covers not the brow of probity and honor. Retain those, dear Charles—retain worth, probity, and honor—and you retain a heart that looks upon them as the only titles that confer true rank and true dignity."

The stranger gave her a long gaze of admiration, and exclaimed, deeply affected,

"Alas, my Lucy, you are, I fear, unfit for the world. Your spirit is too pure, too noble for common life. Like some priceless gem, it sparkles with the brilliancy of too many virtues for the ordinary mass of mankind to appreciate."

"No such thing, Charles: you quite overrate me; but God forbid that the possession of virtue and good dispositions should ever become a disqualification for this world. It is not so; but even if it were, provided I shine in the estimation of my own little world, by which I mean the affection of him

to whom I shall unite my fate, then I am satisfied: his love and his approbation shall constitute my coronet and my honor."

The stranger was absolutely lost in admiration and love, for he felt that the force of truth and sincerity had imparted an eloquence and an energy to her language that were perfectly fascinating and irresistible.

"My dear life," said he, "the music of your words, clothing, as it does, the divine principles they utter, must surely resemble the melody of heaven's own voices. For my part, I feel relaxed in such a delicious rapture as I have never either felt or dreamt of before—entranced, as it were, in a sense of your wonderful beauty and goodness. But, dearest Lucy, allow me to ask on what terms are you with your father? Have you heard from him? Have you written to him? Is he aware of your present residence?"

"No," she replied; "he is not aware of my present residence, but I have written to him. I wished to set his mind at rest as well as I could, and to diminish his anxiety as far as in me lay. Heaven knows," she added, bursting into tears, "that this unnatural estrangement between father and daughter is most distressing. I am anxious to be with papa, to render him, in every sense, all the duties of a child, provided only he will not persist in building up the superstructure of rank upon my own unhappiness. Have *you* seen him?" she inquired, drying her eyes, a task in which she was tenderly assisted by the stranger.

"I saw him," he replied, "for a short time;" but the terms in which he explained the nature of the interview between himself and the baronet were not such as could afford her a distinct impression of all that took place, simply because he wished to spare her the infliction of unnecessary pain.

"And now, Lucy," he added, "I feel it necessary to claim a large portion of your approbation."

She looked at him with a smile, but awaited his explanation.

"You will scarcely credit me when I assure you that I have had a clew to your place of residence, or concealment, or whatever it is to be termed, since the first morning of your arrival there, and yet I disturbed you not, either by letter or visit. Thus you may perceive how sacred your lightest wish is to me."

"And do you imagine that I am insensible to this delicate generosity?" she asked—"oh, no; indeed, I fully appreciate it; but now, Charles, will you permit me to ask how, or when, or where you have been acquainted with my aunt Gourlay, for I was not aware that you had known each other?"

"This, my dear Lucy," he replied, smiling, "you shall have cleared up along with all my other mysteries. Like every riddle, although it may seem difficult now, it will be plain enough when told."

"It matters not, dear Charles; I have every confidence in your truth and honor, and that is sufficient."

He then informed her briefly, that he should be under the necessity of going to France for a short space, upon business of the deepest importance to himself.

"My stay, however," he added, "will not be a very long one; and I trust, that after my return, I shall be in a position to speak out my love. Indeed, I am anxious for this, dear Lucy, for I know how strong the love of truth and candor is in your great and generous heart. And yet, for the sake of one good and amiable individual, or rather, I should say, of two, the object of my journey to France will not be accomplished without the deepest pain to myself. It is, I may say here, to spare the feelings of the two individuals in question, that I have preserved the strict incognito which I thought necessary since my arrival in this country."

"Farewell until then, my dear Charles; and in whatever object you may be engaged, let me beg that you will not inflict a wanton or unnecessary wound upon a good or amiable heart; but I know you will not—it is not in your nature."

"I trust not," he added, as he took his leave. "I cannot wait longer for lady Gourlay; but before I go, I will write a short note for her in the library, which will, for the present, answer the same purpose as seeing her. Farewell, then, dearest and best of girls!—farewell, and be as happy as you can; would that I could say, as I wish you, until we meet again."

And thus they separated.

The scene that had just taken place rendered every effort at composure necessary on the part of Lucy, before the return of Lady Gourlay. This lady, strange as it may seem, she had yet never seen or met, and she now began to reflect upon the nature of the visit she had made her, as well as of the reception she might get. If it were possible that her father had made away with her child on the one hand, could it be possible, on the other, that Lady Gourlay would withhold her resentment from the daughter of the man who had made her childless? But, no; her generous heart could not for a moment admit the former possibility. She reasoned not from what she had felt at his hands, but as a daughter, who, because she abhorred the

crime imputed to him, could not suppose him capable of committing it. His ambition was all for herself. Neither, she felt, would Lady Gourlay, even allowing for the full extent of her suspicions, confound the innocent daughter with the offending parent. Then her reputation for meekness, benevolence, patience, charity, and all those virtues which, without effort, so strongly impress themselves upon the general spirit of social life, spoke with a thousand tongues on her behalf. Yes, she was glad she came; she felt the spirit of a virtuous relationship strongly in her heart; and in that heart she thanked the amiable Mrs. Mainwaring for the advice she had given her.

A gentle and diffident tap at the door interrupted the course of her reflections; and the next moment, a lady, grave, but elegant in appearance, entered. She courtesied with peculiar grace, and an air of the sweetest benignity, to Lucy, who returned it with one in which humility, reverence, and dignity, were equally blended. Neither, indeed, could for a single moment doubt that an accomplished and educated gentlewoman stood before her. Lucy, however, felt that it was her duty to speak first, and account for a visit so unexpected.

"I know not," she said, "as yet, how to measure the apology which I ought to make to Lady Gourlay for my presence here. My heart tells me that I have the honor of addressing that lady."

"I am, indeed, madam, that unhappy woman."

Lucy approached her, and said. "Do not reject me, madam; pardon me—love me—pity me;—I am Lucy Gourlay."

Lady Gourlay opened her arms, exclaiming, as she did it, in a voice of the deepest emotion, "My dear niece—my child—my daughter if you will;" and they wept long and affectionately on each other's bosoms.

"You are the only living individual," said Lucy, after some time, "whom I could ask to pity me; but I am not ashamed to solicit your sympathy. Dear, dear aunt, I am very unhappy. But this, I fear, is wrong; for why should I add my sorrows to the weight of misery which you yourself have been compelled to bear? I fear it is selfish and ungenerous to do so."

"No, my child; whatever the weight of grief or misery which we are forced, perhaps, for wise purposes, to bear, it is ordained, for purposes equally wise and beneficent, that every act of sympathy with another's sorrow lessens our own. Dear Lucy, let me, if you can, or will be permitted to do so, be a loving mother to you, and stand to my heart in relation to the child I have lost; or think that your own dear mother still survives in me."

This kindness and affection fairly overcame Lucy, who sat down on a sofa, and wept bitterly. Lady Gourlay herself was deeply affected for some minutes, but, at length, resuming composure, she sat beside Lucy, and, taking her hand, said: "I can understand, my dear child, the nature of your grief; but be comforted. Your heart, which was burdened, will soon become lighter, and better spirits will return; so, I trust, will better times. It is not from the transient and unsteady, and too often painful, incidents of life, that we should attempt to draw consolation, but from a fixed and firm confidence in the unchangeable purposes of God."

"I wish, dear Lady Gourlay—dear aunt——"

"Yes, that is better, my love."

"I wish I had known you before; of late I have been alone—with none to advise or guide me; for, she, whose affectionate heart, whose tender look, and whose gentle monition, were ever with me—she—alas, my dear aunt, how few know what the bitterness is—when forced to struggle against strong but misguided wills, whether of our own or others'; to feel that we are without a mother—that that gentle voice is silent forever; that that well in the desert of life—a mother's heart—is forever closed to us; that that protecting angel of our steps is departed from us—never, never to return."

As she uttered these words in deep grief, it might have been observed, that Lady Gourlay shed some quiet but apparently bitter tears. It is impossible for us to enter into the heart, or its reflections; but it is not, we think, unreasonable to suppose that while Lucy dwelt so feelingly upon the loss of her mother, the other may have been thinking upon that of her child.

"My dear girl," she exclaimed, "let the affectionate compact which I have just proposed be ratified between us. *My* heart, at all events, has already ratified it. I shall be as a mother to you, and you shall be to me as a daughter."

"I know not, my dear aunt," replied Lucy, "whether to consider you more affectionate than generous. How few of our sex, after—after—that is, considering the enmities—in fact, how a relative, placed as you unhappily are, would take me to her heart as you have done."

"Perhaps, my child, I were incapable of it, if that heart had never been touched and softened by affliction. As it is, Lucy, let me say to you, as one who probably knows the world better, do not look, as most young persons like you do, upon the trials you are at

present forced to suffer, as if they were the sharpest and heaviest in the world. Time, my love, and perhaps other trials of a still severer character, may one day teach you to think that your grief and impatience were out of proportion to what you then underwent. May He who afflicts his people for their good, prevent that this ever should be so in your case; but, even if it should, remember that God loveth whom he chasteneth. And above all things, my dear child, never, never, never despair in his providence. Dry your eyes, my love," she added, with a smile of affection and encouragement, that Lucy felt to be contagious by its cheering influence upon her; "dry your tears, and turn round to the light until I contemplate more clearly and distinctly that beauty of which I have heard so much."

Lucy obeyed her with all the simplicity of a child, and turned round so as to place herself in the position required by the aunt; but whilst she did so, need we say that the blushes followed each other beautifully and fast over her timid but sparkling countenance?

"I do not wonder, my dear girl, that public rumor has borne its ample testimony to your beauty. I have never seen either it or your figure surpassed; but it is here, my dear," she added, placing her hand upon her heart, "where the jewel that gives value to so fair a casket lies."

"How happy I am, my dear aunt," replied Lucy, anxious to change the subject, "since I know you. The very consciousness of it is a consolation."

"And I trust, Lucy, we shall all yet be happy. When the dispensations ripen, then comes the harvest of the blessings."

The old footman now entered, saying: "Here is a note, my lady," and he presented one, "which the gentleman desired me to deliver on your ladyship's return."

Lady Gourlay took the note, saying: "Will you excuse me, my dear niece?—this, I believe, is on a subject that is not merely near to, but in the innermost recesses of my heart."

Lucy now took that opportunity on her part of contemplating the features of her aunt; but, as we have already described them elsewhere, it is unnecessary to do so here. She was, however, much struck with their chaste but melancholy beauty; for it cannot be disputed, that sorrow and affliction, while they impair the complexion of the most lovely, very frequently communicate to it a charm so deep and touching, that in point of fact, the heart that suffers within is taught to speak in the mournful, grave, and tender expression, which they leave behind them as their traces. As Lucy surveyed her aunt's features, which had been moulded by calamity into an expression of settled sorrow—an expression which no cheerfulness could remove, however it might diminish it, she was surprised to observe at first a singular degree of sweetness appear; next a mild serenity; and lastly, she saw that that serenity gradually kindled into a radiance that might, in the hands of a painter, have expressed the joy of the Virgin Mother on finding her lost Son in the Temple. This, however, was again succeeded by a paleness, that for a moment alarmed Lucy, but which was soon lost in a gush of joyful tears. On looking at her niece, who did not presume to make any inquiry as to the cause of this extraordinary emotion, Lady Gourlay saw that her eyes at least were seeking, by the wonder they expressed, for the cause of it.

"May the name," she exclaimed, "of the just and merciful God be praised forever! Here, my darling, is a note, in which I am informed upon the best authority, that my child—my boy, is yet alive—and was seen but very recently. Dear God of all goodness, is my weak and worn heart capable of bearing this returning tide of happiness!"

Nature, however, gave way; and after several struggles and throbbings, she sank into insensibility. To ring for assistance, to apply all kinds of restoratives; and to tend her until she revived, and afterwards, were offices which Lucy discharged with equal promptitude and tenderness.

On recovering, she took the hand of the latter in hers, and said, with a smile full of gratitude, joy, and sweetness, "Our first thanks are always due to God, and to him my heart offers them up; but, oh, how feebly! Thanks to you, also, Lucy, for your kindness; and many thanks for your goodness in giving me the pleasure of knowing you. I trust that we shall both see and enjoy better and happier days. Your visit has been propitious to me, and brought, if I may so say, an unexpected dawn of happiness to the widowed mother's heart."

Lucy was about to reply, when the old footman came to say that the lady who had accompanied her was waiting below in the chaise. She accordingly bade her farewell, only for a time she said, and after a tender embrace, she went down to Mrs. Mainwaring who respectfully declined on that occasion to be presented to Lady Gourlay, in consequence of the number of purchases she had yet to make, and the time it would occupy to make them.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Innocence and Affection overcome by Fraud and Hypocrisy—Lucy yields at Last.

Not many minutes after Mrs. Mainwaring's interview with the baronet, Gibson entered the library, and handed him a letter on which was stamped the Ballytrain post-mark. On looking at it, he paused for a moment :

"Who the d—— can this come from?" he said. "I am not aware of having any particular correspondence at present, in or about Ballytrain. Here, however, is a seal; let me see what it is. What the d——, again? are these a pair of asses' ears or wings? Certainly, if the impression be correct, the former; and what is here? A fox. Very good, perfectly intelligible; a fox, with a pair of asses' ears upon him! intimating a combination of knavery and folly. 'Gad, this must be from Crackenfudge, of whom it is the type and exponent. For a thousand, it contains a list of his qualifications for the magisterial honors for which he is so ambitious. Well, well; I believe every man has an ambition for something. Mine is to see my daughter a countess, that she may trample with velvet slippers on the necks of those who would trample on hers if she were beneath them. This fellow, now, who is both slave and tyrant, will play all sorts of oppressive pranks upon the poor, by whom he knows that he is despised; and for that very reason, along with others, will he punish them. That, however, is, after all, but natural; and on this very account, curse me, but I shall try and shove the beggarly scoundrel up to the point of his paltry ambition. I like ambition. The man who has no object of ambition of any kind is unfit for life. Come, then, 'wax, deliver up thy trust.'"

With a dark grin of contempt, and a kind of sarcastic gratification, he perused the document, which ran as follows :

"My dear Sir Tomas,—In a letter, which a' had the honer of receiving from you, in consequence of your very great kindness in condescending to kick me out of your house, on the occasion of my last visit to Red Hall, you were pleased to express a wish that a' would send you up as arthentic a list as a' could *conveniently* make up of my qualifications for the magistracey. Deed, a'm sore yet, Sir Tomas, and wouldn't it be a good joke, as my friend Dr. Twig says, if the soreness should remain until it is cured by the Komission, wh'ch he thinks would wipe out all recollection of the pain and the punishment. And he says, too, that this application of it would be putting it to a most proper and legutimate use; the only use, he insists, to which it ought to be put. But a' don't go that far, because a' think it would be an honerable dockiment, not only to my posterity, meaning my legutimate progenitors, if a' should happen to have any; but, also and moreover, to the good taste and judgment, and respect for the honer and integrity of the Bench, manifested by those who attributed to place me on it.

"A' now come to Klaim No. I, for the magistracey: In the first place a'm not without expeyrience, having been in the habit of acting as a magistrate in a private way, and upon my own responsibility, for several years. A' established a kourt in a little vilage, which—and this is a strong point in my feavor now-a-days—which a' meself have depopilated; and a' trust that the depopilation won't be overlucked. To this kourt a' compeled all me tenints to atend. They were obliged to summon one another as often as they kould, and much oftener than they wished, and for the slightest kauses. A' presided in it *purs*conally; and a'll tell you why. My system was a *fine* system, indeed. That is to say, a' fined them ether on the one side or the tother, but most generally on both, and then a' put the fines into my own pocet. My tenints a' know didn't like this kind of law very much—but if *they* didn't *a'* did; and a' made them feel that a' was their landlord. No man was a faverite with me that didn't frequent my kourt, and for this resin, in order to stand well with me, they fought like kat and dog. Now, you know, it was my bisness to enkorage this, for the more they fought and disputed, the more a' fined them.

"In fact, a' done everything in my power, to enlitin my tenints. For instance, a' taught them the doktrine of trespiss. If a' found that a stranger tuck the sheltry side of my hedge, to blow his nose, I fined him half-a-crown, as can be proved by proper and undeniable testomony. A' mention all these matters to satisfy you that a' have practis as a magistrate, and won't have my duties to lern when a'm called upon to discharge them.

"Klaim No. II is as follows: A'm very unpopilar with the people, which is a great thing in itself, as a' think no man ought to be risen to the bench that's not unpopilar; because, when popilar, he's likely to feavor them, and symperthize with them—wherein his first duty is always to konsider them in the rong. Nether am a' popilar with the gentry and magistrates of the kountry, because they despise me, and say that a'm this,

that and tother; that a'm mean and tyrannical; that a' changed my name from pride, and that a'm overbearing and ignorant. Now this last charge of ignorance brings me to Klaim No. III.

"Be it nown to you, then, Sir Tomas, that a' received a chollege eddycation, which is an *anser* in full to the play of ignorance. In fact, a' devoted meself to eddycation till my very brain began to go round like a whurligig; and many people say, that a' never rekovered the proper use of it since. Hundres will tell you that they would shed their blood upon the truth of it; but let any one that thinks so transact bisness with me, or bekome a tenint of mine, and he'll find that a' can make him bleed in proving the reverse.

"A' could prove many other klaims equally strong, but a' hope it's not necessary to seduce any more. A' do think, if the Lord Chanceseller knew of my qualifications, a' wouldn't be long off the bench. If, then, Sir Tomas, you, who have so much influence, would write on my behalf, and rekomend me to the *custus rascalorum* as a proper kandidate, I could not fail to suke-ed in reaching the great point of my ambit'on, which is, to be accommadated with a seat—anything would satisfy me—even a c'ose-stool—upon the magistorial bench. Amen, Sir Tomas.

"And have the honer to be,

"Your obedient and much obliged, and very thankful servant for w'at a' got, as well as for what a' expect, Sir Tomas,

"PERIWINKY CRACKENFUDGE."

Sir Thomas—having perused this precious document, which, by the way, contains no single fact that could not be substantiated by the clearest testimony, so little are they at head-quarters acquainted with the pranks that are played off on the unfortunate people by multitudes of petty tyrants in remote districts of the country—Sir Thomas, we say, having perused the aforesaid document, grinned—almost laughed—with a satirical enjoyment of its contents.

"Very good," said he; "excellent: confound me, but Crackenfudge must get to the bench, if it were only for the novelty of the thing. I will this moment recommend him to Lord Cullamore, who is *custos rotulorum* for the county, and who would as soon, by the way, cut his right hand off as recommend him to the Chancellor, if he knew the extent of his 'klaims,' as the miserable devil spells it. Yes. I will recommend him, if it were only to vex my brother baronet, Sir James B——, who is humane, and kind, and popular, forsooth, and a staunch advocate for purity of the bench, and justice to the people! No doubt of it; I shall recommend you, Crackenfudge, and cheek by jowl with the best among them, upon the same magistorial bench, shall the doughty Crackenfudge sit."

He instantly sat down to his writing-desk, and penned as strong a recommendation as he could possibly compose to Lord Cullamore, after which he threw himself again upon the sofa, and exclaimed:

"Well, that act is done, and an iniquitous one it is; but no matter, it is gone off to the post, and I'm rid of him. Now for Lucy, and *my* ambition; she is unquestionably with that shameless old woman who could think of marrying at such an age. She is with her; she will hear of my illness, and as certain as life is life, and death death, she will be here soon."

In this he calculated aright, and he felt that he did so. Mrs. Mainwaring, on the evening of their visit to the city, considered it her duty to disclose, fully and candidly, to Lucy, the state of her father's health, that is, as it appeared to her on their interview. Lucy, who knew that he was subject to sudden attacks upon occasions of less moment, not only became alarmed, but experienced a feeling like remorse for having, as she said, abandoned him so undutifully.

"I will return immediately," she said, weeping; "he is ill: you say he speaks of me tenderly and affectionately—oh, what have I done! Should this illness prove serious—fatal—my piece of mind were gone forever. I should consider myself as a parricide—as the direct cause of his death. My God! perhaps even now I am miserable for life—forever—forever!"

Mrs. Mainwaring soothed her as well as she could, but she refused to hear comfort, and having desired Alley Mahon to prepare their slight luggage, she took an affectionate and tearful leave of Mrs. Mainwaring, bade adieu to her husband, and was about to get into the chaise, which had been ordered from the inn in Wicklow, when Mrs. Mainwaring said:

"Now, my dear Lucy, if your father should recover, and have recourse to any abuse of his authority, by attempting again to force your inclinations and consummate your misery, remember that my door, my arms, my heart, shall ever be open to you. I do not, you will observe, suggest any act of disobedience on your part; on the contrary, I am of opinion that you should suffer everything short of the last resort, by which I mean this hateful marriage with Dunroe, sooner than abandon your father's roof. This union is a subject on which I must see him again. Poor Lord Cullamore I respect

and venerate, for I have reason to believe that he has, for one contemplated error, had an unhappy if not a remorseful life. In the meantime, even in opposition to your father's wishes, I say it, and in confirmation of your strongest prejudices——"

"It amounts to antipathy, Mrs. Mainwaring—to hatred, to abhorrence."

"Well, my dear child, in confirmation of them all, I implore, I entreat, I conjure, and if I had authority, I would say, I command you not to unite your fate with that young profligate."

"Do not fear me, Mrs. Mainwaring; but at present I can think of nothing but poor papa and his illness; I tremble, indeed, to think how I shall find him; and, my God, to reflect that I am the guilty cause of all this!"

They then separated, and Lucy, accompanied by Alley, proceeded to town at a pace as rapid as the animals that bore them could possibly accomplish.

On arriving in town, she was about rushing upstairs to throw herself in her father's arms, when Gibson, who observed her, approached respectfully, and said:

"This haste to see your father, Miss Gourlay, is very natural; but perhaps you will be good enough to wait a few moments, until he is prepared to receive you. The doctor has left strict orders that he shall not see any person; but, above all things, without being announced."

"But, Gibson—first, how is he? Is he very ill?"

Gibson assumed a melancholy and very solemn look, as he replied, "He is, indeed, ill, Miss Gourlay; but it would not become me to distress you—especially as I hope your presence will comfort him; he is perpetually calling for you."

"Go, Gibson, go," she exclaimed, whilst tears, which she could not restrain, gushed to her eyes. "Go, be quick; tell him I am here."

"I will break it to him, madam, as gently as possible," replied this sedate and oily gentleman; "for, if made acquainted with it too suddenly, the unexpected joy might injure him."

"Do not injure him, then," she exclaimed, earnestly; "oh, do not injure him—but go; I leave it to your own discretion."

Lucy immediately proceeded to her own room, and Gibson to the library, where he found the baronet in his nightcap and morning gown, reading a newspaper.

"I have the paragraph drawn up, Gibson," said he, with a grim smile, "stating that I am dangerously ill; take and copy it, and see that it be inserted in to-morrow's publication."

"It will not be necessary, sir," replied the footman; "Miss Gourlay is here, and impatient to see you."

"Here!" exclaimed her father with a start; "you do not say she is in the house?"

"She has just arrived, sir, and is now in her own room."

"Leave me, Gibson," said the baronet, "and attend promptly when I ring;" and Gibson withdrew. "Why," thought he to himself, "why, do I feel as I do? Glad that I have her once more in my power, and this is only natural; but why this kind of terror—this awe of that extraordinary girl? I dismissed that prying scoundrel of a footman, because I could not bear that he should observe and sneer at this hypocrisy, although I know he is aware of it. What can this uncomfortable sensation which checks my joy at her return mean? Is it that involuntary homage which they say vice is compelled to pay to purity, truth, and virtue? I know not; but I feel disturbed, humbled with an impression like that of guilt—an impression which makes me feel as if there actually *were* such a thing as conscience. As my objects, however, are for the foolish girl's advancement, I am determined to play the game out, and for that purpose, as I know now by experience that neither harshness nor violence will do, I shall have recourse to tenderness and affection. I must touch her heart, excite her sympathy, and throw myself altogether upon her generosity. Come then—and now for the assumption of a new character."

Having concluded this train of meditation, he rang for Gibson, who appeared.

"Gibson, let Miss Gourlay know that, ill as I am, I shall try to see her: be precise in the message, sir; use my own words."

"Certainly, Sir Thomas," replied the footman, who immediately withdrew to deliver it.

The baronet, when Gibson went out again, took a pair of pillows, with which the sofa was latterly furnished, in order to maintain the appearance of illness, whenever it might be necessary, and having placed them under his head, laid himself down, pulled the nightcap over his brows, and affected all the symptoms of a man who was attempting to struggle against some serious and severe attack.

In this state he lay, when Lucy entering the room, approached, in a flood of tears, exclaiming, as she knelt by the sofa, "Oh, papa—dear papa, forgive me;" and as she spoke, she put her arms round his neck, and kissed him affectionately. "Dear papa," she proceeded, "you are ill—very ill, I fear; but will you not forgive your poor child for having abandoned you as she did? I have

returned, however, to stay with you, to tend you, to soothe and console you as far as any and every effort of mine can. You shall have no nurse but me, papa. All that human hands can do to give you ease—all that the sincerest affection can do to sustain and cheer you, your own Lucy will do. But speak to me, papa; am I not your own Lucy still?"

Her father turned round, as if by a painful effort, and having looked upon her for some time, replied, feebly, "Yes, you are—you are my own Lucy still."

This admission brought a fresh gush of tears from the affectionate girl, who again exclaimed, "Ah, papa, I fear you are very ill; but those words are to me the sweetest that ever proceeded from your lips. Are you glad to see me, papa?—but I forget myself; perhaps I am disturbing you. Only say how you feel, and if it will not injure you, what your complaint is."

"My complaint, dear Lucy, most affectionate child—for I see you are so still, notwithstanding reports and appearances ——"

"Oh, indeed, I am, papa—indeed I am."

"My complaint was brought on by anxiety and distress of mind—I will not say why—I did, I know, I admit, wish to see you in a position of life equal to your merits; but I cannot talk of that—it would disturb me; it is a subject on which, alas! I am without hope. I am threatened with apoplexy or paralysis, Lucy, the doctor cannot say which; but the danger, he says, proceeds altogether from the state of my mind, acting, it is true, upon a plethoric system of body; but I care not, dear Lucy—I care not, now; I am indifferent to life. All my expectations—all a father's brilliant plans for his child, are now over. The doctor says that ease of mind *might* restore, but I doubt it now; I fear it is too late. I only wish I was better prepared for the change which I know I shall soon be forced to make. Yet I feel, Lucy, as if I never loved you until now—I feel how dear you are to me now that I know I must part with you so soon."

Lucy was utterly incapable of resisting this tenderness, as the unsuspecting girl believed it to be. She again threw her arms around him, and wept as if her very heart would break.

"This agitation, my darling," he added, "is too much for us both. My head is easily disturbed; but—but—send for Lucy," he exclaimed, as if touched by a passing delirium, "send for my daughter. I must have Lucy. I have been harsh to her, and I cannot die without her forgiveness."

"Here, papa—dearest papa! Recollect yourself; Lucy is with you; not to forgive you for anything, but to ask, to implore to be forgiven."

"Ha!" he said, raising his head a little, and looking round like a man awakening from sleep. "I fear I am beginning to wander. Dear Lucy—yes, it is you. Oh, I recollect. Withdraw, my darling; the sight of you—the joy of your very appearance—eh—eh—yes, let me see. Oh, yes; withdraw, my darling; this interview has been too much for me—I fear it has—but rest and silence will restore me, I hope. I hope so—I hope so."

Lucy, who feared that a continuance of this interview might very much aggravate his illness, immediately took her leave, and retired to her own room, whither she summoned Alley Mahon. This blunt but faithful attendant felt no surprise in witnessing her grief; for indeed she had done little else than weep, ever since she heard of her father's illness.

"Now don't cry so much, miss," she said; "didn't I tell you that your grief will do neither you nor him any good? Keep yourself cool and quiet, and spake to him like a raisonable crayture, what you are not, ever since you hard of his being sick. It isn't by shedding tears that you can expect to comfort him, as you intend to do, but by being calm, and considerate, and attentive to him, and not allowin' him to see what you suffer."

"That is very true, Alice, I admit," replied Lucy; but when I consider that it was my undutiful flight from him that occasioned this attack, how can I free myself from blame? My heart, Alice, is divided between a feeling of remorse for having deserted him without sufficient cause, and grief for his illness, and in that is involved the apprehension of his loss. After all, Alice, you must admit that I have no friend in the world but my father. How, then, can I think of losing him?"

"And even if God took him," replied Alley, "which I hope after all isn't so likely——"

"What do you mean, girl?" asked Lucy, ignorant that Alley only used a form of speech peculiar to the people, "what language is this of my father?"

"Why, I hope it's but the truth, miss," replied the maid; "for if God was to call him to-morrow—which may God forbid! you'd find friends that would take care of you and protect you."

"Yes; but, Alice, if papa died, I should have to reproach myself with his death; and that consideration would drive me distracted or kill me. I am beginning to think that obedience to the will of a parent is, under

all circumstances, the first duty of a child. A parent knows better what is for our good than we can be supposed to do. At all events, whatever exceptions there may be to this rule, I care not. It is enough, and too much, for me to reflect that my conduct has been the cause of papa's illness. His great object in life was to promote *my* happiness. Now this was affection for me. I grant he may have been mistaken, but still it was affection; and consequently I cannot help admitting that even his harshness, and certainly all that he suffered through the very violence of his own passions, arose from the same source—affection for me."

"Ah," replied Alley, "it's aisy seen that your heart is softened now; but in truth, miss, it was quare affection that would make his daughter miserable, bekase he wanted her to become a great lady. If he was a kind and raisonable father, he would not force you to be unhappy. An affectionate father would give up the point rather than make you so; but no; the truth is simply this, he wanted to gratify himself more than he did you, or why would he act as he did?"

"Alice," replied Lucy, "remember that I will not suffer you to speak of my father with disrespect. You forget yourself, girl, and learn from me now, that in order to restore him to peace of mind and health, in order to rescue him from death, and oh," she exclaimed involuntarily, "above all things from a death, for which, perhaps, he is not sufficiently prepared—as who, alas, is for that terrible event!—yes in order to do this, I am ready to yield an implicit obedience to his wishes: and I pray heaven that this act on my part may not be too late to restore him to his health, and relieve his mind from the load of care which presses it down upon my accounnt."

"Good Lord, Miss Gourlay," exclaimed poor Alley, absolutely frightened by the determined and vehement spirit in which these words were uttered, "surely you wouldn't think of makin' a saickerfice of yourself that way?"

"That may be the word, Alice, or it may not; but if it be a sacrifice, and if the sacrifice is necessary, it shall be made—I shall make it. My disobedience shall never break my father's heart."

"I don't wish to speak disrespectfully of your father, miss; but I think he's an ambitious man."

"And perhaps the ambition which he feels is a virtue, and one in which I am deficient. You and I, Alice, know but little of life and the maxims by which its great social principles are regulated."

"Faith, spake for yourself, miss; as for me, I'm the very girl that has had my experience. No less than three did I manfully refuse, in spite of both father and mother. First there was big Bob Broghan, a giant of a fellow, with a head and pluck upon him that would fill a mess-pot. He had a chape farm, and could afford to wallow like a swine in filth and laziness. And well becomes the old couple, I must marry him, whether I would or not. Be aisy, said I, it's no go; when I marry a man, it'll be one that'll know the use of soap and wather, at all events. Well, but I must; I did not know what was for my own good: he was rich, and I'd lead a fine life with him. Scrape and clane him for somebody else, says I; no such walkin' dungheap for me. Then they came to the cudgel, and flaked me; but it was in a good cause, and I tould them that if I *must* die a marthyr to cleanliness, I must; and at last they dropped it, and so I got free of Bob Broghan.

"The next was a little fellow that kept a small shop of hucksthery, and some groceries, and the like o' that. He was a near, penurious devil, hard and scraggy lookin', with hunger in his face and in his heart, too; ay, and besides, he had the name of not bein' honest. But then his shop was gettin' bigger and bigger, and himself richer and richer every day. Here's your man, says the old couple. Maybe not, says I. No *shingawn* that deals in light weights and short measures for me. My husband must be an honest man, and not a keen shaving rogue like Barney Buckley. Well, miss, out came the cudgel again, and out came I with the same answer. Lay on, says I; if I must die a marthyr to honesty, why I must; and may God have mercy on me for the same, as he will. Then they saw that I was a rock, and so there was an end of Barney Buckley, as well as Bob Broghan.

"Well and good; then came number three, a fine handsome young man, by name Con Coghlan. At first I didn't much like him, bekase he had the name of being too fond of money, and it was well known that he had disappointed three or four girls that couldn't show guinea for guinea with him. The sleeveen gained upon me, however, and I did get fond of him, and tould him to speak to my father, and so he did, and they met once or twice to make the match; but, ah, miss, every one has their troubles. On the last meetin', when he found that my fortune wasn't what he expected, he shogged off wid himself; and, mother o' mercy, did ever I think it would come to that?" Here she wiped her eyes, and then with fresh spirit proceeded, "He jilted me, Miss—the desate-

ful villain jilted me ; but if he did, I had my revenge. In less than a year he came sneakin' back, and tould my father that as he couldn't get me out of his head, he would take me with whatever portion they could give me. The fellow was rich, Miss, and so the ould couple, ready to bounce at him, came out again. Come, Alley, here's Con Coghlan back. Well, then, says I, he knows the road home again, and let him take it. One good turn desarves another. When he *could* get me he wouldn't take me, and now when he *would* take me, he *won't* get me ; so I think we're even.

"Out once more came the cudgel, and on they laid ; but now I wasn't common stone but whitestone. Lay on, say I ; I see, or rather I *feel*, that the crown is before me. If I must die a marthyr to a dacent spirit, why I must ; and so God's blessing be with you all. I'll shine in heaven for this yet.

"I think now, Miss, you'll grant that I know something about life."

"Alice," replied Lucy, "I have often heard it said, that the humblest weeds which grow contain virtues that are valuable, if they were only known. Your experience is not without a moral, and your last lover was the worst, because he was mean ; but when *I* think of *him*—the delicate, the generous, the disinterested, the faithful, the noble-hearted —alas, Alice!" she exclaimed, throwing herself in a fresh paroxysm of grief upon the bosom of her maid, "you know not the incredible pain—the hopeless agony—of the sacrifice I am about to make. My father, however, is the author of my being, and as his very life depends upon my strength of mind now, I shall, rather than see him die whilst I selfishly gratify my own will—yes, Alice, I shall—I shall—and may heaven give me strength for it!—I shall sacrifice love to duty, and save him ; that is, if it be not already too late."

"And if he does recover," replied Alice, whose tears flowed along with those of her mistress, but whose pretty eye began to brighten with indignant energy as she spoke, "if he does recover, and if ever he turns a cold look, or uses a harsh word to you, may I die for heaven if he oughtn't to be put in the public stocks and made an example of to the world."

"The scene, however, will be changed *then*, Alice ; for the subject matter of all our misunderstandings will have been removed. Yet, Alice, amidst all the darkness and suffering that lie before me, there is one consolation"—and as she uttered these words, there breathed throughout her beautiful features a spirit of sorrow, so deep, so mournful, so resigned, and so touching, that Alley in turn laid her head on her bosom, exclaiming, as she looked up into her eyes, "Oh, may the God of mercy have pity on you, my darling mistress! what wouldn't your faithful Alley do to give you relief? and she can't ;" and then the affectionate creature wept bitterly. "But what is the consolation?" she asked, hoping to extract from the melancholy girl some thought or view of her position that might inspire them with hope or comfort.

"The consolation I allude to, Alice, is the well-known fact that a broken heart cannot long be the subject of sorrow ; and, besides, my farewell of life will not be painful ; for then I shall be able to reflect with peace that, difficult as was the duty imposed upon me, I shall have performed it. Now, dear Alice, withdraw ; I wish to be alone for some time, that I may reflect as I ought, and endeavor to gain strength for the sacrifice that is before me."

Her eye as she looked upon Alley was, though filled with a melancholy lustre, expressive at the same time of a spirit so lofty, calm, and determined, that its whole character partook of absolute sublimity. Alley, in obedience to her words, withdrew ; but not without an anxious and earnest effort at imparting comfort.

When her maid had retired, Lucy began once more to examine her position, in all its dark and painful aspects, and to reflect upon the destiny which awaited her, fraught with unexampled misery as it was. Though well aware, from former experience, of her father's hypocritical disguises, she was too full of generosity and candor to allow her heart to entertain suspicion. Her nature was one of great simplicity, artlessness, and truth. Truth, above all things, was her predominant virtue ; and we need not say, that wherever it resides it is certain to become a guarantee for the possession of all the rest. Her cruel-hearted father, himself false and deceitful, dreaded her for this love of truth, and was so well acquainted with her utter want of suspicion, that he never scrupled, though frequently detected, to impose upon her, when it suited his purpose. This, indeed, was not difficult ; for such was his daughter's natural candor and truthfulness, that if he deceived her by a falsehood to-day, she was as ready to believe him to-morrow as ever. His last heartless act of hypocrisy, therefore, was such a deliberate violation of truth as amounted to a species of sacrilege ; for it robbed the pure shrine of his own daughter's heart of her whole happiness. Nay, when we consider the relations in which they stood, it might be termed, as is beautifully said in

Scripture, "a seething of the kid in the mother's milk."

As it was, however, her father's illness disarmed her generous and forgiving spirit of every argument that stood in the way of the determination she had made. His conduct she felt might, indeed, be the result of one of those great social errors that create so much misery in life; that, for instance, of supposing that one must ascend through certain orders of society, and reach a particular elevation before they can enjoy happiness. This notion, so much at variance with the goodness and mercy of God, who has not confined happiness to any particular class, she herself rejected; but, at the same time, the modest estimate which she formed of her own capacity to reason upon or analyze all speculative opinions, led her to suppose that she might be wrong, and her father right, in the inferences which they respectively drew. Perhaps she thought her reluctance to see this individual case through *his* medium, arose from some peculiar idiosyncrasy of intellect or temperament not common to others, and that she was setting a particular instance against a universal truth.

That, however, which most severely tested her fortitude and noble sense of what we owe a parent, resulted from no moral or metaphysical distinctions of human duty, but simply and directly from what she must suffer by the contemplated sacrifice. She was born in a position of life sufficiently dignified for ordinary ambition. She was surrounded by luxury—had received an enlightened education—had a heart formed for love—for that pure and exalted passion, which comprehends and brings into action all the higher qualities of our being, and enlarges all our capacities for happiness. God and nature, so to speak, had gifted her mind with extraordinary feeling and intellect, and her person with unusual grace and beauty; yet, here, by this act of self-devotion to her father, she renounced all that the human heart with such strong claims upon the legitimate enjoyments of life could expect, and voluntarily entered into a destiny of suffering and misery. She reflected upon and felt the bitterness of all this; but, on the other hand, the contemplation of a father dying in consequence of her disobedience—dying, too, probably in an unprepared state—whose heart was now full of love and tenderness for her; who, in fact, was in grief and sorrow in consequence of what he had caused her to suffer. We say she contemplated all this, and her great heart felt that this was the moment of mercy.

"It is resolved!" she exclaimed; "I will disturb him for a little. There is no time now for meanly wrestling it out, for ungenerous hesitation and delay. Suspense may kill him; and whilst I deliberate, he may be lost. Father, I come, Never again shall you reproach me with disobedience. Though your ambition may be wrong, yet who else than I should become the victim of an error which originates in affection for myself? I yield at last, as is my duty; now your situation makes it so; and my heart, though crushed and broken, shall be an offering of peace between us. Farewell, now, to love—to love legitimate, pure, and holy!—farewell to all the divine charities and tendernesses of life which follow it—farewell to peace of heart—to the wife's pride of eye, to the husband's tender glance—farewell—farewell to everything in this wretched life but the hopes of heaven! I come, my father—I come. But I had forgotten," she said, "I must not see him without permission, nor unannounced, as Gibson said. Stay, I shall ring for Gibson."

"Gibson," said she, when he had made his appearance, "try if your master could see me for a moment; say I request it particularly, and that I shall scarcely disturb him. Ask it as a favor, unless he be very ill indeed—and even then do so."

Whilst Gibson went with this message, Lucy, feeling that it might be dangerous to agitate her father by the exhibition of emotion, endeavored to compose herself as much as she could, so that by the time of Gibson's return, her appearance was calm, noble, and majestic. In fact, the greatness—the heroic spirit—of the coming sacrifice emanated like a beautiful but solemn light from her countenance, and on being desired to go in, she appeared full of unusual beauty and composure.

On entering, she found her father much in the same position: his head, as before, upon the pillows, and the nightcap drawn over his heavy brows.

"You wished to see me, my dear Lucy. Have you any favor to ask, my child? If so, ask whilst I have recollection and consciousness to grant it. I can refuse you nothing now, Lucy. I was wrong ever to struggle with you. It was too much for me, for I am now the victim; but even that is well, for I am glad it is not *you*."

When he mentioned the word victim, Lucy felt as if a poniard had gone through her heart; but she had already resolved that what must be done should be done generously, consequently, without any ostentation of feeling, and with as little appearance of self-sacrifice as possible.

It is not for us, she said to herself, to exaggerate the value of the gift which we bestow, but rather to depreciate it, for it is never generous to magnify an obligation.

"I have a favor to ask, papa," said the generous and considerate girl.

"It is granted, my darling Lucy, before I hear it," he replied. "What is it? Oh how happy I feel that you have returned to me; I shall not now pass away my last moments on a solitary deathbed. But what is your request, my love?"

"You have to-day, papa, told me that the danger of your present attack proceeds from the anxious state of your mind. Now, my request is, that I may be permitted to make that state easier; to remove that anxiety, and, if possible, all other anxiety and care that press upon you. You know, papa, the topic upon which we have always differed; now, rather than any distress of feeling connected with it should stand in the way of your recovery, I wish to say that you may count upon my most perfect obedience."

"You mean the Dunroe business, dear Lucy?"

"I mean the Dunroe business, papa."

"And do you mean to say that you are willing and ready to marry him?"

The reply to this was indeed the coming away of the branch by which she had hung on the precipice of life. On hearing the question, therefore, she paused a little; but the pause did not proceed from any indisposition to answer it, but simply from what seemed to be the refusal of her natural powers to enable her to do so. When about to speak, she felt as if all her physical strength had abandoned her; as if her will, previously schooled to the task, had become recusant. She experienced a general chill and coldness of her whole body; a cessation for a moment or two of the action of the heart, whilst her very sight became dim and indistinct. She thought, however, in this unutterable moment of agony and despair, that she must *act;* and without feeling able to analyze either her thoughts or sensations, in this terrible tumult of her spirit, she heard herself repeat the reply, "I AM, PAPA."

For a moment her father forgot his part, and started up into a sitting posture with as much apparent energy as ever. Another moment, however, was sufficient to make him feel his error.

"Oh," said he, "what have I done? Let me pause a little, my dear Lucy; that effort to express the joy you have poured into my heart was nearly too much for me. You make this promise, Lucy, not with a view merely to ease my mind and contribute to my recovery; but, should I get well, with a firm intention to carry it actually into execution?"

"Such, papa, is my intention—my fixed determination, I should say; but I ought to add, that it is altogether for your sake, dear papa, that I make it. Now let your mind feel tranquillity and ease; dismiss every anxiety that distresses you, papa; for you may believe your daughter, that there is no earthly sacrifice compatible with her duties as a Christian which she would not make for your recovery. This interview is now, perhaps, as much as your state of health can bear. Think, then, of what I have said, papa; let it console and strengthen; and then it will, I trust, help at least to bring about your recovery. Now, permit me to withdraw."

"Wait a moment, my child. It is right that you should know the effect of your goodness before you go. I feel already as if a mountain were removed from my heart—even now I am better. God bless you, my own dearest Lucy; you have saved your father. Let this consideration comfort you and sustain you. Now you may go, my love."

When Lucy withdrew, which she did with a tottering step, she proceeded to her own chamber, which, now that the energy necessary for the struggle had abandoned her, she entered almost unconsciously, and with a feeling of rapidly-increasing weakness. She approached the bell to ring for her maid, which she was able to do with difficulty; and having done so, she attempted to reach the sofa; but exhausted and overwrought nature gave way, and she fell just sufficiently near it to have her fall broken and her head supported by it, as she lay there apparently lifeless. In this state Alley Mahon found her; but instead of ringing an alarm, or attempting to collect a crowd of the servants to witness a scene, and being besides a stout as well as a discreet and sensible girl, she was able to raise her up, place her on a sofa, until, by the assistance of cold water and some patience, she succeeded in restoring her to life and consciousness.

"On opening her eyes she looked about, and Alley observed that her lips were parched and dry.

"Here, my darling mistress," said the affectionate girl, who now wept bitterly, "here, swallow a little cold water; it will moisten your lips, and do you good."

She attempted to do so, but Ally saw that her hand trembled too much to bring the water to her own lips. On swallowing it, it seemed to relieve her a little; she then looked up into Alley's face, with a smile of thanks so unutterably sweet and sorrowful, that the poor girl's tears gushed out afresh.

"Take courage, my darling mistress," she replied; "I know that something painful has happened; but for Christ's blessed sake,

don't look so sorrowful and broken-hearted, or you will——"

"Alice," said she, interrupting her, in a calm, soft voice, like low music, "open my bosom—open my bosom, Alice; you will find a miniature there; take it out; I wish to look upon it."

"O thin," said the girl, as she proceeded to obey her, "happy is he that rests so near that pure and innocent and sorrowful heart; and great and good must he be that is worthy of it."

There was in the look which Lucy cast upon her when she had uttered these words a spirit of gentle but affectionate reproof; but she spoke it not.

"Give it to me, Alice," she said; "but unlock it first; I feel that my hands are too feeble to do so."

Alice unlocked the miniature, and Lucy then taking it from her, looked upon it for a moment, and then pressing it to her lips with a calm emotion, in which grief and despair seemed to mingle, she exclaimed,

"Alas! mamma, how much do I now stand in need of your advice and consolation! The shrine in which your affection and memory dwelt, and against whose troubled pulses your sweet and serene image lay, is now broken. There, dearest mamma, you will find nothing in future but affliction and despair. It has been said, that I have inherited your graces and your virtues, most beloved parent; and if so, alas! in how remote a degree, for who could equal you? But how would it have wrung your gentle and loving heart to know that I should have inherited your secret griefs and sufferings? Yes, mamma, both are painted on that serene brow; for no art of the limner could conceal their mournful traces, nor remove the veil of sorrow which an unhappy destiny threw over your beauty. There, in that clear and gentle eye, is still the image of your love and sympathy—there is that smile so full of sweetness and suffering. Alas, alas! how closely do we resemble each other in all things. Sweet and blessed saint, if it be permitted, descend and let your spirit be with me—to guide, to soothe, and to support me; your task will not be a long one, beloved parent. From this day forth my only hope will be to join you. Life has nothing now but solitude and sorrow. There is no heart with which I can hold communion; for my grief, and the act of duty which occasions it, must be held sacred from all.

She kissed the miniature once more, but without tears, and after a little, she made Alley place it where she had ever kept it—next her heart.

"Alice," said she, "I trust I will soon be with mamma."

"My dear mistress," replied Alice, "don't spake so. I hope there's many a happy and pleasant day before you, in spite of all that has come and gone, yet."

She turned upon the maid a look of incredulity so hopeless, that Alley felt both alarmed and depressed.

"You do not know what I suffer, Alice," she replied, "but I know it. This miniature of mamma I got painted unknown to—unknown to—" (here we need not say that she meant her father)—"any one except mamma, the artist, and myself. It has laid next my heart ever since; but since her death it has been the dearest thing to me on earth—one only other object perhaps excepted. Yes," she added, with a deep sigh, "I hope I shall soon be with you, mamma, and then we shall never be separated any more!"

Alley regretted to perceive that her grief now had settled down into the most wasting and dangerous of all; for it was of that dry and silent kind which so soon consumes the lamp of life, and dries up the strength of those who unhappily fall under its malignant blight.

Lucy's journey, however, from Wicklow, the two interviews with her father, the sacrifice she had so nobly made, and the consequent agitation, all overcame her, and after a painful struggle between the alternations of forgetfulness and memory, she at length fell into a troubled slumber.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Lord Dunroe's Affection for his Father—Glimpse of a new Character—Lord Cullamore's Rebuke to his Son, who greatly refuses to give up his Friend.

A considerable period now elapsed, during which there was little done that could contribute to the progress of our narrative. Summer had set in, and the Cullamore family, owing to the failing health of the old nobleman, had returned to his Dublin residence, with an intention of removing to Glenshee, as soon he should receive the advice of his physician. From the day on which his brother's letter reached him, his lordship seemed to fall into a more than ordinary despondency of mind. His health for years had been very infirm, but from whatsoever cause it proceeded, he now appeared to labor under some secret presentiment of calamity, against which he struggled in vain. So at least he himself admitted. It is true that age and a constitution enfeebled

by delicate health might alone, in a disposition naturally hypochondriac, occasion such anxiety; as we know they frequently do even in the youthful. Be this as it may, one thing was evident, his lordship began to sink more rapidly than he had ever done before; and like most invalids of his class, he became wilful and obstinate in his own opinions. His doctor, for instance, advised him to remove to the delightful air of Glenshee Castle; but this, for some reason or other, he peremptorily refused to do, and so long as he chose to remain in town, so long were Lady Emily and her aunt resolved to stay with him. Dunroe, also, was pretty regular in inquiries after his health; but whether from a principle of filial affection, or a more flagitious motive, will appear from the following conversation, which took place one morning after breakfast, between himself and Norton.

"How is your father this morning, my lord?" inquired that worthy gentleman. "I hope he is better."

"A lie, Norton," replied his lordship—"a lie, as usual. You hope no such thing. The agency which is to follow on the respectable old peer's demise bars that—eh?"

"I give you my honor, my lord, you do me injustice. I am in no hurry with him on that account; it would be unfeeling and selfish."

"Now, Tom," replied the other, in that kind of contemptuous familiarity which slavish minions or adroit knaves like Norton must always put up with from such men, "now, Tom, my good fellow, you know the case is this—you get the agency to the Cullamore property the moment my right honorable dad makes his exit. If he should delay that exit for seven years to come, then you will be exactly seven years short of the period in which you will fleece me and my tenants, and put the wool on yourself."

"Only your tenants, my lord, if you please. I may shear *them* a little, I trust; but you can't suppose me capable of shearing——"

"My lordship. No, no, you are too honest; only you will allow me to insinuate, in the meantime, that I believe you have fleeced me to some purpose already. I do not allude to your gambling debts, which, with my own, I have been obliged to pay; but to other opportunities which have come in your way. It doesn't matter, however; you are a pleasant and a useful fellow, and I believe that although you clip me yourself a little, you would permit no one else to do so. And, by the way, talking of the respectable old peer, he is anything but a friend of yours, and urged me strongly to send you to the devil, as a cheat and impostor."

"How is that, my lord?" asked Norton with an interest which he could scarcely disguise.

"Why, he mentioned something of a conversation you had, in which you told him, you impudent dog—and coolly to his face, too—that you patronized his son while in France, and introduced him to several distinguished French noblemen, not one of whom, he had reason to believe, ever existed except in your own fertile and lying imagination."

"And was that all?" asked Norton, who began to entertain apprehensions of Morty O'Flaherty; "did he mention nothing else?"

"No," replied Dunroe; "and you scoundrel, was not that a d—d deal too much?"

Norton, now feeling that he was safe from Morty, laughed very heartily, and replied,

"It's a fact, sure enough; but then, wasn't it on your lordship's account I bounced? The lie, in point of fact, if it can be called one, was, therefore, more your lordship's lie than mine."

"How do you mean by 'if it can be called one'?"

"Why, if I did not introduce you to real noblemen, I did to some spurious specimens, gentlemen who taught you all the arts and etiquette of the gaming-table, of which, you know very well, my lord, you were then so shamefully ignorant, as to be quite unfit for the society of gentlemen, especially on the continent."

"Yes, Tom, and the state of my property now tells me at what cost you taught me. You see these tenants say they have not money, plead hard times, failure of crops, and depreciation of property."

"Ay, and so they will plead, until *I* take them in hand."

"And, upon my soul, *I* don't care how soon that may be."

"Monster of disobedience," said Norton, ironically, "is it thus you speak of a beloved parent, and that parent a respectable old peer? In other words, you wish him in kingdom come. Repent, my lord—retract those words, or dread 'the raven of the valley.'"

"Faith, Tom, there's no use in concealing it. It's not that I wish him gone; but that I long as much to touch the property at large, as you the agency. It's a devilish tough affair, this illness of his."

"Patience, my lord, and filial affection."

"I wish he would either live or die; for, in the first case, I could marry this brave and wealthy wench of the baronet's, which I can't do now, and he in such a state of health. If I could once touch the Gourlay cash, I were satisfied. The Gourlay estates will come to

me, too, because there is no heir, and they go with this wench, who is a brave wench, for that reason."

"So she has consented to have you at last?"

"Do you think, Tom, she ever had any serious intention of declining the coronet? No, no; she wouldn't be her father's daughter if she had."

"Yes; but your lordship suspected that the fellow who shot you had made an impression in that quarter."

"I did for a time—that is, I was fool enough to think so; she is, however, a true woman, and only played him off against me."

"But why does she refuse to see you?"

"She hasn't refused, man; her health, they tell me, is not good of late; of course, she is only waiting to gain strength for the interview, that is all. Ah, Tom, my dear fellow, I understand women a devilish deal better than you do."

"So you ought; you have had greater experience, and paid more for it. What will you do with the fair *blonde*, though. I suppose the matrimonial compact will send her adrift."

"Suppose no such thing, then. I had her before matrimony, and I will have her after it. No, Tom, I am not ungrateful; fore or aft, she shall be retained. She shall never say that I acted unhandsomely by her, especially as she has become a good girl and repented. I know I did her injustice about the player-man. On that point she has thoroughly satisfied me, and I was wrong."

Norton gave him a peculiar look, one of those looks which an adept in the ways of life, in its crooked paths and unprincipled impostures, not unfrequently bestows upon the poor aristocratic dolt whom he is plundering to his face. The look we speak of might be mistaken for surprise—it might be mistaken for pity—but it was meant for contempt.

"Of course," said he, "you are too well versed in the ways of the world, my lord, and especially in those of the fair sex, to be imposed upon. If ever I met an individual who can read a man's thoughts by looking into his face, your lordship is the man. By the way, when did you see your father-in-law that is to be?"

"A couple of days ago. He, too, has been ill, and looks somewhat shaken. It is true, I don't like the man, and I believe nobody does; but I like very well to hear him talk of deeds, settlements, and marriage articles. He begged of me, however, not to insist on seeing his daughter until she is fully recovered, which he expects will be very soon; and the moment she is prepared for an interview, he is to let me know. But, harkee, Tom, what can the old earl want with me this morning, think you?"

"I cannot even guess," replied the other, "unless it be to prepare you for——"

"For what?"

"Why, it is said that the fair lady with whom you are about to commit the crime of matrimony is virtuous and religious, as well as beautiful and so forth; and, in that case, perhaps he is about to prepare you for the expected conference. I cannot guess anything else, unless, perhaps, it may be the avarice of age about to rebuke the profusion and generosity of youth. In that case, my lord, keep your temper, and don't compromise your friends."

"Never fear, Tom; I have already fought more battles on your account than you could dream of. Perhaps, after all, it is nothing. Of late he has sent for me occasionally, as if to speak upon some matter of importance, when, after chatting upon the news of the day or lecturing me for supporting an impostor—meaning you—he has said he would defer the subject on which he wished to speak, until another opportunity. Whatever it is, he seems afraid of it, or perhaps the respectable old peer is doting."

"I dare say, my lord, it is very natural he should at these years; but if he," proceeded Norton, laughing, "is doting now, what will you be at *his* years? Here, however, is his confidential man, Morty O'Flaherty."

O'Flaherty now entered, and after making a bow that still smacked strongly of Tipperary, delivered his message.

"My masther, Lord Cullamore, wishes to see you, my lord. He has come down stairs, and is facing the sun, the Lord be praised, in the back drawin'-room."

"Go, my lord," said Norton; "perhaps he wishes you to make a third luminary. Go and help him to face the sun."

"Be my sowl, Mr. Norton, if I'm not much mistaken, it's the father he'll have to face. I may as well give you the hard word, my lord—troth, I think you had better be on your edge; he's as dark as midnight, although the sun *is* in his face."

His lordship went out, after having given two or three yawns, stretched himself, and shrugged his shoulders, like a man who was about to enter upon some unpleasant business with manifest reluctance.

"Ah," exclaimed Morty, looking after him, "there goes a cute boy—at laste, God forgive him, he's of that opinion himself. What a pity there's not more o' the family; they'd ornament the counthry."

"Say, rather, Morty, that there's one too many."

"Faith, and I'm sure, Barney, you oughtn't to think so. Beg pardon—Mr. Norton."

"Morty, curse you, will you be cautious? But why shoul I I not think so?"

"For sound raisons, that no man knows better than yourself."

"I'm not the only person that thinks there's one too many of the family, Morty. In that opinion I am ably supported by his lordship, just gone out there."

"Where! Ay, I see whereabouts you are now. One too many—faith, so the blessed pair of you think, no doubt."

"Right, Morty; if the devil had the agency of the ancient earl's soul, I would soon get that of his ancient property; but whilst he lives it can't be accomplished. What do you imagine the old bawble wants with the young one?"

"Well, I don't know; I'm hammerin' upon that for some time past, and can't come at it."

"Come, then, let us get the materials first, and then put them on the anvil of my imagination. *Imprimis*—which means, Morty, *in the first place*, have you *heard* anything?"

"No; nothing to speak of."

"Well, in the second place, have you *seen* or *observed* anything?"

"Why, no; not much."

"Which means—both your answers included—that you have both heard and seen—so I interpret 'nothing to speak of,' on the one hand, and your 'not much,' on the other. Out with it; two heads are better than one: what you miss, I may hit."

"The devil's no match for you, Bar—Mr. Norton, and it's hard to expect Dunroe should. I'll tell you, then—for, in troth, I'm as anxious to come at the meanin' of it myself as you can be for the life of you. Some few months ago, when we were in London, there came a man to me."

"Name him, Morty."

"His name was M'Bride."

"M'Bride—proceed."

"His name was M'Bride. His face was tanned into mahogany, just as every man's is that has lived long in a hot country. 'Your name,' says he, 'is O'Flaherty, I understand?'"

"'Morty O'Flaherty, at your sarviee,' says I, 'and how are you, sir? I'm happy to see you; only in the mane time you have the advantage of me.'"

"'Many thanks to you,' said he, 'for your kind inquiries; as to the advantage, I won't keep it long; only you don't seem to know your relations.'"

"'Maybe not,' says I, 'they say it's a wise man that does. Are you one o' them?'"

"'I'm one o' them. Did you ever hear of ould Kid Flaherty?'"

"'Well, no; but I did of Buck Flaherty, that always went in boots and buckskin breeches, and wore two watches and a silver-mounted whip.'"

"'Well, you must know that Kid was a son'—and here he pointed his thumb over his left shoulder wid a knowin' grin upon him—'was a son of the ould Buck's. The ould Buck's wife was a Murtagh; now she again had a cousin named M'Shaughran, who was married upon a man by name M'Faddle. M'Faddle had but one sisther, and she was cousin to Frank M'Fud, that suffered for—but no matther—the M'Swiggins and the M'Fuds were cleaveens to the third cousins of Kid Flaherty's first wife's sister-in-law, and she again was married in upon the M'Brides of Newton Nowhere—so that you see you and I are thirty-second cousins at all events.'"

"'Well, anyway he made out some relationship between us, or at least I thought he did—and maybe that was as good—and faith may be a great deal better, for if ever a man had the look of a schemer about him the same customer had. At any rate we had some drink together, and went on very well till we got befuddled, which, it seems, is his besetting sin. It was clearly his intention, I could see, to make me tipsy, and I dare say he might a done so, only for a slight mistake he made in first getting tipsy himself."

"Well, but I'm not much the wiser of this," observed Norton. "What are you at?"

"Neither am I," replied Morty; "and as to what I'm at—I dunna what the devil I'm at. That's just what I want to know."

"Go on," said the other, "we must have patience. *Who* did this fellow turn out to be?"

"He insisted he was a relation of my own, as I tould you."

"Who the devil cares whether he was or not! *What* was he, then?"

"Ay; what was he?—that's what I'm askin' you."

"Proceed," said Norton; "tell it your own way."

"He said he came from the Aist Indies beyant; that he knew some members of his lordship's family there; that he had been in Paris, and that while he was there he larned to take French lave of his masther."

"But who was his master?"

"That he would not tell me. However, he said he had been in Ireland for some time before, where he saw an aunt of his, that was half mad; and then he went on to

tell me that he had been once at sarvice wid my masther, and that if he liked he could tell him a secret; but then, he said, it wouldn't be worth his while, for that he would soon know it."

"Very clear, perfectly transparent, nothing can be plainer. What a Tipperary sphinx you are; an enigma, half man, half beast, although there is little enigma in that, it is plain enough. In the meantime, you bog-trotting oracle, say whether you are humbugging me or not."

"Devil a bit I'm humbuggin' you; but proud as you sit there, you have trotted more bogs and horses than ever I did."

"Well, never mind that, Morty. What did this end in?"

"End in!—why upon my conscience I don't think it's properly begun yet."

"Good-by," exclaimed Norton, rising to go, or at least pretending to do so. "Many thanks in the meantime for your information—it is precious, invaluable."

"Well, now, wait a minute. A few days ago I seen the same schemer skulkin' about the house as if he was afeared o' bein' seen; and that beef and mutton may be my poison, wid health to use them, but I seen him stealin' out of his lordship's own room. So, now make money o' that; only when you do, don't be puttin' it in circulation."

"No danger of that, Morty, in any sense. At all events, I don't deal in base coin."

"Don't you, faith. I wondher what do you call imposin' Barney Bryan, the horse-jockey, on his lordship, for Tom Norton, the gentleman? However, no matther—that's your own affair; and so long as you let the good ould lord alone among you—keep your secret—I'm not goin' to interfere wid you. None of your travellers' tricks upon *him*, though."

"No, not on him, Morty; but concerning this forthcoming marriage, if it takes place, I dare say I must travel; I can't depend upon Dunroe's word."

"Why, unlikelier things has happened, Mr. Norton. I think you'll be forced to set out."

"Well, I only say that if Mr. Norton can prevent it, it won't happen. I can wind this puppy of a lord, who has no more will of his own than a goose, nor half so much; I say I can wind him round my finger; and if I don't get him to make himself, in any interview he may have with her, so egregiously ridiculous, as to disgust her thoroughly, my name's not Norton—hem—ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, your name's not Norton—very good. In the mane time more power to you in that; for by all accounts it's a sin and a shame to throw away such a girl upon him."

Norton now having gained all he could from his old acquaintance, got up, and was about to leave the room, when Morty, looking at him significantly, asked,

"Where are you bound for now, if it's a fair question?"

"I will tell you, then, Morty—upon an affair that's anything but pleasant to me, and withal a little dangerous: to buy a horse for Dunroe."

"Troth, you may well say so; in God's name keep away from horses and jockeys, or you'll be found out; but, above all things, don't show your face on the Curragh."

"Well, I don't know. I believe, after all, there's no such vast distinction there between the jockeys and the gentlemen. Sometimes the jockey swindles himself up into a gentleman, and sometimes the gentleman swindles himself down to a jockey. So far there would be no great mistake; the only thing to be dreaded is, discovery, so far as it affects the history which I gave of myself to Dunroe and his father. Then there is the sale of some races against me on that most elastic sod; and I fear they are not yet forgotten. Yes, I shall avoid the Curragh; but you know, a fit of illness will easily manage that. However, pass that by; I wish I knew what the old peer and the young one are discussing."

"What now," said Norton to himself, after Morty had gone, "can this M'Bride be scheming about in the family? There's a secret here, I'm certain. Something troubles the old peer of late, whatever it is. Well, let me see; I'll throw myself in the way of this same M'Bride, and it will go hard with me or I'll worm it out of him. The knowledge of it may serve me. It's a good thing to know family secrets, especially for a hanger-on like myself. One good effect it may produce, and that is, throw worthy Lord Dunroe more into my power. Yes, I will see this M'Bride, and then let me alone for playing my card to some purpose."

Dunroe found his father much as Morty had described him—enjoying the fresh breeze and blessed light of heaven, as both came in upon him through the open window at which he sat.

The appearance of the good old man was much changed for the worse. His face was paler and more emaciated than when we last described it. His chin almost rested on his breast, and his aged-looking hands were worn away to skin and bone. Still there was the same dignity about him as ever, only that the traces of age and illness gave to it something that was still more ven-

erable and impressive. Like some portrait, by an old master, time, whilst it mellowed and softened the colors, added that depth and truthfulness of character by which the value is at once known. He was sitting in an arm-chair, with a pillow for his head to rest upon when he wished it; and on his son's entrance he asked him to wheel it round nearer the centre of the room, and let down the window.

"I hope you are better this morning, my lord?" inquired Dunroe.

"John," said he in reply, "I cannot say that I am better, but I can that I am worse."

"I am sorry to hear that, my lord," replied the other, "the season is remarkably fine, and the air mild and cheerful."

"I would much rather the cheerfulness were *here*," replied his father, putting his wasted hand upon his heart; "but I did not ask you here to talk about myself on this occasion, or about my feelings. Miss Gourlay has consented to marry you, I know."

"She has, my lord."

"Well, I must confess I did her father injustice for a time. I ascribed his extraordinary anxiety for this match less to any predilection of hers—for I thought it was otherwise—than to his ambition. I am glad, however, that it is to be a marriage, although I feel you are utterly unworthy of her; and if I did not hope that her influence may in time, and in a short time, too, succeed in bringing about a wholesome reformation in your life and morals, I would oppose it still as far as lay in my power. It is upon this subject I wish to speak with you."

Lord Dunroe bowed with an appearance of all due respect, but at the same time wished in his heart that Norton could be present to hear the lecture which he had so correctly prognosticated, and to witness the ability with which he should bamboozle the old peer.

"I assure you, my lord," he replied, "I am very willing and anxious to hear and be guided by everything you shall say. I know I have been wild—indeed, I am very sorry for it; and if it will satisfy you, my lord, I will add, without hesitation, that it is time I should turn over a new leaf—hem!"

"You have, John, been not merely wild—for wildness I could overlook without much severity—but you have been profligate in morals, profligate in expenditure, and profligate in your dealings with those who trusted in your integrity. You have been intemperate; you have been licentious; you have been dishonest; and as you have not yet abandoned any one of these frightful vices, I look upon your union with Miss Gourlay as an association between pollution and purity."

"You are very severe, my lord."

"I meant to be so; but am I unjust? Ah, John, let your own conscience answer that question."

"Well, my lord, I trust you will be gratified to hear that I am perfectly sensible of the life I have led—ahem?"

"And what is that but admitting that you know the full extent of your vices?—unless, indeed, you have made a firm resolution to give them up."

"I have made such a resolution, my lord, and it is my intention to keep it. I know I can do little of myself, but I trust that where there is a sincere disposition, all will go on swimmingly, as the Bible says—ahem!"

"Where does the Bible say that *all will go on swimmingly?*"

"I don't remember the exact chapter and verse, my lord," he replied, affecting a very grave aspect, "but I know it is somewhere in the Book of Solomon—ahem!—ahem! Either in Solomon or Exodus the Prophet, I am not certain which. Oh, no, by the by, I believe it is in the dialogue that occurs between Jonah and the whale."

His father looked at him as if to ascertain whether his worthy son were abandoned enough to tamper, in the first place, with a subject so solemn, and, in the next, with the anxiety of his own parent, while laboring, under age and infirmity, to wean him from a course of dissipation and vice. Little indeed did he suspect that his virtuous offspring was absolutely enacting his part, for the purpose of having a good jest to regale Norton with in the course of their evening's potations.

Let it not be supposed that we are overstepping the modesty of nature in this scene. There is scarcely any one acquainted with life who does not know that there are hundreds, thousands, of hardened profligates, who would take delight, under similar circumstances, to quiz the governor—as a parent is denominated by this class—even at the risk of incurring his lasting displeasure, or of altogether forfeiting his affection, rather than lose the opportunity of having a good joke to tell their licentious companions, when they meet. The present age has as much of this, perhaps, as any of its predecessors, if not more. But to return.

"I know not," observed Lord Cullamore, "whether this is an ironical affectation of ignorance, or ignorance itself; but on whichever horn of the dilemma I hang you, Dunroe, you are equally contemptible and guilty. A heart must be deeply corrupted, indeed, that

can tempt its owner to profane sacred things, and cast an aged and afflicted parent into ridicule. You are not aware, unfortunate young man, of the precipice on which you stand, or the dismay with which I could fill your hardened heart, by two or three words speaking. And only that I was not a conscious party in circumstances which may operate terribly against us both, I would mention them to you, and make you shudder at the fate that is probably before you."

"I really think," replied his son, now considerably alarmed by what he had heard, "that you are dealing too severely with me. I am not, so far as I know, profaning anything sacred; much less would I attempt to ridicule your lordship. But the truth is, I know little or nothing of the Bible, and consequently any mistaken references to it that I may sincerely make, ought not to be uncharitably misinterpreted—ahem! 'We are going on swimmingly as Jonah said to the whale,' or the whale to Jonah, I cannot say which, is an expression which I have frequently heard, and I took it for granted that it was a scriptural quotation. Your lordship is not aware, besides, that I am afflicted with a very bad memory."

"Perfectly aware of it, Dunroe: since I have been forced to observe that you forget every duty of life. What is there honorable to yourself or your position in the world, that you ever have remembered? And supposing now, on the one hand, that you may for the present only affect a temporary reformation, and put in practice that worst of vices, a moral expediency, and taking it for granted, on the other, that your resolution to amend is sincere, by what act am I to test that sincerity?"

"I will begin and read the Bible, my lord, and engage a parson to instruct me in virtue. Isn't that generally the first step?"

"I do not forbid you the Bible, nor the instructions of a pious clergyman; but I beg to propose a test that will much more satisfactorily establish that sincerity. First, give up your dissipated and immoral habits; contract your expenditure within reasonable limits; pay your just debts, by which I mean your debts of honesty, not of honor—unless they have been lost to a man of honor, and not to notorious swindlers; forbear to associate any longer with sharpers and blacklegs, whether aristocratic or plebeian; and as a first proof of the sincerity you claim, dismiss forever from your society that fellow, Norton, who is, I am sorry to say, your bosom friend and boon companion."

"With every condition you have proposed, my lord, I am willing and ready to comply, the last only excepted. I am sorry to find that you have conceived so strong and unfounded a prejudice against Mr. Norton. You do not know his value to me, my lord. He has been a Mentor to me—saved me thousands by his ability and devotion to my interests. The fact is, he is my friend. Now I am not prepared to give up and abandon my friend without a just cause; and I regret that any persuasion to such an act should proceed from you, my lord. In all your other propositions I shall obey you implicitly; but in this your lordship must excuse me. I cannot do it with honor, and therefore cannot do it at all."

"Ah, I see, Dunroe, and I bitterly regret to see it—this fellow, this Norton, has succeeded in gaining over you that iniquitous ascendancy which the talented knave gains over the weak and unsuspicious fool. Pardon me, for I speak plainly. He has studied your disposition and habits; he has catered for your enjoyments; he has availed himself of your weaknesses; he has flattered your vanity; he has mixed himself up in the management of your affairs; and, in fine, made himself necessary to your existence; yet you will not give him up?"

"My lord, I reply to you in one word—HE IS MY FRIEND."

A shade of bitterness passed over the old man's face as he turned a melancholy look upon Dunroe.

"May you never live, Dunroe," he said, "to see your only son refuse to comply with your dying request, or to listen with an obedient spirit to your parting admonition. It is true, I am not, I trust, immediately dying, and yet why should I regret it? But, at the same time, I feel that my steps are upon the very threshold of death—a consideration which ought to insure obedience to my wishes in any heart not made callous by the worst experiences of life."

"I would comply with your wishes, my lord," replied Dunroe, "with the sincerest pleasure, and deny myself anything to oblige you; but in what you ask there is a principle involved, which I cannot, as a man of honor, violate. And, besides, I really could not afford to part with him now. My affairs are in such a state, and he is so well acquainted with them, that to do so would ruin me."

His father, who seemed wrapt in some painful reflection, paid no attention to this reply, which, in point of fact, contained, so far as Norton was concerned, a confirmation of the old man's worst suspicions. His chin had sunk on his breast, and looking into the palms of his hands as he held them clasped together, he could not prevent the tears from

rolling slowly down his furrowed cheeks. At length he exclaimed:

"My child, Emily, my child! how will I look upon thee! My innocent, my affectionate angel; what, what, oh what *will* become of *thee?* But it cannot be. My guilt was not premeditated. What I did I did in ignorance; and why should we suffer through the arts of others? I shall oppose them step by step should they proceed. I shall leave no earthly resource untried to frustrate their designs; and if they are successful, the cruel sentence may be pronounced, but it will be over my grave. I could never live to witness the sufferings of my darling and innocent child. My lamp of life is already all but exhausted—this would extinguish it forever."

He then raised his head, and after wiping away the tears, spoke to his son as follows:

"Dunroe, be advised by me; reform your life; set your house in order, for you know not, you see not, the cloud which is likely to burst over our heads."

"I don't understand you, my lord."

"I know you do not, nor is it my intention that you should for the present; but if you are wise, you will be guided by my instructions and follow my advice."

When Dunroe left him, which he did after some formal words of encouragement and comfort, to which the old man paid little attention, turning toward the door, which his son on going out had shut, he looked as if his eye followed him beyond the limits of the room, and exclaimed:

"Alas! why was I not born above the ordinary range of the domestic affections? Yet so long as I have my darling child—who is all affection—why should I complain on this account? Alas, my Maria, it is now that thou art avenged for the neglect you experienced at my hands, and for the ambition that occasioned it. Cursed ambition! Did the coronet I gained by my neglect of you, beloved object of my first and only affection, console my heart under the cries of conscience, or stifle the grief which returned for you, when that ambition was gratified? Ah, that false and precipitate step! How much misery has it not occasioned me since I awoke from my dream! Your gentle spirit seemed to haunt me through life, but ever with that melancholy smile of tender and affectionate reproach with which your eye always encountered mine while living. And thou, wicked woman, what has thy act accomplished, if it should be successful? What has thy fraudulent contrivance effected? Sorrow to one who was ever thy friend—grief, shame, and degradation to the innocent!"

Whilst the old man indulged in these painful and melancholy reflections, his son, on the other hand, was not without his own speculations. On retiring to his dressing-room, he began to ponder over the admonitory if not prophetic words of his father.

"What the deuce can the matter be?" he exclaimed, surveying himself in the glass; "a good style of face that, in the meantime. Gad, I knew she would surrender in form, and I was right. Something is wrong with—that gold button—yes, it looks better plain—the old gentleman—something's in the wind—in the meantime I'll raise this window—or why should he talk so lugubriously as he does? Upon my soul it was the most painful interview I ever had. There is nothing on earth so stupid as the twaddle of a sick old lord, especially when repenting for his sins. Repentance! I can't at all understand that word; but I think the style of the thing in the old fellow's hands was decidedly bad—inartistic, as they say, and without taste; a man, at all events, should repent like a gentleman. As far as I can guess at it, I think there ought to be considerable elegance of manner in repentance—a kind of genteel ambiguity, that should seem to puzzle the world as to whether you weep for or against the sin; or perhaps repentance should say—as I suppose it often does—'D—n me, this is no humbug; this, look you, is a grand process—I know what I'm about; let the world look on; I have committed a great many naughty things during my past life; I am now able to commit no more; the power of doing so has abandoned me; and I call gods and men to witness that I am very sorry for it.'—Now, that, in my opinion, would be a good style of thing. Let me see, however, what the venerable earl can mean. I am threatened, am I? Well, but nothing can affect the title; of that I'm sure when the cue, '*exit* old peer,' comes; then, as to the property; why, he is one of the wealthiest men in the Irish peerage, although he is an English one also. Then, what the deuce can his threats mean? I don't know—perhaps he does not know himself; but, in any event, and to guard against all accidents, I'll push on this marriage as fast as possible; for, in case anything unexpected and disagreeable *should* happen, it will be a good move to have something handsome—something certain, to fall back upon."

Having dressed, he ordered his horse, and rode out to the Phœnix Park, accompanied by his shadow, Norton, who had returned, and heard with much mirth a full history of the interview, with a glowing description of the stand which Dunroe made for himself.

CHAPTER XXX.

A Courtship on Novel Principles.

Having stated that Sir Thomas Gourlay requested Dunroe to postpone an interview with Lucy until her health should become reëstablished, we feel it necessary to take a glance at the kind of life the unfortunate girl led from the day she made the sacrifice until that at which we have arrived in this narrative. Since that moment of unutterable anguish her spirits completely abandoned her. Naturally healthy she had ever been, but now she began to feel what the want of it meant; a feeling which to her, as the gradual precursor of death, and its consequent release from sorrow, brought something like hope and consolation. Yet this was not much; for we know that to the young heart entering upon the world of life and enjoyment, the prospect of early dissolution, no matter by what hopes or by what resignation supported, is one so completely at variance with the mysterious gift of existence and the natural tenacity with which we cling to it, that, like the drugs which we so reluctantly take during illness, its taste upon the spirit is little else than bitterness itself. Lucy's appetite failed her; she could not endure society, but courted solitude, and scarcely saw any one, unless, indeed, her father occasionally, and her maid Alley Mahon, when her attendance was necessary. She became pale as a shadow, began to have a wasted appearance, and the very fountains of her heart seemed to have dried up, for she found it impossible to shed a tear. A dry, cold, impassive agony, silent, insidious, and exhausting, appeared to absorb the very elements of life, and reduce her to a condition of such physical and morbid incapacity as to feel an utter inability, or at all events disinclination, to complain.

Her father's interviews with her were not frequent. That worthy man, however, looked upon all her sufferings as the mere pinings of a self-willed girl, lovesick and sentimental, such as he had sometimes heard of, or read in books, and only worthy to be laughed at and treated with contempt. He himself was now progressing in an opposite direction, so far as health was concerned, to that of his daughter. In other words, as she got ill, he gradually, and with a progress beautifully adapted to the accomplishment of his projects, kept on recovering. This fact was Lucy's principal, almost her sole consolation; for here, although she had sacrificed herself, she experienced the satisfaction of seeing that the sacrifice was not in vain.

But, after all, and notwithstanding his base and ungodly views of life, let us ask, had the baronet no painful visitations of remorse in contemplating the fading form and the silent but hopeless agony of his daughter? Did conscience, which in his bosom of stone indulged in an almost unbroken slumber, never awaken to scourge his hardened spirit with her whip of snakes, and raise the gloomy curtain that concealed from him the dark and tumultuous fires that await premeditated guilt and impenitence? We answer, he was man. Sometimes, especially in the solemn hours of night, he experienced brief periods, not of remorse, much less of repentance, but of dark, diabolical guilt—conscious guilt, unmitigated by either penitence or remorse, as might have taught his daughter, could she have known them, how little she herself suffered in comparison with him. These dreadful moments remind one of the heavings of some mighty volcano, when occasioned by the internal strugglings of the fire that is raging within it, the power and fury of which may be estimated by the terrible glimpses which rise up, blazing and smouldering from its stormy crater.

"What am I about?" he would say "What a black prospect does life present to me! I fear I am a bad man. Could it be possible now, that there are thousands of persons in life who have committed great crimes in the face of society, who, nevertheless, are not responsible for half my guilt? Is it possible that a man may pass through the world, looking on it with a plausible aspect, and yet become, from the natural iniquity of his disposition and the habitual influence of present and perpetual evil within him, a man of darker and more extended guilt than the murderer or robber? Is it, then, the isolated crime, the crime that springs from impulse, or passion, or provocation, or revenge?—or is it the black unbroken iniquity of the spirit, that constitutes the greater offence, or the greater offender against society? Am I, then, one of those reprobates of life in whom there is everything adverse to good and friendly to evil, yet who pass through existence with a high head, and look upon the public criminal and felon with abhorrence or affected compassion? But why investigate myself? Here I am; and that fact is the utmost limit to which my inquiries and investigations can go. I am what I am: besides, I did not form nor create myself. I am different from my daughter, she is different from me. I am different from most people. In what? May I not have a destined purpose in creation to fulfil; and is it not probable that my natural disposition has been bestowed upon me for the purpose of fulfilling it? Yet if all

were right, how account for these dreadful and agonizing glimpses of my inner life which occasionally visit me? But I dare say every man feels them. What are they, after all, but the superstitious operations of conscience—of that grim spectre which is conjured up by the ridiculous fables of the priest and nurse? Conscience! Why, its fearful tribunal is no test of truth. The wretched anchorite will often experience as much remorse if he neglect to scourge his miserable carcass, as the murderer who sheds the blood of man—or more. Away with it! I am but a fool for allowing it to disturb me at all, or mar my projects."

In this manner would he attempt to reason himself out of these dreadful visitations, by the shallow sophistry of the sceptic and infidel.

The time, however, he thought, was now approaching when it was necessary that something should be done with respect to Lucy's approaching marriage. He accordingly sent for her, and having made very affectionate inquiries after her health, for he had not for a moment changed the affected tenderness of his manner, he asked if she believed herself capable of granting an interview to Lord Dunroe. Lucy, now that escape from the frightful penalty of her obedience was impossible, deemed it, after much painful reflection, better to submit with as little apparent reluctance as possible.

"I fear, papa," she said, in tones that would have touched and softened any heart but that to which she addressed herself, "I fear that it is useless to wait until I am better. I feel my strength declining every day, without any hope of improvement. I may therefore as well see him now as at a future time."

"My dear Lucy, I know that you enter into this engagement with reluctance. I know that you do it for my sake; and you may rest assured that your filial piety and obedience will be attended with a blessing. After marriage you will find that change of scene, Dunroe's tenderness, and the influence of enlivening society, will completely restore your health and spirits. Dunroe's a rattling, pleasant fellow; and notwithstanding his escapades, has an excellent heart. Tut, my dear child, after a few months you will yourself smile at these girlish scruples, and thank papa for forcing you into happiness."

Lucy's large eyes had been fixed upon him while he spoke, and as he concluded, two big tears, the first she had shed for weeks, stood within their lids. They seemed, however, but visionary; for although they did fall they soon disappeared, having been absorbed, as it were, into the source from which they came, by the feverish heat of her brain.

"It is enough, papa," she said; "I am willing to see him—willing to see him whenever you wish. I am in your hands, and neither you nor he need apprehend any further opposition from me."

"You are a good girl, Lucy; and you may believe me again that this admirable conduct of yours will have its reward in a long life of future happiness."

"*Future* happiness, papa," she replied, with a peculiar emphasis on the word; "I hope so. May I withdraw, sir?"

"You may, my dear child. God bless and reward you, Lucy. It is to your duty I owe it that I am a living man—that you have a father."

When she had gone, he sat down to his desk, and without losing a moment sent a note to Dunroe, of which the following is a copy:

"My dear Lord Dunroe,—I am happy to tell you that Lucy is getting on famously. Of course you know, I suppose, that these vaporish affections are, with most young girls, nothing but the performance of the part which they choose to act before marriage; the mere mists of the morning, poor wenches, which only prognosticate for themselves and their husbands an unclouded day. All this make-believe is very natural; and it is a good joke, besides, to see them pout and look grave, and whine and cry, and sometimes do the hysteric, whilst they are all the time dying in secret, the hypocritical baggages, to get themselves transformed into matrons. Don't, therefore, be a whit surprised or alarmed if you find Miss Lucy in the pout—she is only a girl, after all, and has her little part to play, as well as the best of them. Still, such a change is often in reality a serious one to a young woman; and you need not be told that no animal will allow itself to be caught without an effort. When you see her, therefore, pluck up your spirits, rattle away, laugh and jest, so as, if possible, to get her into good humor, and there is no danger of you. Or stay—I am wrong. Had you followed this advice, it would have played the deuce with you. Don't be merry. On the contrary, pull a long face—be grave and serious; and if you can imitate the manner of one of those fellows who pass for young men of decided piety, you were nothing but a made man. Have you a Bible? If you have, commit half-a-dozen texts to memory, and intersperse them judiciously through your con-

versation. Talk of the vanity of life, the comforts of religion, and the beauty of holiness. But don't overdo the thing either. Just assume the part of a young person on whose mind the truth is beginning to open, because Lucy knows now very well that these rapid transitions are suspicious. At all events, you will do the best you can ; and if you are here to-morrow—say about three o'clock—she will see you.

"Ever, my dear Dunroe,

"Faithfully, your father-in-law that is to be,

THOMAS GOURLAY."

This precious epistle Dunroe found upon his table after returning from his ride in the Phœnix Park ; and having perused it, he immediately rang for Norton, from whom he thought it was much too good a thing to be concealed.

"Norton," said he, "I am beginning to think that this black fellow, the baronet, is not such a disgraceful old scoundrel as I had thought him. There's not a bad thing in its way—read it."

Norton, after throwing his eye over it, laughed heartily.

"Egad," said he, "that fellow has a pretty knowledge of life ; but it is well he recovered himself in the instructions, for, from all that I have heard of Miss Gourlay, his first code would have ruined you, sure enough."

"I am afraid I will break down, however, in the hypocrisy. I failed cursedly with the old peer, and am not likely to be more successful with her."

"Indeed, I question whether hypocrisy would sit well upon one who has been so undisguised an offender. The very assumption of it requires some training. 'I think a work to be called 'Preparations for Hypocrisy' would be a great book to the general mass of mankind. You cannot bound at one step from the licentious to the hypocritical, unless, indeed, upon the convenient principle of instantaneous conversion. The thing must be done decently, and by judicious gradations, nor is the transition attended with much difficulty, in consequence of the natural tendency which hypocrisy and profligacy always have to meet. Still, I think you ought to attempt the thing. Get by heart, as her father advises, half-a-dozen serious texts of Scripture, and drop one in now and then, such as, 'All flesh is grass.' 'Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.' 'He that marrieth not doth well, but he that marrieth doth better.' To be sure, there is a slight inversion of text here, but then it is made more appropriate."

"None of these texts, however," replied his lordship, "except the last, are applicable to marriage."

"So much the better ; that will show her that you can think of other and more serious things."

"But there are very few things more serious, my boy."

"At all events," proceeded the other, "it will be original, and originality, you know, is your *forte*. I believe it is supposed that she has no great relish for this match, and is not overburdened with affection for you?"

"She must have changed, though," replied his lordship, "or she wouldn't have consented."

"That may be ; but if she should candidly tell you that she does not like you—why, in that case, your originality must bear you out. Start some new and original theory on marriage ; say, for instance, that your principle is not to marry a girl who does love you, but rather one who feels the other way. Dwell fearfully on the danger of love before marriage : and thus strike out strongly upon the advantages of indifference—honest indifference. By this means you will meet all her objections, and be able to capsize her on every point."

"Norton," said his lordship, "I think you are right. My originality will carry the day ; but in the meantime you must give me further instructions on the subject, so that I may be prepared at all points."

"By the by, Dunroe, you will be a happy fellow. I am told she is a magnificent creature ; beautiful, sensible, brilliant, and mistress of many languages."

"Not to be compared with the *blonde*, though."

"I cannot say," replied Norton, "having not yet seen her. You will get very fond of her, of course."

"Fond—'gad, I hope it will never come to that with me. The moment a man suffers himself to become fond of *his wife*, he had better order his Bible and Prayer-book at once—it is all up with him."

"I grant you it's an unfortunate condition to get into ; and the worst of it is, that once you *are* in, it is next to an impossibility to get out. Of course, you will take care to avoid it, for your own sake, and, if you have no objection, for mine. Perhaps her ladyship may take a fancy to support the venerable peer against me in recommending the process of John Thrustout. If so, Dunroe, whatever happiness your marriage may bring yourself, it will bring nothing but bitterness and calamity to me. I am now so much accustomed—so much—so much—hang it, why conceal it?—so much attached and devoted

to you—that a separation would be the same as death to me."

"Never fear, Norton," replied Dunroe, "I have not yielded to my father on this point, neither shall I to my wife. Happen what may, my friend must never be given up for the whim of any one. But, indeed, you need entertain no apprehensions. I am not marrying the girl for love, so that she is not likely to gain any ascendancy whatever over me. It is her fortune and property that have attracted *my* affections, just as the title she will enjoy has inveigled those of the old father."

Norton, in deep emotions of gratitude, ably sustained, had already seized the hand of his patron, and was about to reply—but the effort was too much for him; his heart was too full; he felt a choking; so, clapping his handkerchief to his face with one hand, and the other upon his heart, he rushed out of the room, lest Dunroe might perceive the incredible force of his affection for him.

The next day, when Dunroe made his appearance in the drawing-room, Lucy, before descending, felt as one may be supposed to do who stands upon the brow of a precipice, conscious at the same time that not only is retreat from this terrible position impossible, but that the plunge must be made. On this occasion she experienced none of that fierce energy which sometimes results from despair, and which one might imagine to have been in accordance with her candid and generous character, when driven as she was to such a step. On the contrary, she felt calm, cold, and apathetic. Her pulse could scarcely be perceived by Alley Mahon; and all the physical powers of life within her seemed as if about to suspend their functions. Her reason, however, was clear, even to torture. Those tumultuous vibrations of the spirit—those confused images and unsettled thoughts of the brain; and all those excited emotions of the heart, that are usually called into existence in common minds by such scenes, would have been to her as a relief, in comparison to what she experienced. In her case there was a tranquillity of agony—a quiet, unresisting submission—a gentle bowing of the neck to the stake, at the sacrifice that resulted from the clear perception of her great mind, which thus, by its very facility of apprehension, magnified the torture she suffered. Whilst descending the stairs, she felt such a sinking of the soul within her, as the unhappy wretch does who ascends from those which lead to that deadly platform from which is taken the terrible spring into eternity.

On entering the room she saw herself in the large mirror that adorned the mantelpiece, and felt for the first time as if all this was some dreadful dream. The reality, however, of the misery she felt was too strongly in her heart to suffer this consoling fiction, painful even though it was, to remain. The next moment she found Lord Dunroe doing her homage and obeisance, an obeisance which she returned with a lady-like but melancholy grace, that might have told to any other observer the sufferings she felt, and the sacrifice she was making.

Dunroe, with as much politeness as he could assume, handed her to the sofa, close to which he drew a chair, and opened the dialogue as follows:

"I am sorry to hear that you have not been well, Miss Gourlay. Life, however, is uncertain, and we should always be prepared—at least, so says Scripture. All flesh is grass, I think is the expression—ahem."

Lucy looked at him with a kind of astonishment; and, indeed, we think our readers will scarcely feel surprised that she did so; the reflection being anything but adapted to the opening of a love scene.

"Your observation, my lord," she replied, "is very true—too true, for we rarely make due preparation for death."

"But I can conceive, readily enough," replied his lordship, "why the man that wrote the Scripture used the expression. Death, you know Miss Gourlay, is always represented as a mower, bearing a horrible scythe, and an hour-glass. Now, a mower, you know, cuts down grass; and there is the origin of the similitude."

"And a very appropriate one it is, I think," observed Lucy.

"Well, I dare say it is; but somewhat vulgar though. I should be disposed to say, now, that the man who wrote that must have been a mower himself originally."

Lucy made no reply to this sapient observation. His lordship, however, who seemed to feel that he had started upon a wrong principle, if not a disagreeable one, went on:

"It is not, however, to talk of death, Miss Gourlay, that we have met, but of a very different and much more agreeable subject—marriage."

"To me, my lord," she replied, "death is the more agreeable of the two."

"I am sorry to hear that, Miss Gourlay; but I think you are in low spirits, and that accounts for it. Your father tells me, however, that I have your permission to urge my humble claims. He says you have kindly and generously consented to look upon me, all unworthy as I feel I am, as your future husband."

"It is true, my lord, I have consented to

this projected union; but I feel that it is due to your lordship to state that I have done so under very painful and most distressing circumstances. It is better I should speak now, my lord, than at a future day. My father's mind has been seized by an unaccountable ambition to see me your wife. This preyed upon him so severely that he became dangerously ill." Here, however, from delicacy to the baronet, she checked herself, but added, "Yes, my lord, I have consented; but, understand me—you have not my affections."

"Why, as to that, Miss Gourlay, I have myself peculiar opinions; and I am glad that they avail me here. You will think it odd, now, that I had made my mind up never to marry a woman who loved me. This is really fortunate."

"I don't understand you, my lord."

"Well, I suppose you don't; but I shall make myself intelligible as well as I can. Love before marriage, in my opinion, is exceedingly dangerous to future happiness; and I will tell you why I think so. In the first place, a great deal of that fuel which feeds the post-matrimonial flame is burned away and wasted unnecessarily; the imagination, too, is raised to a ridiculous and most enthusiastic expectation of perpetual bliss and ecstasy; then comes disappointment, coolness, indifference, and the lights go out for want of the fuel I mentioned; and altogether the domestic life becomes rather a dull and tedious affair. The wife wonders that the husband is no longer a lover; and the husband cannot for the soul of him see all the—the—the—ahem!—I scarcely know what to call them—that enchanted him before marriage. Then, you perceive, that when love is necessary, the fact comes out that it was most injudiciously expended before the day of necessity. Both parties feel, in fact, that the property has been prematurely squandered—like many another property—and when it is wanted, there is nothing to fall back upon. I wish to God affection could be funded, so that when a married couple found themselves low in pocket in that commodity they could draw the interest or sell out at once."

"And what can you expect, my lord, from those who marry without affection?" asked Lucy.

"Ten chances for happiness," replied his lordship, "for one that results from love. When such persons meet, mark you, Miss Gourlay, they are not enveloped in an artificial veil of splendor, which the cares of life, and occasionally a better knowledge of each other, cause to dissolve from about them, leaving them stripped of those imaginary qualities of mind and person which never had any existence at all, except in their hypochondriac brains, when love-stricken; whereas, your honest, matter-of-fact people come together—first with indifference, and, as there is nothing angelic to be expected on either side, there is consequently no disappointment. There has, in fact, been no sentimental fraud committed—no swindle of the heart—for love, too, like its relation, knavery, has its black-legs, and very frequently raises credit upon false pretences; the consequence is, that plain honesty begins to produce its natural effects."

"Can this man," thought Lucy, "have been taking lessons from papa? And pray, my lord," she proceeded, "what are those effects which marriage without love produces?"

"Why, a good honest indifference, in the first place, which keeps the heart easy and somewhat indolent withal. There is none of that sharp jealousy which is perpetually on the spy for offence. None of that pulling and pouting—falling out and falling in—which are ever the accessories of love. On the contrary, honest indifference minds the family—honest indifference, mark, buys the beef and mutton, reckons the household linen—eschews parties and all places of fashionable resort, attends to the children—sees them educated, bled, blistered, et cetera, when necessary; and, what is still better, looks to their religion, hears them their catechism, brings them, in their clean bibs and tuckers, to church, and rewards that one who carries home most of the sermon with a large lump of sugar-candy."

"These are very original views of marriage, my lord."

"Aha!" thought his lordship, "I knew the originality would catch her."

"Why, the fact is, Miss Gourlay, that I believe—at least I think I may say—that originality is my *forte*. I have a horror against everything common."

"I thought so, my lord," replied Lucy; "your sense, for instance, is anything but common sense."

"You are pleased to flatter me, Miss Gourlay, but you speak very truly; and that is because I always think for myself—I do not wish to be measured by a common standard."

"You are very right, my lord; it would be difficult, I fear, to find a common standard to measure you by. One would imagine, for instance, that you have been on this principle absolutely studying the subject of matrimony. At least, you are the first person I have ever met who has succeeded in completely stripping it of common sense, and there I must admit your originality."

"Gad!" thought his lordship, "I have her with me—I am getting on famously."

"They would imagine right, Miss Gourlay; these principles are the result of a deep and laborious investigation into that mysterious and awful topic. Honest indifference has no intrigues, no elopements, no disgraceful trials for criminal conversation, no divorces. No; your lovers in the yoke of matrimony, when they tilt with each other, do it sharply, with naked weapons; whereas, the worthy indifferents, in the same circumstances, have a wholesome regard for each other, and rattle away only with the scabbards. Upon my honor, Miss Gourlay, I am quite delighted to hear that you are not attached to me. I can now marry upon my own principles. It is not my intention to coax, and fondle, and tease you after marriage; not at all. I shall interfere as little as possible with your habits, and you, I trust, as little with mine. We shall see each other only occasionally, say at church, for instance, for I hope you will have no objection to accompany me there. Neither man nor woman knows what is due to society if they pass through the world without the comforts of religion. All flesh—ahem!—no—sufficient unto the day—as Scripture says."

"My lord, I think marriage a solemn subject, and——"

"Most people find it so, Miss Gourlay."

——"And on that account that it ought to be exempted from ridicule."

"I perfectly agree with you, Miss Gourlay: it is indeed a serious subject, and ought not to be sported with or treated lightly."

"My lord," said Lucy, "I must crave your attention for a few moments. I believe the object of this interview is to satisfy you that I have given the consent which my father required and entreated of me. But, my lord, you are mistaken. Our union cannot take place upon your principles, and for this reason, there is no indifference in the case, so far, at least, as I am concerned. It would not become me to express here, under my father's roof, the sentiments which I feel. Your own past life, my lord—your habits, your associates, may enable you to understand them. It is enough to say, that in wedding you I wed misery, wretchedness, despair; so that, in my case, at least, there is no 'sentimental fraud' committed."

"Not a bit of it, Miss Gourlay; your conduct, I say, is candid and honorable; and I am quite satisfied that the woman who has strength of mind and love of truth to practice this candor before marriage, gives the best security for fidelity and all the other long list of matrimonial virtues afterwards. I am perfectly charmed with your sentiments. Indeed I was scarcely prepared for this. Our position will be delightful. The only thing I have any apprehension of is, lest this wholesome aversion might gradually soften into fondness, which, you know, would be rather unpleasant to us both."

"My lord," replied Lucy, rising up with disdain and indignation glowing in her face, "there is one sentiment due to every woman whose conduct is well regulated and virtuous—that sentiment is, respect. From you on this occasion, at least, and on this subject especially, I had thought myself entitled to it. I find I have been mistaken, however. Such a sentiment is utterly incompatible with the heartless tirade of buffoonery in which you have indulged. This dialogue is very painful, my lord. I have already intimated to you that I am prepared to fulfil the engagement into which my father has entered with you. I know—I feel what the result will be—you are to consider me your victim, my lord, as well as your wife."

"Excuse me, Miss Gourlay, I was utterly unconscious of any buffoonery. Upon my honor, I expressed on the subject of matrimony no principles that I do not feel; but as to your charge of disrespect, I solemnly assure you there is not an individual of your sex in existence whom I respect more highly; nor do I believe there is a lady living more signally entitled to it from all who have the honor to know her."

"Then, if you be serious, my lord, it betrays a painful equality between your understanding and your heart. No man with such a heart should enter into the state of matrimony at all; and no man with an understanding level to such principles is capable either of communicating or receiving happiness."

"Well, then, suppose I say that I shall submit myself in everything to your wishes?"

"Then I should reply, that the husband capable of doing so would experience from me a sentiment little short of contempt. What, my lord! so soon to abandon your favorite principles! That is a proof, I fear, that, after all, you place but little value on them."

"Well, but I know I have not been so good a boy as I ought to have been; I have been naughty now and then; and as I intend to reform, I shall make you my guide and adviser. I assure you, I am perfectly serious in the reformation. It shall be on quite an original scale. I intend to repent, Miss Gourlay; but, then, my repentance won't be commonplace repentance. I shall do the thing with an aristocratic feeling—or, in other words, I shall repent like a man of honor and a gentleman."

"Like anything but a Christian, my lord, I presume."

"Just so; I must be original or die. I will give up everything; for, after all, Miss Gourlay, what is there more melancholy than the vanity of life—unless, indeed, it be the beauty of holiness—ahem! All flesh—no—I repeated that sweet text before. He that marrieth doth well; but he that marrieth not doth better. Sufficient unto the day—No, hang it, I think I misquoted it. I believe it runs correctly—He that giveth 'way, does well; but he that giveth not 'way, does better: then, I believe, comes in, Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof. What beautiful and appropriate texts are to be found in Scripture, Miss Gourlay! By the way, the man that wrote it was a shrewd fellow and a profound thinker. The only pity is, that the work's anonymous."

Lucy rose, absolutely sickened, and said, "My lord, excuse me. The object of our interview has been accomplished, and as I am far from well, you will permit me to withdraw. In the meantime, pray make whatever arrangements and hold whatever interviews may be necessary in this miserable and wretched business; but henceforth they must be with my father."

"You are surely not going, Miss Gourlay?"

She replied not, but turning round, seemed to reflect for a moment, after which she spoke as follows:

"I cannot bring myself to think, my lord, after the unusual opinions you have expressed, that you have been for one moment serious in the conversation which has taken place between us. Their strangeness and eccentricity forbid me to suppose this; and if I did not think that it is so, and that, perhaps, you are making an experiment upon my temper and judgment, for some purpose at present inconceivable; and if I did not think, besides, notwithstanding these opinions, that you may possess sufficient sense and feeling to perceive the truth and object of what I am about to say, I would not remain one moment longer in your society. I request, therefore, that you will be serious for a little, and hear me with attention, and, what is more, if you can, with sympathy. My lord, the highest instance of a great and noble mind is to perform a generous act; and when you hear from my own lips the circumstances which I am about to state, I would hope to find you capable of such an act. I am now appealing to your generosity—your disinterestedness—your magnanimity (and you ought to be proud to possess these virtues)—to all those principles that honor and dignify our nature, and render man a great example to his kind. My lord, I am very unhappy—I am miserable—I am wretched; so completely borne down by suffering that life is only a burden, which I will not be able long to bear; and you, my lord, are the cause of all this anguish and agony."

"Upon my honor, Miss Gourlay, I am very much concerned to hear it. I would rather the case were otherwise, I assure you. Anything that I can do, I needn't say, I shall be most happy to do; but proceed, pray."

"My lord, I throw myself upon your generosity; do you possess it? Upon your feeling as a man, upon your honor as a gentleman, I implore, I entreat you, not to press this unhappy engagement. I implore you for my sake, for the sake of humanity, for the sake of God; and if that will not weigh with you, then I ask it for the sake of your own honor, which will be tarnished by pressing it on. I have already said that you possess not my affections, and that to a man of honor and spirit ought to be sufficient; but I will go farther, and say, that if there be one man living against a union with whom I entertain a stronger and more unconquerable aversion than another, you are that man."

"But you know, Miss Gourlay, if I may interrupt you for a moment, that that fact completely falls into my principles. There is only one other circumstance wanting to make the thing complete; but perhaps you will come to it; at least I hope so. Pray, proceed, madam; I am all attention."

"Yes," she replied, "I shall proceed; because I would not that my conscience should hereafter reproach me for having left anything undone to escape this misery. My lord, I implore you to spare me; force me not over the brow of this dreadful precipice; have compassion on me—have generosity—act with honor."

"I would crown you with honor, if I could, Miss Gourlay."

"You are about to crown me with fire, my lord; to wring my spirit with torture; to drive me into distraction—despair—madness. But you will not do so. You know that I cannot love you. I am not to blame for this; our affections are not always under our own control. Have pity on me, then, Lord Dunroe. Go to my father, and tell him that you will not be a consenting party to my misery—and accessory to my death. Say what is true; that as I neither do nor can love you, the honor of a gentleman, and the spirit of a man, equally forbid you to act ungenerously to me and dishonorably to yourself. What man, not base and mean, and sunk farther down in degradation of spirit

than contempt could reach him, would for a moment think of marrying a woman who, like me, can neither love nor honor him? Go, my lord; see my father; tell him you are a man—an Irish gentleman——"

"Pardon me, Miss Gourlay, I do not wish to be considered such."

—"That justice, humanity, self-respect, and a regard for the good opinion of the world, all combine to make you release me from this engagement."

"Unfortunately, Miss Gourlay, I have it not in my power, even if I were willing, to release you from this engagement. I am pledged to your father, and cannot, as a man of honor and a gentleman, recede from that pledge. All these objections and difficulties only bring you exactly up to my theory, or very near it. We shall marry upon very original principles; so that altogether the whole affair is very gratifying to me. I had expectations that there was a prior attachment; but that would be too much to hope for. As it is, I am perfectly satisfied."

"Then, my lord, allow me to add to your satisfaction by assuring you that my heart is wholly and unalterably in possession of another; that that other knows it; and that I have avowed my love for him with the same truth and candor with which I now say that I both loathe and despise you."

"I perceive you are excited, Miss Gourlay; but, believe me, all this sentimental affection for another will soon disappear after marriage, as it always does; and your eyes will become open to a sense of your enviable position. Yes, indeed, you will live to wonder at these freaks of a heated imagination; and I have no doubt the day will come when you will throw your arms about my neck, and exclaim, 'My dear Dunroe, or Cullamore (you will then be my countess, I hope), what a true prophet you have been! And what a proof it was of your good sense to overcome my early folly! I really thought at the time that I was in love with another; but you knew better. Shan't we spend the winter in England, my love? I am sick of this dull, abominable country, where nobody that one can associate with is to be met; and you mustn't forget the box at the Opera.' Yes; we shall have an odd scene or so occasionally of that sort of thing; and no doubt be as happy as our neighbors."

Lucy turned upon him one withering look, in which might be read hatred, horror, contempt; after which she slightly inclined her head, and without speaking, for she had now become incapable of it, withdrew to her own apartment, in a state of feeling which the reader may easily imagine.

"Alice," said she to her maid, and her cheek, that had only a little before been so pale, now glowed with indignation like fire as she spoke, "Alice, I have degraded myself; I am sunk forever in my own opinion since I saw that heartless wretch."

"How is that, miss?" asked Alice; "such a thing can't be."

"Because," replied Lucy, "I was mean enough to throw myself on his very compassion—on his honor—on his generosity—on his pride as a man and a gentleman—but he has not a single virtue;" and she then, with cheeks still glowing, related to her the principal part of their conversation.

"And that was the reply he gave you, miss?" observed Alley; "in truth, it was more like the answer of a sheriff's bailiff to some poor woman who had her cattle distrained for rent, and wanted to get time to pay it."

"Alice," she exclaimed, "I hope in God I may retain my senses, or, rather, let them depart from me, for then I shall not be conscious of what I do. Matters are far worse than I had even imagined—desperate—full of horror. This man is a fool; his intellect is beneath the very exigencies of hypocrisy, which he would put on if he could. His infamy, his profligacy, can proceed even from no perverted energy of character, and must therefore be associated with contempt. There is a lively fatuity about him that is uniformly a symptom of imbecility. Among women, at least, it is so, and I have no doubt but it is the same with men. Alice, I know what my fate will be. It is true, you may see me married to him; but you will see me drop dead at the altar, or worse than that may happen. I shall marry him; but to live his wife!—oh! to live the wife of *that* man! the thing would be impossible; death in any shape a thousand times sooner! Think, Alice, how you should feel if your husband were despised and detested by the world; think of that, Alice. Still, there might be consolation even there, for the world might be wrong; but think, Alice, if he *deserved* that contempt and detestation—think of it; and that you yourself knew he was entitled to nothing else but that and infamy at its hands! Oh, no!—not one spark of honor—not one trace of feeling—of generosity—of delicacy—of truth—not one moral point to redeem him from contempt. He may be a lord, Alice, but he is not a gentleman. Hardened, vicious, and stupid, I can see he is, and altogether incapable of comprehending what is due to the feelings of a lady, of a woman, which he outrages without even the consciousness of the offence. But, Alice, oh Alice! when I

think—when I compare him with—and may Heaven forgive me for the comparison!—when I compare him with the noble, the generous, the delicate, the true-hearted, and intellectual *gentleman* who has won and retains, and ever will retain, my affections, I am sick almost to death at the contrast. Satan, Alice, is a being whom we detest and fear, but cannot despise. This mean profligate, however, is all vice, and low vice; for even vice sometimes has its dignity. If you could conceive Michael the Archangel resplendent with truth, brightness, and the glory of his divine nature, and compare him with the meanest, basest, and at the same time wickedest spirit that ever crawled in the depths of perdition, then indeed you might form an opinion as to the relative character of this Dunroe and my noble lover. And yet I cannot weep, Alice; I cannot weep, for I feel that my brain is burning, and my heart scorched. And now, for my only melancholy consolation!"

She then pulled from her bosom the portrait of her mother, by the contemplation of which she felt the tumult of her heart gradually subside; but, after having gazed at it for some time, she returned it to its place next her heart; the consolation it had transiently afforded her passed away, and the black and deadly gloom which had already withered her so much came back once more.

CHAPTER XXXI.

The Priest goes into Corbet's House very like a Thief —a Sederunt, with a Bright look up for Mr. Gray.

It is unnecessary to say that the priest experienced slight regret at the mistake which had been instrumental in bringing him into collision with a man, who, although he could not afford them any trace of unfortunate Fenton, yet enabled them more clearly to identify the baronet with his fate. The stranger, besides, was satisfied from the evidence of the pound note, and Trailcudgel's robbery, that his recent disappearance was also owing to the same influence. Still, the evidence was far from being complete, and they knew that if Fenton even were found, it would be necessary to establish his identity as the heir of Sir Edward Gourlay. No doubt they had made a step in advance, and, besides, in the right direction; but much still remained to be done; the plot, in fact, must be gradually, but clearly, and regularly developed; and in order to do so, they felt that they ought, if the thing could be managed, to win over some person who had been an agent in its execution.

From what Skipton had disclosed to Father M'Mahon, both that gentleman and the stranger had little doubt that old Corbet could render them the assistance required, if he could only be prevailed upon to speak. It was evident from his own conversation that he not only hated but detested Sir Thomas Gourlay; and yet it was equally clear that some secret influence prevented him from admitting any knowledge or participation in the child's disappearance. Notwithstanding the sharp caution of his manner, and his disavowal of the very knowledge they were seeking, it was agreed upon that Father M'Mahon should see him again, and ascertain whether or not he could be induced in any way to aid their purpose. Nearly a week elapsed, however, before the cunning old ferret could be come at. The truth is, he had for many a long year been of opinion that the priest entertained a suspicion of his having been in some way engaged, either directly or indirectly, in the dark plots of the baronet, if not in the making away with the child. On this account then, the old man never wished to come in the priest's way whenever he could avoid it; and the priest himself had often remarked that whenever he (old Corbet), who lived with the baronet for a couple of years, after the child's disappearance, happened to see or meet him in Ballytrain, he always made it a point to keep his distance. In fact, the priest happened on one occasion, while making a visit to see Quin, the monomaniac, and waiting in the doctor's room, to catch a glimpse of Corbet passing through the hall, and on inquiring who he was from one of the keepers, the fellow, after some hesitation, replied, that he did not know.

By this time, however, the mysterious loss of the child had long passed out of the public mind, and as the priest never paid another visit to the asylum, he also had ceased to think of it. It is quite possible, indeed, that the circumstance would never again have recurred to him had not the stranger's inquiries upon this very point reminded him that Corbet was the most likely person he knew to communicate information upon the subject. The reader already knows with what success that application had been made.

Day after day had elapsed, and the priest, notwithstanding repeated visits, could never find him at home. The simple-hearted man had whispered to him in the watch-house, that he wished to speak to him upon that very subject—a communication which filled the old fellow with alarm, and the conse-

quence was, that he came to the resolution of not seeing him at all, if he could possibly avoid it.

One day, however, when better than a week had passed, Father M'Mahon entered his shop, where he found a woman standing, as if she expected some person to come in. His wife was weighing huckstery with her back to the counter, so that she was not aware of his presence. Without speaking a word he passed as quietly as possible into the little back parlor, and sat down. After about fifteen minutes he heard a foot overhead passing stealthily across the room, and coming to the lobby, where there was a pause, as if the person were listening. At length the foot first came down one stair very quietly, then another, afterwards a third, and again there was a second pause, evidently to listen as before. The priest kept his eyes steadily on the staircase, but was placed in such a position that he could see without being visible himself. At length Corbet's long scraggy neck was seen projecting like that of an ostrich across the banisters, which commanded a view of the shop through the glass door. Seeing the coast, as he thought, clear, he ventured to speak.

"Is he gone?" he asked, "for I'll take my oath I saw him come up the street."

"You needn't trust your eyes much longer, I think," replied his wife, "you saw no such man; he wasn't here at all."

"Bekaise I know it's about that poor boy he's coming; and sure, if I stir in it, or betray the others, I can't keep the country; an', besides, I will lose my pension."

Having concluded these words he came down the stairs into the little parlor we have mentioned, where he found Father M'Mahon sitting, his benevolent features lit up with a good deal of mirth at the confusion of Corbet, and the rueful aspect he exhibited on being caught in the trap so ingeniously laid for him.

"Dunphy," said the priest, for by this name he went in the city, "you are my prisoner; but don't be afraid in the mane time —better *my* prisoner than that of a worse man. And now, you thief o' the world, why did you refuse to see me for the last week? Why keep me trotting day after day, although you know I wanted to speak with you? What have you to say for yourself?"

Corbet, before replying, gave a sharp, short, vindictive glance at his wife, whom he suspected strongly of having turned traitress, and played into the hands of the enemy.

"Troth, your reverence, I was sorry to hear that you had come so often;" and as he spoke, another glance toward the shop seemed to say, "You deceitful old wretch, you have betrayed and played the devil with me."

"I don't at all doubt it, Anthony," replied the priest, "the truth being that you were sorry I came at all. Come I am, however, and if I were to wait for twelve months, I wouldn't go without seeing you. Call in Mrs. Dunphy till I spake to her, and ask her how she is."

"You had better come in, ma'am," said the old fellow, in a tone of voice that could not be misunderstood; "here's Father M'Mahon, who wants to spake to you."

"Arra, get out o' that!" she replied; "didn't I tell you that he didn't show his round rosy face to-day yet; but I'll go bail he'll be here for all that—sorra day he missed for the last week, and it's a scandal for you to thrate him as you're doin'—sorra thing else."

"Stop your goster," said Dunphy, "and come in—isn't he inside here?"

The woman came to the door, and giving a hasty and incredulous look in, started, exclaiming, "Why, then, may I never sin, but he is. Musha! Father M'Mahon, how in the name o' goodness did you get inside at all?"

"Aisily enough," he replied; "I only made myself invisible for a couple of minutes, and passed in while you were weighing something for a woman in the shop."

"Troth, then, one would think you must a' done so, sure enough, for the sorrow a stim of you I seen anyhow."

"O, she's so attentive to her business, your reverence," said Anthony, with bitter irony, "that she sees nothing else. The lord mayor might drive his coach in, and she wouldn't see him. There's an ould proverb goin' that says there's none so blind as thim that *won't* see. Musha, sir, wasn't that a disagreeable turn that happened you the other morning?"

"But it didn't last long, that was one comfort. The Lord save me from ever seeing such another sight. I never thought our nature was capable of such things: it is awful, even to think of it. Yes, terrible to reflect, that there were unfortunate wretches there who will probably be hurried into eternity without repenting for their transgressions, and making their peace with God;" and as he concluded, Corbet found that the good pastor's eye was seriously and solemnly fixed upon him.

"Indeed—it's all true, your reverence—it's all true," he replied.

"Now, Anthony," continued the priest, "I have something very important to spake to you about; something that will be for your own benefit, not only in this

world, but in that awful one which is to come, and for which we ought to prepare ourselves sincerely and earnestly. Have you any objection that your wife should be present, or shall we go upstairs and talk it over there?"

"I have every objection," replied Corbet; "something she *does* know, but——"

"O thank goodness," replied the old woman, very naturally offended at being kept out of the secret, "I'm not in all your saicrets, nor I don't wish to know them, I'm sure. I believe you find some of them a heavy burden, at any rate."

"Come, then," said the priest, "put on your hat and take a walk with me as far as the Brazen Head inn, where I'm stopping. We can have a private room there, where there will be no one to interrupt us."

"Would it be the same thing to you, sir, if I'd call on you there about this time to-morrow?"

"What objection have you to come now?" asked the priest. "Never put off till to-morrow what can be done to-day, is a good old proverb, and applies to things of weightier importance than belong to this world."

"Why, then, it's a little business of a very particular nature that I have to attend to; and yet I don't know," he added, "maybe I'll be a betther match for them afther seeing you. In the mane time," he proceeded, addressing his wife, "if *they* should come here to look for me, don't say where I'm gone, nor, above all things, who I'm with. Mark that now; and tell Charley, or Ginty, whichever o' them comes, that it must be put off till to-morrow—do you mind, now?"

She merely nodded her head, by way of attention.

"Ay," he replied, with a sardonic grin, "you'll be alive, as you were a while ago, I suppose."

They then proceeded on their way to the Brazen Head, which they reached without any conversation worth recording.

"Now, Anthony," began the priest, after they had seated themselves comfortably in a private room, "will you answer me truly why you refused seeing me? why you hid or absconded whenever I went to your house for the last week?"

"Bekaise I did *not* wish to see you, then."

"Well, that's the truth," said the priest, "and I know it. But why did you *not* wish to see me?" he inquired; "you must have had some reason for it."

"I had my suspicions."

"You had, Anthony; and you've had the same suspicions this many a long year—ever since the day I saw you pass through the hall in the private mad-house in——."

"Was that the time Mr. Quin was there?" asked Anthony, unconsciously committing himself from the very apprehension of doing so by giving a direct answer to the question.

"Ah! ha! Anthony, then you *knew* Mr. Quin was there. That will do; but there's not the slightest use in beating about the bush any longer. You have within the last half-hour let your secret out, within my own ears, and before my own eyes. And so you have a pension from the Black Baronet; and you, an old man, and I fear a guilty one, are receiving the wages of iniquity and corruption from *that* man—from the man that first brought shame and everlasting disgrace, and guilt and madness into and upon your family and name—a name that had been without a stain before. Yes; you have sold yourself as a slave—a bond-slave—have become the creature and instrument of his vices—the clay in his hands that he can mould as he pleases, and that he will crush and trample on, and shiver to pieces, the moment his cruel, unjust, and diabolical purposes are served."

Anthony's face was a study, but a fearful study, whilst the priest spoke. As the reverend gentleman went on, it darkened into the expression of perfect torture; he gasped and started as if every word uttered had given him a mortal stab; his keen old eye flickered with scintillations of unnatural and turbid fire, until the rebuke was ended.

The priest had observed this, and naturally imputed the feeling to an impression of remorse, not, it is true, unmingled with indignation. We may imagine his surprise, therefore, on seeing that face suddenly change into one of the wildest and most malignant delight. A series of dry, husky hiccoughs, or what is termed the black laugh, rapidly repeated, proceeded from between his thin jaws, and his eyes now blazed with an expression of such fiery and triumphant vengeance, that the other felt as if some fiendish incarnation of malignity, and not a man, sat before him.

"Crush *me!*" he exclaimed, "crush me, indeed! Wait a little. What have I been doin' all this time? I tell you that I have been every day for this many a long year windin' myself like a serpent about him, till I get him fairly in my power; and when I do—then for one sharp, deadly sting into his heart:—ay, and, like the serpent, it's in my tongue that sting lies—from that tongue the poison must come that will give me the revenge that I've been long waitin' for."

"You speak," replied the priest, "and, indeed, you look more like an evil spirit than a man, Anthony. This language is disgrace-

ful and unchristian, and such as no human being should utter. How can you think of death with such principles in your heart?"

"I'll tell you how I think on death: I'm afeared of it when I think of that poor, heart-broken woman, Lady Gourlay; but when I think of him—of *him*—I do hope and expect that my last thought in this world will be the delightful one that I've had my revenge on him."

"And you would risk the misery of another world for the gratification of one evil passion in this! Oh, God help you, and forgive you, and turn your heart!"

"God help me, and forgive me, and turn my heart! but not so far as *he* is consarned. I neither wish it, nor pray for it, and what's more, if you were fifty priests, I never will. Let us drop this subject, then, for so long as we talk of him, I feel as if the blood in my ould veins was all turned into fire."

The priest saw and felt that this was true, and resolved to be guided by the hint he had unconsciously received. To remonstrate with him upon Christian principles, in that mood of mind, would, he knew, be to no purpose. If there were an assailable point about him, he concluded, from his own words, that it was in connection with the sufferings of Lady Gourlay, and the fate of her child. On this point, therefore, he resolved to sound him, and ascertain, without, if possible, alarming him, how far he would go on—whether he felt disposed to advance at all, or not.

"Well," said the priest, "since you are resolved upon an act of vengeance—against which, as a Christian priest and a Christian man, I doubly protest—I think it only right that you should perform an act of justice also. You know it is wrong to confound the innocent with the guilty. There is Lady Gourlay, with the arrow of grief, and probably despair, rankling in her heart for years. Now, you could restore that woman to happiness—you could restore her lost child to happiness, and bid the widowed mother's heart leap for joy."

"It isn't for that I'd do it, or it would, maybe, be done long ago; but I'm not sayin' *I* know where her son is. Do you think now, if I did, that it wouldn't gratify my heart to pull down that black villain—to tumble him down in the eyes of all the world with disgrace and shame, from the height he's sittin' on, and make him a world's wondher of villany and wickedness?"

"I know very well," replied the priest, who, not wishing to use an unchristian argument, thought it still too good to be altogether left out, "I know very well that you cannot restore Lady Gourlay's son, without punishing the baronet at the same time. If you be guided by me, however, you will think only of what is due to the injured lady herself."

"Do you think, now," persisted Corbet, not satisfied with the priest's answer, and following up his interrogatory, "do you think, I say, that I wouldn't 'a' dragged him down like a dog in the kennel, long ago, if I knew where his brother's son was."

"From your hatred to Sir Thomas Gourlay," replied the other, "I think it likely you would have tumbled him long since if you could."

"Why," exclaimed Corbet, with another sardonic and derisive grin, "that's a proof of how little you know of a man's heart. Do you forget what I said awhile ago about the black villain—that I have been windin' myself about him for years, until I get him fairly into my power? When that time comes, you'll see what I'll do."

"But will that time *soon* come?" asked the other. "Recollect that you are now an old man, and that old age is not the time to nourish projects of vengeance. Death may seize you—may take you at a short notice—so that it is possible you may never live to execute your devilish purpose on the one hand, nor the act of justice toward Lady Gourlay on the other. Will that time soon come, I ask?"

"So far I'll answer you. It'll take a month or two—not more. I have good authority for what I'm sayin'."

"And what will you do then?"

"I'll tell you that," he replied; and rising up, he shut his two hands, turning in his thumbs, and stretching his arms down along his body on each side, he stooped down, and looking directly and fully into the priest's eyes, he replied, "*I'll give him back his son.*"

"Tut!" returned the clergyman, whose honest heart, and sympathies were all with the widow and her sorrows; "I was thinking of Lady Gourlay's son. In the mane time, that's a queer way of punishing the baronet. You'll give him back his son?—pooh!"

"Ay," replied Corbet, "that's the way I'll have my revenge; and maybe it'll be a greater one than you think. That's all."

This was accompanied by a sneer and a chuckle, which the ambiguous old sinner could not for the blood of him suppress. "And now," he added, "I must be off."

"Sir," said Father M'Mahon, rising up and traversing the room with considerable heat, "you have been tampering with the confidence I was disposed to place in you. Whatever dark game you are playing, or have been playing, I know not; but this I can as-

sure you, that Lady Gourlay's friends know more of your secrets than you suspect. I believe you to be nothing more nor less than a hardened old villain, whose heart is sordid, and base, and cruel—corrupted, I fear, beyond all hope of redemption. You have been playing with me, sir—sneering at me in your sleeve, during this whole dialogue. This was a false move, however, on your part, and you will find it so. I am not a man to be either played with or sneered at by such a snake-like and diabolical old scoundrel as you are. Listen, now, to me. You think your secret is safe; you think you are beyond the reach of the law; you think we know nothing of your former movements under the guidance and in personal company with the Black Baronet. Pray, did you think it impossible that there was above you a God of justice, and of vengeance, too, whose providential disclosures are sufficient to bring your villany to light? Anthony Corbet, be warned in time. Let your disclosures be voluntary, and they will be received with gratitude, with deep thanks, with ample rewards; refuse to make them, endeavor still further to veil the crimes to which I allude, and sustain this flagitious compact, and we shall drag them up your throat, and after forcing you to disgorge them, we shall send you, in your wicked and impenitent old age, where the clank of the felon's chain will be the only music in your ears, and that chain itself the only garter that will ever keep up your Connemaras. Now begone, and lay to heart what I've said to you. It wasn't my intention to have let you go without a bit of something to eat, and a glass of something to wash it down afterwards; but you may travel now; nothing stronger than pure air will cross your lips in this house, unless at your own cost."

The old fellow seemed to hesitate, as if struck by some observation contained in the priest's lecture.

"When do you lave town, sir?" he asked.

"Whenever it's my convanience," replied the other; "that's none of your affair. I'll go immediately and see Skipton."

The priest observed that honest Anthony looked still graver at the mention of this name. "If you don't go," he added, "until a couple of days hence, I'd like to see you again, about this hour, the day afther to-morrow."

"Whether I'll be here, or whether I won't is more than I know. I may be brought to judgment before then, and so may you. You may come then, or you may stay away, just as you like. If you come, perhaps I'll see you, and perhaps I won't. So now good-by! Thank goodness we are not depending on you!"

Anthony then slunk out of the room with a good deal of hesitation in his manner, and on leaving the hall-door he paused for a moment, and seemed disposed to return. At length he decided, and after lingering awhile, took his way toward Constitution Hill.

This interview with the priest disturbed Corbet very much. His selfishness, joined to great caution and timidity of character, rendered him a very difficult subject for any man to wield according to his purposes. There could be no doubt that he entertained feelings of the most diabolical resentment and vengeance against the baronet, and yet it was impossible to get out of him the means by which he proposed to visit them upon him. On leaving Father M'Mahon, therefore, he experienced a state of alternation between a resolution to make disclosures and a determination to be silent and work out his own plans. He also feared death, it is true: but this was only when those rare visitations of conscience occurred that were awakened by superstition, instead of an enlightened and Christian sense of religion. This latter was a word he did not understand, or rather one for which he mistook superstition itself. Be this as it may, he felt uneasy, anxious, and irresolute, wavering between the right and the wrong, afraid to take his stand by either, and wishing, if he could, to escape the consequences of both. Other plans, however, were ripening as well as his, under the management of those who were deterred by none of his cowardice or irresolution. The consideration of this brings us to a family discussion; which it becomes our duty to detail before we proceed any further in our narrative.

On the following day, then, nearly the same party of which we have given an account in an early portion of this work, met in the same eating-house we have already described; the only difference being that instead of O'Donegan, the classical teacher old Corbet himself was present. The man called Thomas Corbet, the eldest son of Anthony, Ginty Cooper the fortune-teller, Ambrose Gray, and Anthony himself, composed this interesting *sederunt*. The others had been assembled for some time before the arrival of Anthony, who consequently had not an opportunity of hearing the following brief dialogue.

"I'm afraid of my father," observed Thomas; "he's as deep as a draw-well, and it's impossible to know what he's at. How are we to manage him at all?"

"By following his advice, I think," said

Ginty. "It's time, I'm sure, to get this boy into his rights."

"I was very well disposed to help you in that," replied her brother; "but of late he has led such a life, that I fear if he comes into the property, he'll do either us or himself little credit; and what is still worse, will he have sense to keep his own secret? My father says his brother, the legitimate son, is dead; that he died of scarlet-fever many years ago in the country—and I think myself, by the way, that he looks, whenever he says it, as if he himself had furnished the boy with the fever. That, however, is not our business. If I had been at Red Hall, instead of keeping the house and place in town, it's a short time the other—or Fenton as he calls himself—would be at large. He's now under a man that will take care of him. But indeed it's an easy task. He'll never see his mother's face again, as I well know. Scarman has him, and I give the poor devil about three months to live. He doesn't allow him half food, but, on the other hand, he supplies him with more whiskey than he can drink; and this by the baronet's own written orders. As for you, Mr. Gray, for we may as well call you so yet awhile, your conduct of late has been disgraceful."

"I grant it," replied Mr. Gray, who was now sober; "but the truth is, I really looked, after some consideration, upon the whole plan as quite impracticable. As the real heir, however, is dead——"

"Not the real heir, Amby, if you please. He, poor fellow, is in custody that he will never escape from again. Upon my soul, I often pitied *him*."

"How full of compassion you are!" replied his sister.

"I have very little for the baronet, however," he replied; "and I hope he will never die till I scald the soul in his body. Excuse me, Amby. You know all the circumstances of the family, and, of course, that you are the child of guilt and shame."

"Why, yes, I'm come on the wrong side as to birth, I admit; but if I clutch the property and title, I'll thank heaven every day I live for my mother's frailty."

"It was not frailty, you unfeeling boy," replied Ginty, "so much as my father's credulity and ambition. I was once said to be beautiful, and he, having taken it into his head that this man, when young, might love me, went to the expense of having me well educated. He then threw me perpetually into his society; but I was young and artless at the time, and believed his solemn oaths and promises of marriage."

"And the greater villain he," observed her brother; "for I myself did not think there could be danger in your intimacy, because you and he were foster-children; and, except in his case, I never knew another throughout the length and breadth of the country, where the obligation of that tie was forgotten."

"Well," observed Ambrose, "we must only make the best of our position. If I succeed, you shall, according to our written agreement, be all provided for. Not that I would feel very strongly disposed to do much for that enigmatical old grandfather of mine. The vile old ferret saw me in the lock-up the other morning, and refused to bail me out; ay, and threatened me besides."

"He did right," replied his uncle; "and if you're caught there again, I'll not only never bail you out, but wash my hands of the whole affair. So now be warned, and let it be for your good. Listen, then; for the case in which you stand is this: there is Miss Gourlay and Dunroe going to be married after all; for she has returned to her father, and consented to marry the young lord. The baronet, too, is ill, and I don't think will live long. He is burned out like a lime-kiln; for, indeed, like that, his whole life has been nothing but smoke and fire. Very well; now pay attention. If we wait until these marriage articles are drawn up, the appearance or the discovery of this heir here will create great confusion; and you may take my word that every opposition will be given, and every inquiry made by Dunroe, who, as there seems to be no heir, will get the property; for it goes, in that case, with Miss Gourlay. Every knot is more easily tied than untied. Let us produce the heir, then, *before* the property's disposed of, and then we won't have to untie the knot—to invalidate the marriage articles. So far, so good—that's our plan. But again, there's the baronet ill; should he die before we establish this youth's rights, think of our difficulty. And, thirdly, he's beginning to suspect our integrity, as he is pleased to call it. That strange gentleman, Ginty, has mentioned circumstances to him that he says could come only from my father or myself, or you."

"Proceed," replied his sister, "proceed; I may look forward to the fulfilment of these plans; but I will never live to see it."

"You certainly are much changed for the worse," replied her brother, "especially since your reason has been restored to you. In the meantime, listen. The baronet is now ill, although Gibson says there's no danger of him; he's easier in his mind, however, in

consequence of this marriage, that he has, for life or death, set his heart on; and altogether this is the best time to put this vagabond's pretensions forward."

"Thank you, uncle," replied Ambrose, with a clouded brow. "In six months hence, perhaps, I'll be no vagabond."

"Ay, in sixty years hence you will; and indeed, I fear, to tell you the truth, that you'll never be anything else. That, however, is not the question now. We want to know what my father may say—whether he will agree with us, or whether he can or will give us any better advice. There is one thing, at least, we ought to respect him for; and that is, that he gave all his family a good education, although he had but little of that commodity himself, poor man."

He had scarcely concluded, when old Anthony made his appearance, with that mystical expression on his face, half sneer, half gloom, which would lead one to conclude that his heart was divided between remorse and vengeance.

"Well," said he, "you're at work, I see—honestly employed, of course. Ginty, how long is Mr. Ambrose here dead now?"

"He died," replied her brother, "soon after the intention of changing the children took place. You took the hint, father, from the worthy baronet himself."

"Ay, I did; and I wish I had not. You died, my good young fellow, of scarlet-fever—let me see—but divil a much matther it is when you died; it's little good you'll come to, barrin' you change your heart. They say, indeed, the divil's children have the divil's luck; but I say, the divil's children have the divil's face, too; for sure he's as like the black fiend his father as one egg is to another."

"And that will strengthen the claim," replied the young man, with a grin. "I don't look too old, I hope?"

"There's only two years' difference between you and the boy, your brother, that's dead," said his mother. "But I wish we were well through with this. My past life seems to me like a dream. My contemplated revenge upon that bad man, and my ambition for this boy, are the only two principles that now sustain me. What a degraded life has Thomas Gourlay caused me to lead! But I really think that I saw into futurity; nay, I am certain of it; otherwise, what put hundreds of predictions into my lips, that were verified by the event?"

There was a momentary expression of wildness in her eye as she spoke, which the others observed with pain.

"Come, Ginty," said her brother, "keep yourself steady now, at all events; be cool and firm, till we punish this man. If you want to know why you foretold so much, I'll tell you. It was because you could put two and two together."

"My whole life has been a blank," she proceeded, "an empty dream—a dead, dull level; insanity, vengeance, ambition, all jostling and crossing each other in my unhappy mind; not a serious or reasonable duty of life discharged; no claim on society—no station in the work of life—an impostor to the world, and a dupe to myself; but it was he did it. Go on; form your plans—make them firm and sure; for, by Him who withdrew the light of reason from my spirit—by Him from whom it came, I will have vengeance. Father, I know you well, and I am your daughter."

"You know me well, do you?" he replied, with his usual grin. "Maybe you do, and maybe you don't; but let us proceed. The baronet's son's dead, you know."

"But what makes you look as you do, father, when you say so? Your face seems to contradict your words. You know you have told us for years that he's dead."

"And I'm a liar, am I?" he replied, looking at him with a peculiar smile.

"No, I don't say so; certainly not. But, still, you squeeze your face up in such a way that you don't seem to believe it yourself."

"Come, come," continued the old man, "this is all useless. What do you intend to do? How do you intend to proceed?"

"We sent for you to advise us in that," replied his son. "You are the oldest and the wisest here, and of course ought to possess the soundest judgment."

"Well, then, my advice to you is, to go about your business; that is, to do any lawful business that you have to do, and not to bring yourselves to disgrace by puttin' forrid this drunken profligate, who will pitch us all to the devil when he gets himself safe, and tread in his black father's steps afterwards."

"And you must assist us, father," said Ginty, rising up, and pacing to and fro the room in a state of great agitation. "You, the first cause, the original author of my shame; you, to whose iniquitous avarice and vulgar ambition I fell a sacrifice, as much as I did to the profligacy and villany of Thomas Gourlay. But I care not—I have my ambition; it is a mother's, and more natural on that account. I have also my vengeance to gratify; for, father, we are your children, and vengeance is the family principle. Father, you must assist us—you must join us—you must lend us your perjury—supply us with false oaths, with deceitful accounts, with all that is necessary; for, father, it is to work out your own principles—that I may

be able to die smiling—smiling that I have overreached and punished him at last. That, you know, will be a receipt in full for my shame and madness. Now, I say, father, you must do this, or I will kneel down and curse you."

The old man, as she proceeded, kept his eyes fixed upon her, first with a look of indifference; this, however, became agreeable and complacent; gradually his eye kindled as he caught her spirit, and when she had concluded, he ground his black old stumps of teeth together with a vindictive energy that was revolting, or at least would have been so to any others unless those that were present.

"Well, Ginty," he replied, "I have turned it over in my mind, and as helpin' you now will be givin' the black fellow an additional stab, I'll do it. Yes, my lad," he added, grinning rather maliciously, by the way, at the object of his promised support, "I will make a present of you to your father; and a thankful man he ought to be to have the like of you. I was sometimes for you, and sometimes against you; but, at all events, the old fellow must have you—for the present at least."

This was accompanied by another grin, which was, as usual, perfectly inexplicable to the others. But as he had expressed his assent and promised his assistance, they were glad to accept it on his own terms and in his own way.

"Well, then," he proceeded, "now that we've made up our minds to go through with it, I'll think over what's to be done—what's the best steps to take, and the best time and place to break it to him. This will require some time to think of it, and to put things together properly; so let us have a drop of something to drink, and we can meet again in few days."

Having partaken of the refreshment which was ordered in, they soon afterwards separated until another opportunity.

Ambrose Gray, with whose real name the reader is already acquainted, took but little part, as may have been perceived, in the discussion of a project which so deeply affected his own interests. When it was first discovered to him by his mother and uncle, he was much struck even at the bare probability of such an event. Subsequent reflection, however, induced him to look upon the whole scheme as an empty bubble, that could not bear the touch of a finger without melting into air. It was true he was naturally cunning, but then he was also naturally profligate and vicious; and although not without intellect, yet was he deficient in self-command to restrain himself when necessary. Altogether, his character was bad, and scarcely presented to any one a favorable aspect. When affected with liquor he was at once quarrelsome and cowardly—always the first to provoke a fight, and the first, also, to sneak out of it.

Soon after the disappearance of Sir Edward Gourlay's heir, the notion of removing the baronet's own son occurred, not to his mother, nor to her brother, but to old Corbet, who desired his son Charles, then a young man, and the baronet's foster-brother, as a preparatory step to his ultimate designs, to inform him that his illegitimate son was dead. Sir Thomas at this time had not assumed the title, nor taken possession of the immense estates.

"Mr. Gourlay," said Charles, "that child is dead; I was desired to tell you so by my father, who doesn't wish to speak to you himself upon the subject."

"Well," replied Mr. Gourlay, "what affair is that of mine?"

"Why," said the other, "as the unfortunate mother is insane, and without means of providing decently for its burial, he thinks it only reasonable that you should furnish money for that purpose—he, I know, won't."

"What do you mean by providing decently?" asked Mr. Gourlay. "What stuff that is!—throw the brat into a shell, and bury it. I am cursedly glad it's gone. There's half-a-crown, and pitch it into the nearest kennel. Why the deuce do you come to me with such a piece of information?"

Charles Corbet, being his father's son, looked at him, and we need not at any length describe the nature of that look nor the feeling it conveyed. This passed, but was not forgotten; and on being detailed by Charles Corbet to his father, the latter replied,

"Ah, the villain—that's his feelin', is it! Well, never mind, I'll punish him one day."

Some months after this he came into Mr. Gourlay's study, with a very solemn and anxious face, and said,

"I have something to say to you, sir."

"Well, Anthony, what is it you have to say to me?"

"Maybe I'm wrong, sir, and I know I oughtn't to alarm you or disturb your mind; but still I think I ought to put you on your guard."

"Confound your caution, sir; can't you come out with whatever you have to say at once?"

"Would it be possible, sir, that there could be any danger of the child bein' taken away like the other—like your brother's?"

"What do you mean?—why do you ask such a question?"

"Bekaise, sir, I observed for the last few days a couple of strange men peepin' and

pimpin' about the place, and wherever the child went they kept dodgin' afther him."

"But why should any one think of taking him away?"

"Hem!—well, I don't know, sir; but *you* know that the *heir* was taken away."

"Come, Anthony, be quiet—walls have ears; go on."

"What 'ud you think if there was sich a thing as revinge in the world? I'm not suspectin' any one, but at the same time, a woman's revinge is the worst and deepest of all revinges. You know very well that she suspects you—and, indeed, so does the world."

"But very wrongly, you know, Anthony," replied the baronet, with a smile dark as murder.

"Why, ay, to be sure," replied the instrument, squirting the tobacco spittle into the fire, and turning on him a grin that might be considered a suitable commentary upon the smile of his employer.

"But," added Mr. Gourlay, "what if it should be the father, instead of the son, they want?"

"But why would they be dodgin' about the child, sir?"

"True; it is odd enough. Well, I shall give orders to have him well watched."

"And, with the help o' God, I'll put a mark upon him that'll make him be known, at any rate, through all changes, barrin' they should take his life."

"How do you mean by a mark!" asked the other.

"I learnt it in the army, sir, when I was with Sir Edward. It's done by gunpowder. It can do no harm, and will at any time durin' his life make him known among millions. It can do no harm, at any rate, sir."

"Very well, Anthony—very well," replied Mr. Gourlay; "mark him as you like, and when it is done, let me see it."

In about a fortnight afterwards, old Corbet brought his son to him, and raising his left arm, showed him the child's initials distinctly marked on the under part of it, together with a cross and the family crest; all so plainly and neatly executed, that the father was surprised at it.

Nothing, however, happened at that time; vigilance began to relax as suspicion diminished, until one morning, about eight months afterwards, it was found that the child had disappeared. It is unnecessary to add, that every possible step was taken to discover him. Searches were made, the hue and cry was up, immense rewards were offered; but all in vain. From that day forth neither trace nor tidings of him could be found, and in the course of time he was given up, like the heir of the property, altogether for lost.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Discovery of the Baronet's Son—who, however, is Shelved for a Time.

Lord Dunroe, as had already been agreed upon between him and her father, went directly to that worthy gentleman, that he might make a faithful report of the interview.

"Well, Dunroe," said the baronet, "what's the news? How did it go off?"

"Just as we expected," replied the other. "Vapors, entreaties, and indignation. I give you my honor, she asked me to become her advocate with you, in order to get released from the engagement. That was rather cool, wasn't it?"

"And what did you say?"

"Why, the truth is, I conducted the affair altogether on a new principle. I maintained that love should not be a necessary element in marriage; vindicated the rights of honest indifference, and said that it was against my system to marry any woman who was attached to me."

"Why, I remember preaching some such doctrine, in a bantering way, to her myself."

"Guided by this theory, I met her at every turn; but, nevertheless, there was a good deal of animated expostulation, tears, solicitations, and all that."

"I fear you have mismanaged the matter some way; if you have followed my advice, and done it with an appearance of common sense, so much the better. This would have required much tact, for Lucy is a girl very difficult to be imposed upon by appearances. I am the only person who can do so, but that is because I approach her aided by my knowledge of her filial affection. As it is, however, these things are quite common. My own wife felt much the same way with myself, and yet we lived as happily as most people. Every young baggage must have her scenes and her sacrifices. Ah! what a knack they have got at magnifying everything! 'How do you do, my Lady Dunroe?' half a dozen times repeated, however, will awaken her vanity, and banish all this girlish rodomontade."

"'Room for the Countess of Cullamore,' will soon follow," replied his lordship, laughing, "and that will be still better. The old peer, as Norton and I call him, is near the end of his journey, and will make his parting bow to us some of these days."

"Did she actually consent, though?" asked the father, somewhat doubtfully.

"Positively, Sir Thomas; make your mind easy upon that point. To be sure, there were protestations and entreaties, and God knows what; but still the consent was given."

"Exactly, exactly," replied her father; "I knew it would be so. Well, now, let us not lose much time about it. I told those lawyers to wait a little for further instructions, because I was anxious to hear how this interview would end, feeling some apprehension that she might relapse into obstinacy; but now that she has consented, we shall go on. They may meet to-morrow, and get the necessary writings drawn up; and then for the wedding."

"Will not my father's illness stand a little in the way?" asked Dunroe.

"Not a bit; why should it? But he really is not ill, only getting feeble and obstinate. The man is in his dotage. I saw him yesterday, and he refused, most perversely, to sanction the marriage until some facts shall come to his knowledge, of which he is not quite certain at present. I told him the young people would not wait; and he replied, that if I give you my daughter now, I shall do so at my peril; and that I may consider myself forewarned. I know he is thinking of your peccadilloes, my lord, for he nearly told me as much before. I think, indeed, he is certainly doting, otherwise there is no understanding him."

"You are right, Sir Thomas; the fuss he makes about morality and religion is a proof that he is. In the meantime, I agree with you that there is little time to be lost. The lawyers must set to work immediately; and the sooner the better, for I am naturally impatient."

They then shook hands very cordially, and Dunroe took his leave.

The reader may have observed that in this conversation the latter reduced his account of the interview to mere generalities, a mode of reporting it which was agreeable to both, as it spared each of them some feeling. Dunroe, for instance, never mentioned a syllable of Lucy's having frankly avowed her passion for another; neither did Sir Thomas make the slightest allusion to the settled disinclination to marry him which he knew she all along felt. Indifferent, however, as Dunroe naturally was to high-minded feeling or principle, he could not summon courage to dwell upon this attachment of Lucy to another. A consciousness of his utter meanness and degradation of spirit in consenting to marry any woman under such circumstances, filled him with shame even to glance at it. He feared, besides, that if her knavish father had heard it, he would at once have attributed his conduct to its proper motives—that is to say, an eagerness to get into the possession and enjoyment of the large fortune to which she was entitled. He himself, in his conversations with the baronet, never alluded to the subject of dowry, but placed his anxiety for the match altogether to the account of love. So far, then, each was acting a fraudulent part toward the other.

The next morning, about the hour of eleven o'clock, Thomas Corbet—foster-brother to the baronet, though a much younger man—sent word that he wished to see him on particular business. This was quite sufficient; for, as Corbet was known to be more deeply in his confidence than any other man living, he was instantly admitted.

"Well, Corbet," said his master, "I hope there is nothing wrong."

"Sir Thomas," replied the other, "you have a right to be a happy and a thankful man this morning; and although I cannot mention the joyful intelligence with which I am commissioned, without grief and shame for the conduct of a near relation of my own, yet I feel this to be the happiest day of my life."

"What the deuce!" exclaimed the baronet, starting to his feet—"how is this? What is the intelligence?"

"Rejoice, Sir Thomas—rejoice and be thankful; but, in the meantime, pray sit down, if you please, and don't be too much agitated. I know how evil news, or anything that goes in opposition to your will, affects you: the two escapes, for instance, of that boy."

"Ha! I understand you now," exclaimed the baronet, whilst the very eyes danced in his head with a savage delight that was frightful, and, for the sake of human nature, painful to look upon, "I understand you now, Corbet—he is dead! eh? Is it not so? Yes, yes—it is—it is true. Well, you shall have a present of one hundred pounds for the intelligence. You shall, and that in the course of five minutes."

"Sir Thomas," replied Corbet, calmly, have patience; the person, Fenton, you speak about, is still alive; but to all intents and purposes, dead to you and for you. This, however, is another and a far different affair. Your son has been found!"

The baronet's brow fell: he looked grave, and more like a man disappointed than anything else. In fact, the feeling associated with the recovery of his son was not strong enough to balance or counteract that which he experienced in connection with the hoped-for death of the other. He recovered himself, however, and exclaimed,

"Found! Tom found!—little Tom found! My God! When—where—how?"

"Have the goodness to sit down, sir," replied Corbet, "and I will tell you."

The baronet took a seat, but the feeling of

disappointment, although checked by the intelligence of his son, was not extinguished, and could still be read in his countenance. He turned his eyes upon Corbet and said,

"Well, Corbet, go on; he is not dead, though?"

"No, sir; thank God, he is not."

"Who—who—are you speaking of? Oh, I forgot—proceed. Yes, Corbet, you are right; I am very much disturbed. Well, speak about my son. Where is he? In what condition of life? Is he a gentleman—a beggar—a profligate—what?"

"You remember, Sir Thomas—hem—you remember that unfortunate affair with my sister?"

Corbet's face became deadly pale as he spoke, and his voice grew, by degrees, hollow and husky; yet he was both calm and cool, as far, at least, as human observation could form a conjecture.

"Of course I do; it was a painful business; but the girl was a fool for losing her senses."

"Hear me, Sir Thomas. When her child died, you may remember my father sent me to you, as its parent, for the means of giving it decent interment. You cannot forget your words to me on that occasion. I confess I felt them myself as very offensive. What, then, must his mother have suffered—wild, unsettled, and laboring, as she was, under a desperate sense of the injury she had experienced at your hands?"

"But why have mentioned it to her?"

"I confess I was wrong there; but I did so to make her feel more severely the consequences of her own conduct. I did it more in anger to her than to you. My words, however, instead of producing violence or outrage on my sister, seemed to make her settle down into a fearful silence, which none of us could get her out of for several days. It struck us that her unfortunate malady had taken a new turn, and so it did."

"Well? Well? Well?"

"Soon after that, your son, Master Thomas, disappeared. You may understand me now: it was she who took him."

"Ah! the vindictive vagabond!" exclaimed the baronet.

"Have patience, Sir Thomas. She took your little boy with no kind intention toward him: her object was to leave you without a son; her object, in fact, was, at first, to murder him, in consequence of your want, as she thought, of all paternal affection for him she had just lost, and, in short, of your whole conduct toward her. The mother's instinct, however, proved stronger than her revenge. She could not take away the child's life for the thought of her own; but she privately placed him with an uncle of ours, a classical hedge-school-master, in a remote part of the kingdom, with whom he lived under a feigned name, and from whom he received a good education."

"But where is he now?" asked the other. "How does he live? Why not bring him here?"

"He must first wait your pleasure, you know, Sir Thomas. He's in town, and has been in town for some time, a student in college."

"That's very good, indeed; we must have him out of college, though. Poor Lucy will go distracted with joy, to know that she has now a brother. Bring him here, Corbet; but stop, stay—his appearance *now*—let me see—caution, Corbet—caution. We must look before us. Miss Gourlay, you know, is about to be married. Dunroe, I understand; he cares little or nothing personally about the girl—it is her fortune, but principally her inheritance, he loves. It is true, he doesn't think that I even suspect this, much less feel certain of it. How does the young fellow look, though? Good looking—eh?"

"Exceedingly like his father, sir; as you will admit on seeing him."

"He must have changed considerably, then; for I remember he was supposed to bear a nearer resemblance to his mother and her family, the only thing which took him down a little in my affection. But hold; hang it, I am disturbed more than I have been this long time. What was I speaking of, Corbet? I forgot—by the way, I hope this is not a bad sign of my health."

"You were talking of Dunroe, sir, and Miss Gourlay's marriage."

"Oh, yes, so I was. Well—yes—here it is, Corbet—is it not possible that the appearance of this young man at this particular crisis—stepping in, as he does, between Dunroe and the very property his heart is set upon—might knock the thing to pieces? and there is all that I have had my heart set upon for years—that grand project of ambition for my daughter—gone to the winds, and she must put up with some rascally commoner, after all."

"It is certainly possible, sir; and, besides, every one knows that Lord Dunroe is needy, and wants money at present very much."

"In any event, Corbet, it is our best policy to keep this discovery a profound secret till after the marriage, when it can't affect Miss Gourlay, or Lady Dunroe as she will then be."

"Indeed, I agree with you, Sir Thomas; but, in the meantime, you had better see your son; he is impatient to come to you

and his sister. It was only last night that the secret of his birth was made known to him."

"By what name does he go?"

"By the name of Ambrose Gray, sir; but I cannot tell you why my sister gave him such a name, nor where she got it. She was at the time very unsettled. Of late her reason has returned to her very much, thank God, although she has still touches of her unfortunate complaint; but they are slight, and are getting more so every time they come. I trust she will soon be quite well."

The baronet fixed his eye upon the speaker with peculiar steadiness.

"Corbet," said he, "you know you have lost a great deal of my confidence of late. The knowledge of certain transactions which reached that strange fellow who stopped in the Mitre, you were never able to account for."

"And never will, sir, I fear; I can make nothing of that."

"It must be between you and your father, then; and if I thought so——"

He paused, however, but feared to proceed with anything in the shape of a threat, feeling that, so far as the fate of poor Fenton was concerned, he still lay at their mercy.

"It may have been my father, Sir Thomas, and I am inclined to think it must, too, as there was no one else could. Our best plan, however, is to keep quiet and not provoke him. A very short time will put us out of his power. Fenton's account with this world is nearly settled."

"I wish, with all my heart, it was closed," observed the other; "it's a dreadful thing to feel that you are liable to every accident, and never beyond the reach of exposure. To me such a thing would be death."

"You need entertain no apprehension, Sir Thomas. The young man is safe, at last; he will never come to light, you may rest assured. But about your son—will you not see him?"

"Certainly; order the carriage, and fetch him—quietly and as secretly as you can, observe—his sister must see him, too; and in order to prepare her, I must first see her. Go now, and lose no time about it."

"There is no necessity for a carriage, Sir Thomas; I can have him here in a quarter of an hour."

Sir Thomas went to the drawing-room with the expectation of finding Lucy there—a proof that the discovery of his son affected him very much, and deeply; for, in general his habit when he wanted to speak with her was to have her brought to the library, which was his favorite apartment. She was not there, however, and without ringing, or making any further inquiries, he proceeded to an elegant little boudoir, formerly occupied by her mother and herself, before this insane persecution had rendered her life so wretched. The chief desire of her heart now was to look at and examine and contemplate every object that belonged to that mother, or in which she ever took an interest. On this account, she had of late selected this boudoir as her favorite apartment; and here, lying asleep upon a sofa, her cheek resting upon one arm, the baronet found her. He approached calmly, and with a more extraordinary combination of feelings than perhaps he had ever experienced in his life, looked upon her; and whether it was the unprotected helplessness of sleep, or the mournful impress of suffering and sorrow, that gave such a touching charm to her beauty, or whether it was the united influence of both, it is difficult to say; but the fact was, that for an instant he felt one touch of pity at his heart.

"She is evidently unhappy," thought he, as he contemplated her; "and that face, lovely as it is, has become the exponent of misery and distress. Goodness me! how wan she is! how pale! and how distinctly do those beautiful blue veins run through her white and death-like temples! Perhaps, after all, I am wrong in urging on this marriage. But what can I do? I have no fixed principle from any source sufficiently authentic to guide me; no creed which I can believe. This life is everything to us; for what do we know, what *can* we know, of another? And yet, could it be that for my indifference to what is termed revealed truth, God Almighty is now making me the instrument of my own punishment? But how can I receive this doctrine? for here, before my eyes, is not the innocent suffering as much, if not more, than the guilty, even granting that I am so? And if I am perversely incredulous, is not here my son restored to me, as if to reward my unbelief? It is a mysterious maze, and I shall never get out of it; a curse to know that the most we can ever know is, that we know—nothing. Yet I will go on with this marriage. Pale as that brow is, I must see it encircled by the coronet of a countess; I must see her, as she ought to be, high in rank as she is in truth, in virtue, in true dignity. I shall force the world to make obeisance to her; and I shall teach her afterwards to despise it. She once said to me, 'And is it to gain the applause of a world you hate and despise, that you wish to exalt me to such a bawble?'—meaning the coronet. I replied, 'Yes, and for that very reason.' I shall not now disturb her."

He was about to leave the room, when he noticed that her bosom began suddenly and rapidly to heave, as if by some strong and fearful agitation; and a series of close, painful sobbings proceeded from her half-closed lips. This tumult went on for a little, when at length it was terminated by one long, wild scream, that might be supposed to proceed from the very agony of despair itself; and opening her eyes, she started up, her face, if possible, paler than before, and her eyes filled as if with the terror of some horrible vision.

"No," she said, "the sacrifice is complete—I am your wife; but there is henceforth an eternal gulf between us, across which you shall never drag me."

On gazing about her with wild and disturbed looks, she paused for moment, and, seeing her father, she rose up, and with a countenance changed from its wildness to one in which was depicted an expression so woe-begone, so deplorable, so full of sorrow, that it was scarcely in human nature, hardened into the induration of the world's worst spirit, not to feel its irresistible influence. She then threw her arms imploringly and tenderly about his neck, and looking into his eyes as if she were supplicating for immortal salvation at his hands, she said, "Oh, papa, have compassion on me."

"What's the matter, Lucy? what's the matter, my love?"

But she only repeated the words, "Oh, papa, have pity on me! have mercy on me, papa! Save me from destruction—from despair—from madness!"

"You don't answer me, child. You have been dreaming, and are not properly awake."

Still, however, the arms—the beautiful arms—clung around his neck; and still the mournful supplication was repeated.

"Oh, papa, have pity upon me! Look at me! Am I not your daughter? Have mercy upon your daughter, papa!" And still she clung to him; and still those eyes, from which the tears now flowed in torrents, were imploring him, and gazing through his into the very soul within him; then she kissed his lips, and hung upon him as upon her last stay; and the soft but melting accents were again breathed mournfully and imploringly as before. "Oh, have pity upon me, beloved papa—have pity upon your child!"

"What do you mean, Lucy? what are you asking, my dear girl? I am willing to do anything I can to promote your happiness. What is it you want?"

"I fear to tell you, papa; but surely you understand me. Oh, relent! as you hope for heaven's mercy, pity me. I have, for your sake, undertaken too much. I have not strength to fulfil the task I imposed on myself. I will die; you will see me dead at your feet, and then your *last one* will be gone. You will be alone; and I should wish to live for your sake, papa. Look upon me! I am your only child—your only child—your last, as I said; and do not make your last and only one miserable—miserable—mad! Only have compassion on me, and release me from this engagement."

The baronet's eye brightened at the last two or three allusions, and he looked upon her with a benignity that filled her unhappy heart with hope.

"Oh, speak, papa," she exclaimed, "speak. I see, I feel that you are about to give me comfort—to fill my heart with joy."

"I am, indeed, Lucy. Listen to me, and restrain yourself. You are *not* my only child!"

"What!" she exclaimed. "What do you mean, papa? What is it?"

"Have strength and courage, Lucy; and, mark me, no noise nor rout about what I am going to say. Your brother is found—my son Thomas is found—and you will soon see him; he will be here presently. Get rid of this foolish dream you've had, and prepare to receive him!"

"My brother!" she exclaimed, "my brother! and *have* I a brother? Then God has not deserted me; I shall now have a friend. My brother!—my brother! But is it possible, or am I dreaming still? Oh, where is he, papa? Bring me to him!—is he in the house? Or where is he? Let the carriage be ordered, and we will both go to him. Alas, what may not the poor boy have suffered! What privations, what necessities, what distress and destitution may he not have suffered! But that matters little; come to him. In want, in rags, in misery, he is welcome—yes, welcome; and, oh, how much more if he has suffered."

"Have patience, child; he will be here by and by. You cannot long to see him more than I do. But, Lucy, listen to me; for the present we must keep his discovery and restoration to us a profound secret."

"A profound secret! and why so, papa? Why should we keep it secret? Is it not a circumstance which we should publish to the world with delight and gratitude? Surely you will not bring him into this house like a criminal, in secrecy and silence? Should the lawful heir of your name and property be suffered to enter otherwise than as becomes him? Oh, that I could see him! Will he soon be here?"

"How your tongue runs on, you foolish girl, without knowing what you say."

"I know what I say, papa. I know—I feel—that he will be a friend to me—that he will share with me in my sorrows."

"Yes, the sorrows of being made a countess."

"And a wretched woman, papa. Yes, he will sympathize with, sustain, and console me. Dear, dear brother, how I wish to see you, to press you to my heart, and to give you a sister's tenderest welcome!"

"Will you hear me, madam?" said he, sternly; "I desire you to do so."

"Yes, papa; excuse me. My head is in a tumult of joy and sorrow; but for the present I will forget myself. Yes, papa, speak on; I hear you."

"In the first place, then, it is absolutely necessary, for reasons which I am not yet at liberty to disclose to you, that the discovery of this boy should be kept strictly secret for a time."

"For a time, papa, but not long, I hope. How proud I shall feel to go out with him. We shall be inseparable; and if he wants instructions, I shall teach him everything I know."

"Arrange all that between you as you may, only observe me, I repeat. None in this house knows of his restoration but I, yourself, and Corbet. He must not live here; but he shall want neither the comforts nor the elegancies of life, at all events. This is enough for the present, so mark my words, and abide by them."

He then left her, and retired to his private room, where he unlocked a cabinet, from which he took out some papers, and having added to them two or three paragraphs, he read the whole over, from beginning to end, then locked them up again, and returned to the library.

The reader may perceive that this unexpected discovery enabled the baronet to extricate himself from a situation of much difficulty with respect to Lucy; nor did he omit to avail himself of it, in order to give a new turn to her feelings. The affectionate girl's heart was now in a tumult of delight, checked, however, so obviously by the gloomy retrospection of the obligation she had imposed upon herself, that from time to time she could not repress those short sobs by which recent grief, as in the case of children who are soothed after crying, is frequently indicated. Next to the hated marriage, however, that which pressed most severely upon her was the recollection of the manly and admirable qualities of him whom she had now forever lost, especially as contrasted with those of Dunroe. The former, for some time past, has been much engaged in attempting to trace Fenton, as well as in business connected with his own fortunes; and yet so high was his feeling of generosity and honor, that, if left to the freedom of his own will, he would have postponed every exertion for the establishment of his just rights until death should have prevented at least one honored individual from experiencing the force of the blow which must necessarily be inflicted on him by his proceedings.

At the moment when the baronet was giving such an adroit turn to the distracted state of his daughter's mind, the stranger resolved to see Birney, who was then preparing to visit France, as agent in his affairs, he himself having preferred staying near Lucy, from an apprehension that his absence might induce Sir Thomas Gourlay to force on her marriage. On passing through the hall of his hotel, he met his friend Father M'Mahon, who, much to his surprise, looked careworn and perplexed, having lost, since he saw him last, much of his natural cheerfulness and easy simplicity of character. He looked travel-stained, too, and altogether had the appearance of a man on whose kind heart something unpleasant was pressing.

"My excellent friend," said he, "I am heartily glad to see you. But how is this? you look as if something was wrong, and you have been travelling. Come upstairs; and if you have any lengthened stay to make in town, consider yourself my guest. Nay, as it is, you must stop with me. Here, Dandy—here, you Dulcimer, bring in this gentleman's luggage, and attend him punctually."

Dandy, who had been coming from the kitchen at the time, was about to comply with his orders, when he was prevented by the priest.

"Stop, Dandy, you thief. My luggage, sir! In truth, the only luggage I have is this bundle under my arm. As to my time in town, sir, I hope it won't be long; but, long or short, I must stop at my ould place, the Brazen Head, for not an hour's comfort I could have in any other place, many thanks to you. I'm now on my way to it; but I thought I'd give you a call when passing."

They then proceeded upstairs to the stranger's room, where breakfast was soon provided for the priest, who expressed an anxiety to know how the stranger's affairs proceeded, and whether any satisfactory trace of poor Fenton had been obtained.

"Nothing satisfactory has turned up in either case," replied the stranger. "No additional clew to the poor young fellow has been got, and still my own affairs are far from being complete. The loss of important documents obtained by myself in France will render it necessary for Birney to proceed to that country, in order to procure

fresh copies. I had intended to accompany him myself; but I have changed my mind on that point, and prefer remaining where I am. A servant in whom I had every confidence, but who, unfortunately, took to drink, and worse vices, robbed me of them, and has fled to America, with a pretty Frenchwoman, after having abandoned his wife."

"Ay, ay," replied the priest, "that is the old story; first drink, and after that wickedness of every description. Ah, sir, it's a poor wretched world; but at the same time it is as God made it; and it becomes our duty to act an honest and a useful part in it, at all events."

"You seemed depressed, sir, I think," observed the stranger; "I hope there is nothing wrong. If there is, command my services, my friendship, my purse; in each, in all, command me."

"Many thanks, many thanks," returned the other, seizing him warmly by the hand, whilst the tears fell from his eyes. "I wish there were more in the world like you. There is nothing wrong with me, however, but what I will be able, I hope, to set right soon."

"I trust you will not allow any false delicacy to stand in your way, so far as I am concerned," said the stranger. "I possess not only the wish but the ability to serve you; and if——"

"Not now," replied the priest; "nothing to signify is wrong with me. God bless you, though, and he will, too, and prosper your honorable endeavors. I must go now: I have to call on old Corbet, and if I can influence him to assist you in tracing that poor young man, I will do it. He is hard and cunning, I know; but then he is not insensible to the fear of death, which, indeed, is the only argument likely to prevail with him."

"You should dine with me to-day," said his friend, "but that I am myself engaged to dine with Dean Palmer, where I am to meet the colonel of the Thirty-third, and some of the officers. It is the first time I have dined out since I came to the country. The colonel is an old friend of mine, and can be depended on."

"The dean is a brother-in-law of Lady Gourlay's, is he not?"

"He is."

"Yes, and what is better still, he is an excellent man, and a good Christian. I wish there were more like him in the country. I know the good done by him in my own neighborhood, where he has established, by his individual exertions, two admirable institutions for the poor—a savings' bank and a loan fund—to the manifest relief of every struggling man who is known to be industrious and honest; and see the consequences—he is loved and honored by all who know him, for he is perpetually doing good."

"Your own bishop is not behindhand in offices of benevolence and charity, any more than Dean Palmer," observed the stranger.

"In truth, you may say so," replied the other. "With the piety and humility of an apostle, he possesses the most childlike simplicity of heart; to which I may add, learning the most profound and extensive. His private charity to the poor will always cause himself to be ranked among their number. I wish every dean and bishop in the two churches resembled the Christian men we speak of; it would be well for the country."

"Mr. Birney, I know, stands well with you. I believe, and I take it for granted, that he does also with the people."

"You may be certain of that, my dear sir. He is one of the few attorneys who is not a rogue, but, what is still more extraordinary, an honest man and an excellent landlord. I will tell you, now, what he did some time ago. He has property, you know, in my parish. On that property an arrear of upwards of eight hundred pounds had accumulated. Now, this arrear, in consideration of the general depression in the value of agricultural produce, he not only wiped off, but abated the rents ten per cent. Again, when a certain impost, which shall be nameless (tithe), became a settled charge upon the lands, under a composition act, instead of charging it against the tenants, he paid it himself, never calling upon a tenant to pay one farthing of it. Now, I mention these things as an example to be held up and imitated by those who hold landed property in general, many of whom, the Lord knows, require such an example badly; but I must not stop here. Our friend Birney has done more than this.

"For the last fifteen years he has purchased for and supplied his tenants with flaxseed, and for which, at the subsequent gale time, in October, they merely repay him the cost price, without interest or any other charge save that of carriage.

"He also gives his tenantry, free of all charges, as much turf-bog as is necessary for the abundant supply of their own fuel.

"He has all along paid the poor-rates, without charging one farthing to the tenant.

"During a season of potato blight, he forgave every tenant paying under ten pounds, half a year's rent; under twenty, a quarter's rent; and over it, twenty per cent. Now, it is such landlords as this that are the best benefactors to the people, to the country, and ultimately to themselves; but, unfortu-

nately, we cannot get them to think so; and I fear that nothing but the iron scourge of necessity will ever teach them their duty, and then, like most other knowledge derived from the same painful source, it will probably come too late. One would imagine a landlord ought to know without teaching, that, when he presses his tenantry until they fall, he must himself fall with them. In truth, I must be off now."

"Well, then, promise to dine with me to-morrow."

"If I can I will, then, with pleasure; but still it may be out of my power. I'll try, however. What's your hour?"

"Suit your own convenience: name it yourself."

"Good honest old five o'clock, then; that is, if I can come at all, but if I cannot, don't be disappointed. The Lord knows I'll do everything in my power to come, at any rate; and if I fail, it won't be my heart that will hinder me."

When he had gone, the stranger, after a pause, rang his bell, and in a few moments Dandy Dulcimer made his appearance.

"Dandy," said his master, "I fear we are never likely to trace this woman, Mrs. Norton, whom I am so anxious to find."

"Begad, plaise your honor, and it isn't but there's enough of them to be had. Sure it's a levy I'm houldin' every day in the week wid them, and only that I'm engaged, as they say, I'd be apt to turn some o' them into Mrs. Dulcimer."

"How is that, Dandy?"

"Why, sir, I gave out that you're young and handsome, God pardon me."

"How, sirra," said his master, laughing, "do you mean to say that I am not?"

"Well, sir, wait till you hear, and then you may answer yourself; as for me, afther what I've seen, I'll not undertake to give an opinion on the subject. I suppose I'm an ugly fellow myself, and yet I know a sartin fair one that's not of that opinion—ahem!"

"Make yourself intelligible in the meantime," said his master: "I don't properly understand you."

"That's just what the Mrs. Nortons say, your honor. 'I don't understand you, sir;' and that is bekaise *you* keep me in the dark, and that I can't explain to them properly what you want; divil a thing but an oracle you've made of me. But as to beauty—only listen, sir. This mornin' there came a woman to me wid a thin, sharp face, a fiery eye that looked as if she had a drop in it, or was goin' to fight a north-wester, and a thin, red nose that was nothing else than a stunner. She was, moreover, a good deal of the gentleman on the upper lip—not to mention two or three separate plantations of the same growth on different parts of the chin. Altogether, I was very much struck with her appearance."

"You are too descriptive, Dandy," said his master, after enjoying the description, however; "come to the point."

"Ay, that's just what she said," replied Dandy, "coaxing the point of her nose wid her finger and thumb: 'Come to the point,' said she; 'mention the services your master requires from me.'

"'From you,' says I, lookin' astonished, as you may suppose—'from you, ma'am?'

"'Yes, my good man, from me; I'm Mrs. Norton.'

"'Are you indeed, ma'am?' says I; 'I hope you're well, Mrs. Norton. My master will be delighted to see you.'

"'What kind of a man is he?' she asked.

"'Young and handsome, ma'am,' says I; 'quite a janious in beauty.'

"'Well,' says my lady, 'so far so good; I'm young and handsome myself, as you see, and I dare say we'll live happily enough together;' and as she spoke, she pushed up an old bodice that was tied round something that resembled a dried skeleton, which it only touched at points, like a reel in a bottle, strivin', of course, to show off a good figure; she then winked both eyes, as if she was meetin' a cloud o' dust, and agin shuttin' one, as if she was coverin' me wid a rifle, whispered, 'You'll find me generous maybe, if you desarve it. I'll increase your allowances *afther* our marriage.'

"'Thanks, ma'am,' says I, 'but my masther isn't a marryin' man—unfortunately, he *is* married; still,' says I, recoverin' myself—for it struck me that she might be the right woman, afther all—'although he's married, his wife's an invalid; so that it's likely you may be the lady still. Were you ever in France, ma'am?'

"'No,' says she, tossing up the stunner I spoke of, 'I never was in France; but I was in Tipperary, if that would sarve him.'

"I shook my head, your honor, as much as to say—'It's no go this time.'

"'Ma'am,' says I, 'that's unfortunate—my masther, when he gets a loose leg, will never marry any woman that has not been in France, and can dance the fandango like a Frenchman.'

"'I am sorry for his taste,' says she, 'and for yours, too; but at all events, you had better go up and tell him that I'll walk down the opposite side of the street, and then he can see what he has lost, and feel what France has cost him.'

"She then walked, sir, or rather sailed, down the other side of the street, holdin' up

her clothes behind, to show a pair of legs like telescopes, with her head to it's full height, and one eye squintin' to the hotel, like a crow lookin' into a marrow bone."

"Well," said his master, "but I don't see the object of all this."

"Why, the object, sir, is to show you that it's not so aisy to know whether a person's young and handsome or not. You, sir, think yourself both; and so did the old skeleton I'm spakin' of."

"I see your moral, Dandy," replied his master, laughing; "at all events, make every possible inquiry, but, at the same time, in a quiet way. More depends upon it than you can imagine. Not," he added, in a kind of half soliloquy, "that I am acting in this affair from motives of a mere personal nature; I am now only the representative of another's wishes, and on that account, more than from any result affecting myself, do I proceed in it."

"I wish I knew, sir," said Dandy, "what kind of a woman this Mrs. Norton is; whether she's old or young, handsome or otherwise. At all events, I think I may confine myself to them that's young and handsome. It's always pleasanter, sir, and more agreeable to deal with a hands——"

"Confine yourself to truth, sir," replied his master, sharply; "make prudent inquiries, and in doing so act like a man of sense and discretion, and don't attempt to indulge in your buffoonery at my expense. No woman named Norton can be the individual I want to find, who has not lived for some years in France. That is a sufficient test; and if you should come in the way of the woman I am seeking, who alone can answer this description, I shall make it worth your while to have succeeded."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

The Priest asks for a Loan of Fifty Guineas, and Offers "Freney the Robber" as Security.

Whilst Father M'Mahon was wending his way to Constitution Hill from the Brazen Head, where he had deposited his little bundle, containing three shirts, two or three cravats, and as many pairs of stockings, a dialogue was taking place in old Corbet's with which we must make the reader acquainted. He is already aware that Corbet's present wife was his second, and that she had a daughter by her first marriage, who had gone abroad to the East Indies, many years ago, with her husband. This woman was no other than Mrs. M'Bride, wife of the man who had abandoned her for the French girl, as had been mentioned by the stranger to Father M'Mahon, and who had, as was supposed, eloped with her to America. Such certainly was M'Bride's intention, and there is no doubt that the New World would have been edified by the admirable example of these two moralists, were it not for the fact that Mrs. M'Bride, herself as shrewd as the Frenchwoman, and burdened with as little honesty as the husband, had traced them to the place of rendezvous on the very first night of their disappearance; where, whilst they lay overcome with sleep and the influence of the rosy god, she contrived to lessen her husband of the pocketbook which he had helped himself to from his master's escritoire, with the exception, simply, of the papers in question, which, not being money, possessed in her eyes but little value to her. She had read them, however; and as she had through her husband become acquainted with their object, she determined on leaving them in his hands, with a hope that they might become the means of compromising matters with his master, and probably of gaining a reward for their restoration. Unfortunately, however, it so happened, that that gentleman did not miss them until some time after his arrival in Ireland; but, on putting matters together, and comparing the flight of M'Bride with the loss of his property, he concluded, with everything short of certainty, that the latter was the thief.

Old Corbet and this woman were seated in the little back parlor whilst Mrs. Corbet kept the shop, so that their conversation could take a freer range in her absence.

"And so you tell me, Kate," said the former, "that the vagabond has come back to the country?"

"I seen him with my own eyes," she replied; "there can be no mistake about it."

"And he doesn't suspect you of takin' the money from him?"

"No more than he does you; so far from that, I wouldn't be surprised if it's the Frenchwoman he suspects."

"But hadn't you better call on him? that is, if you know where he lives. Maybe he's sorry for leavin' you."

"He, the villain! No; you don't know the life he led me. If he was my husband—as unfortunately he is—a thousand times over, a single day I'll never live with him. This lameness, that I'll carry to my grave, is his work. Oh, no; death any time sooner than that."

"Well," said the old man, after a long pause, "it's a strange story you've tould me; and I'm sorry, for Lord Cullamore's sake, to

near it. He's one o' the good ould gentlemen that's now so scarce in the country. But, tell me, do you know where M'Bride lives?"

"No," she replied, "I do not, neither do I care much; but I'd be glad that his old master had back his papers. There's a woman supposed to be livin' in this country that could prove this stranger's case, and he came over here to find her out if he could."

"Do you know her name?"

"No; I don't think I ever heard it, or, if I did, I can't at all remember it. M'Bride mentioned the woman, but I don't think he named her."

"At all events," replied Corbet, "it doesn't signify. I hope whatever steps they're takin' against that good ould nobleman will fail; and if I had the papers you speak of this minute, I'd put them into the fire. In the mane time try and make out where your vagabone of a husband lives, or, rather, set Ginty to work, as she and you are living together, and no doubt she'll soon ferret him out."

"I can't understand Ginty at all," replied the woman. "I think, although she has given up fortune tellin', that her head's not altogether right yet. She talks of workin' out some prophecy that she tould Sir Thomas Gourlay about himself and his daughter."

"She may talk as much about that as she likes," replied the old fellow. "She called him plain Thomas Gourlay, didn't she, and said he'd be stripped of his title?"

"So she told me; and that his daughter would be married to Lord Dunroe."

"Ay, and so she tould myself; but there she's in the dark. The daughter will be Lady Dunroe, no doubt, for they're goin' to be married; but she's takin' a bad way to work out the prophecy against the father by —hem——"

"By what?"

"I'm not free to mention it, Kate; but this very day it's to take place, and I suppose it'll soon be known to everybody."

"Well, but sure you might mention it to me."

"I'll make a bargain with you, then. Set Ginty to work; let her find out your husband; get me the papers you spake of, and I'll tell you all about it."

"With all my heart, father. I'm sure I don't care if you had them this minute. Let Ginty try her hand, and if she can succeed, well and good."

"Well, Kate," said her father, "I'm glad I seen you; but I think it was your duty to call upon me long before this."

"I would, but that I was afraid you wouldn't see me; and, besides, Ginty told me it was better not for some time. She kept me back, or I would have come months ago."

"Ay, ay; she has some devil's scheme in view that'll end in either nothing or something. Good-by, now; get me these papers, and I'll tell you what'll be worth hearin'."

Immediately after her departure Father M'Mahon entered, and found Corbet behind his counter as usual. Each on looking at the other was much struck by his evident appearance for the worse; a circumstance, however, which caused no observation until after they had gone into the little back room.

Corbet's countenance, in addition to a careworn look, and a consequent increase of emaciation, presented a very difficult study to the physiognomist, a study not unobserved by the priest himself. It was indicative of the conflicting resolutions which had for some time past been alternating in his mind; but so roguishly was each resolution veiled by an assumed expression of an opposite nature, that although the general inference was true, the hypocrisy of the whole face made it individually false. Let us suppose, by way of illustration, that a man whose heart is full of joy successfully puts on a look of grief, and *vice versa*. Of course, the physiognomist will be mistaken in the conclusions he draws from each individual expression, although correct in perceiving that there are before him the emotions of joy and grief; the only difference being, that dissimulation has put wrong labels upon each emotion.

"Anthony," said his reverence, after having taken a seat, "I am sorry to see such a change upon you for the worse. You are very much broken down since I saw you last; and although I don't wish to become a messenger of bad news, I feel, that as a clergyman, it is my duty to tell you so."

"Troth, your reverence," replied the other, "I'm sorry that so far as bad looks go I must return the compliment. It grieves me to see you look so ill, sir."

"I know I look ill," replied the other; "and I know too that these hints are sent to us in mercy, with a fatherly design on the part of our Creator, that we may make the necessary preparations for the change, the awful change that is before us."

"Oh, indeed, sir, it's true enough," replied Corbet, whose visage had become much blanker at this serious intimation, notwithstanding his hypocrisy; "it's true enough, sir; too true, indeed, if we could only remember it as we ought. Have you been unwell, sir?"

"Not in my bodily health, thank God, but I've got into trouble; and what is more, I'm coming to you, Anthony, with a firm hope that you will bring me out of it."

"The trouble can't be very great then," replied the apprehensive old knave, "or *I* wouldn't be able to do it."

"Anthony," said the priest, "I have known you a long time, now forty years at least, and you need not be told that I've stood by some of your friends when they wanted it. When your daughter ran away with that M'Bride, I got him to marry her, a thing he was very unwilling to do; and which I believe, only for me, he would not have done. On that occasion you know I advanced twenty guineas to enable them to begin the world, and to keep the fellow with her; and I did this all for the best, and not without the hope either that you would see me reimbursed for what you ought, as her father, to have given them yourself. I spoke to you once or twice about it, but you lent me the deaf ear, as they call it, and from that day to this you never had either the manliness or the honesty to repay me."

"Ay," replied Corbet, with one of his usual grins, "you volunteered to be generous to a profligate, who drank it, and took to the army."

"Do you then volunteer to be generous to an honest man; *I* will neither drink it nor take to the army. If he took to the army, he didn't do so without taking your daughter along with him. I spoke to Sir Edward Gourlay, who threatened to write to his colonel; and through the interference of the same humane gentleman I got permission for him to bring his wife along with him. These are circumstances that you ought not to forget, Anthony."

"I don't forget them, but sure you're always in somebody's affairs; always goin' security for some of your poor parishioners; and then, when they're not able to pay, down comes the responsibility upon you."

"I cannot see a poor honest man, struggling and industrious, at a loss for a friendly act. No; I never could stand it, so long as I had it in my power to assist him."

"And what's wrong now, if it's a fair question?"

"Two or three things; none of them very large, but amounting in all to about fifty guineas."

"Whew!—fifty guineas!"

"Ay, indeed; fifty guineas, which you will lend me on my own security."

"Fifty guineas to you? Don't I know you? Why, if you had a thousand, let alone fifty, it's among the poor o' the parish they'd be afore a week. Faith, I know you too well, Father Peter."

"You know me, man alive—yes, you *do* know me; and it is just because you do that I expect you will lend me the money. You wouldn't wish to see my little things pulled about and auctioned; my *laughy* little library gone; nor would you wish to see me and poor Freney the Robber separated. Big Ruly desaved me, the thief; but I found him out at last. Money I know is a great temptation, and so is mate when trusted to a shark like him; but any way, may the Lord pardon the blackguard! and that's the worst I wish him."

There are some situations in life where conscience is more awakened by comparison, or perhaps we should say by the force of contrast, than by all the power of reason, religion, or philosophy, put together, and advancing against it in their proudest pomp and formality. The childlike simplicity, for instance, of this good and benevolent man, earnest and eccentric as it was, occasioned reflections more painful and touching to the callous but timid heart of this old manœuvrer than could whole homilies, or the most serious and lengthened exhortations.

"I am near death," thought he, as he looked upon the countenance of the priest, from which there now beamed an emanation of regret, not for his difficulties, for he had forgotten them, but for his knavish servant—so simple, so natural, so affecting, so benevolent, that Corbet was deeply struck by them. "I am near death," he proceeded, "and what would I not give to have within me a heart so pure and free from villany as that man. He has made me feel more by thinkin' of what goodness and piety can do, than I ever felt in my life; and now if he gets upon Freney the Robber, or lugs in that giant Ruly, he'll forget debts, difficulties, and all for the time. Heavenly Father, that I had as happy a heart this day, and as free from sin!"

"Anthony," said the priest, "I must tell you about Freney——"

"No, sir, if you plaise," replied the other, "not now."

"Well, about poor Mat Ruly; do you know that I think by taking him back I might be able to reclaim him yet. The Lord has gifted him largely in one way, I admit; but still——"

"But still your bacon and greens would pay for it. I know it all, and who doesn't? But about your own affairs?"

"In truth, they are in a bad state—the same bacon and greens—he has not left me much of either; he made clean work of them, at any rate, before he went."

"But about your affairs, I'm sayin'?"

"Why, they can't be worse; I'm run to the last pass; and Freney now, the crature, when the saddle's on him, comes to the mounting-stone of himself, and waits there

till I'm ready. Then," he added, with a deep sigh, "to think of parting with *him!* And I must do it—I must;" and here the tears rose to his eyes so copiously that he was obliged to take out his cotton handkerchief and wipe them away.

The heart of the old miser was touched. He knew not why, it is true, but he felt that the view he got of one immortal spirit uncorrupted by the crimes and calculating hypocrisy of life, made the contemplation of his own state and condition, as well as of his future hopes, fearful.

"What would I not give," thought he, "to have a soul as free from sin and guilt, and to be as fit to face my God as that man? And yet they say it can be brought about. Well, wait—wait till I have my revenge on this black villain, and I'll see what may be done. Ay, let what will happen, the shame and ruin of my child must be revenged. And yet, God help me, what am I sayin'? Would this good man say that? He that forgives every one and everything. Still, I'll repent in the long run. Come, Father Peter," said he, "don't be cast down; I'll thry what I can for you; but then, again, if I do, what security can you give me?"

"Poor Freney the Robber——"

"Well, now, do you hear this!"

"—Was a name I gave him on account of——"

"Troth, I'll put on my hat and lave you here, if you don't spake out about what you came for. How much is it you say you want?"

The good man, who was startled out of his affection for Freney by the tone of Corbet's voice more than by his words, now raised his head, and looked about him somewhat like a person restored to consciousness.

"Yes, Anthony," said he; "yes, man alive; there's kindness in that."

"In what, sir?"

"In the very tones of your voice, I say. God has touched your heart, I hope. But oh, Anthony, if it were His blessed will to soften it—to teach it to feel true contrition and repentance, and to fill it with love for His divine will in all things, and for your fellow-creatures, too—how little would I think of my own miserable difficulties! Father of all mercy! if I could be sure that I had gained even but one soul to heaven, I would say that I had not been born and lived in vain!"

"He'll never let me do it," thought Corbet, vexed, and still more softened by the piety, the charity, and the complete forgetfulness of self, which the priest's conduct manifested. Yet was this change not brought about without difficulty, and those pitiful misgivings and calculations which assail and re-assail a heart that has been for a long time under the influence of the world and those base principles by which it is actuated. In fact, this close, nervous, and penurious old man felt, when about to perform this generous action, all that alarm and hesitation which a virtuous man would feel when on the eve of committing a crime. He was about to make an inroad upon his own system—going to change the settled habits of his whole life, and, for a moment, he entertained thoughts of altering his purpose. Then he began to think that this visit of the priest might have been a merciful and providential one; he next took a glimpse at futurity—reflected for a moment on his unprepared state, and then decided to assist the priest *now*, and consider the necessity for repentance as soon as he felt it convenient to do so afterwards.

How strange and deceptive, and how full of the subtlest delusions, are the workings of the human heart!

"And now, Anthony," proceeded the priest, "while I think of it, let me speak to you on another affair."

"I see, sir," replied Corbet, somewhat querulously, "that you're determined to prevent me from sarvin' you. If my mind changes, I won't do it; so stick to your own business first. I know very well what you're goin' to spake about. How much do you want, you say?"

"Fifty guineas. I'm responsible for three bills to that amount. The bills are not for myself, but for three honest families that have been brought low by two of the worst enemies that ever Ireland had—bad landlords and bad times."

"Well, then, I'll give you the money."

"God bless you, Anthony!" exclaimed the good man, "God bless you! and above all things may He enable you and all of us to prepare for the life that is before us."

Anthony paused a moment, and looked with a face of deep perplexity at the priest.

"Why am I doin' this," said he, half repentant of the act, "and me can't afford it? You must give me your bill, sir, at three months, and I'll charge you interest besides."

"I'll give you my bill, certainly," replied the priest, "and you may charge interest too; but be moderate."

Corbet then went upstairs, much at that pace which characterizes the progress of a felon from the press-room to the gallows; here he remained for some time—reckoning the money—paused on the stairhead—and again the slow, heavy, lingering step was

heard descending, and, as nearly as one could judge, with as much reluctance as that with which it went up. He then sat down and looked steadily, but with a good deal of abstraction, at the priest, after having first placed the money on his own side of the table.

"Have you a blank bill?" asked the priest.

"Eh?"

"Have you got a blank bill? or, sure we can send out for one."

"For what?"

"For a blank bill."

"A blank bill—yes—oh, ay—fifty guineas! —why, that's half a hundre'. God protect me! what am I about? Well, well; there—there—there; now put it in your pocket;" and as he spoke he shoved it over hastily to the priest, as if he feared his good resolution might fail him at last.

"But about the bill, man alive?"

"Hang the bill—deuce take all the bills that ever were drawn! I'm the greatest ould fool that ever wore a head—to go to allow myself to be made a—a——. Take your money away out of this, I bid you—*your* money—no, but *my* money. I suppose I may bid farewell to it—for so long as any one tells you a story of distress, and makes a poor mouth to you, so long you'll get yourself into a scrape on their account."

The priest had already put the money in his pocket, but he instantly took it out, and placed it once more on Corbet's side of the table.

"There," said he, "keep it. I will receive no money that is lent in such a churlish and unchristian spirit. And I tell you now, moreover, that if I do accept it, it must be on the condition of your listening to what I feel it my duty to say to you. You, Anthony Corbet, have committed a black and deadly crime against the bereaved widow, against society, against the will of a merciful and—take care that you don't find him, too—a just God. It is quite useless for you to deny it; I have spoken the truth, and you know it. Why will you not enable that heart-broken and kind lady—whose whole life is one perpetual good action—to trace and get back her son?"

"*I* can't do it."

"That's a deliberate falsehood, sir. Your conscience tells you it's a lie. In your last conversation with me, at the Brazen Head, you as good as promised to do something of the kind in a couple of months. That time and more has now passed, and yet you have done nothing."

"How do you know that?"

"Don't I know that the widow has got no trace of her child? And right well I know that you could restore him to her if you wished. However, I leave you now to the comfort of your own hardened and wicked heart. The day will come soon when the black catalogue of your own guilt will rise up fearfully before you—when a death-bed, with all its horrors, will startle the very soul within you by its fiery recollections. It is then, my friend, that you will feel—when it is too late—what it is to have tampered with and despised the mercy of God, and have neglected, while you had time, to prepare yourself for His awful judgment. Oh, what would I not do to turn your heart from the dark spirit of revenge that broods in it, and changes you into a demon! Mark these words, Anthony. They are spoken, God knows, with an anxious and earnest wish for your repentance, and, if neglected, they will rise and sound the terrible sentence of your condemnation at the last awful hour. Listen to them, then—listen to them in time, I entreat, I beseech you—I would go on my bare knees to you to do so." Here his tears fell fast, as he proceeded, "I would; and, believe me, I have thought of you and prayed for you, and now you see that I cannot but weep for you, when I know that you have the knowledge—perhaps the guilt of this heinous crime locked up in your heart, and will not reveal it. Have compassion, then, on the widow—enable her friends to restore her child to her longing arms; purge yourself of this great guilt, and you may believe me, that even in a temporal point of view it will be the best rewarded action you ever performed; but this is little—the darkness that is over your heart will disappear, your conscience will become light, and all its reflections sweet and full of heavenly comfort; your death-bed will be one of peace, and hope, and joy. Restore, then, the widow's son, and forbear your deadly revenge against that wretched baronet, and God will restore you to a happiness that the world can neither give nor take away."

Corbet's cheek became pale as death itself whilst the good man spoke, but no other symptom of emotion was perceptible; unless, indeed, that his hands, as he unconsciously played with the money, were quite tremulous.

The priest, having concluded, rose to depart, having completely forgotten the principal object of his visit.

"Where are you going?" said Corbet, "won't you take the money with you?"

"That depends upon your reply," returned the priest; "and I entreat you to let me have a favorable one."

"One part of what you wish I will do," he

replied; "the other is out of my power at present. I am not able to do it yet."

"I don't properly understand you," said the other; "or rather, I don't understand you at all. Do you mean what you have just said to be favorable or otherwise?"

"I have come to a resolution," replied Corbet, "and time will tell whether it's in your favor or not. You must be content with this, for more I will not say now; I cannot. There's your money, but I'll take no bill from *you*. Your promise is sufficient—only say you will pay me?"

"I will pay you, if God spares me life."

"That is enough; unless, indeed"—again pausing.

"Satisfy yourself," said the priest; "I will give you either my bill or note of hand."

"No, no; I tell you. I am satisfied. Leave everything to time."

"That may do very well, but it does not apply to eternity, Anthony. In the meantime I thank you; for I admit you have taken me out of a very distressing difficulty. Good-by—God bless you; and, above all things, don't forget the words I have spoken to you."

"Now," said Corbet, after the priest had gone, "something must be done; I can't stand this state of mind long, and if death should come on me before I've made my peace with God—but then, the black villain!—come or go what may, he must be punished, and Ginty's and Tom's schemes must be broken. That vagabone, too! I can't forget the abuse he gave me in the watch-house; however, I'll set the good act against the bad one, and who knows but the one may wipe out the other? I suppose the promisin' youth has seen his father, and thinks himself the welcome heir of his title and property by this; and the father too—but wait, if I don't dash *that* cup from his lips, and put one to it filled with gall, I'm not here; and then when it's done, I'll take to religion for the remainder of my life."

What old Corbet said was, indeed, true enough; and this brings us to the interview between Mr. Ambrose Gray, his parent, and his sister.

There is nothing which so truly and often so severely tests the state of man's heart, or so painfully disturbs the whole frame of his moral being as the occurrence of some important event that is fraught with happiness. Such an event resembles the presence of a good man among a set of profligates, causing them to feel the superiority of virtue over vice, and imposing a disagreeable restraint, not only upon their actions, but their very thoughts. When the baronet, for instance, went from his bedroom to the library, he experienced the full force of this observation. A disagreeable tumult prevailed within him. It is true, he felt, as every parent must feel, to a greater or less extent delighted at the contemplation of his son's restoration to him. But, at the same time, the tenor of his past life rose up in painful array before him, and occasioned reflections that disturbed him deeply. Should this young man prove, on examination, to resemble his sister in her views of moral life in general—should he find him as delicately virtuous, and animated by the same pure sense of honor, he felt that his recovery would disturb the future habits of his life, and take away much of the gratification which he expected from his society. These considerations, we say, rendered him so anxious and uneasy, that he actually wished to find him something not very far removed from a profligate. He hoped that he might be inspired with his own views of society and men, and that he would now have some one to countenance him in all his selfish designs and projects.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Young Gourlay's Affectionate Interview with His Father—Risk of Strangulation—Movements of M'Bride.

It is not necessary here to suggest to the reader that Tom Corbet, who knew the baronet's secrets and habits of life so thoroughly, had prepared Mr. Ambrose Gray, by frequent rehearsals, for the more adroit performance of the task that was before him.

At length a knock, modest but yet indicative of something like authority, was heard at the hall-door, and the baronet immediately descended to the dining-room, where he knew he could see his son with less risk of interruption. He had already intimated to Lucy that she should not make her appearance until summoned for that purpose.

At length Mr. Gray was shown into the dining-room, and the baronet, who, as usual, was pacing it to and fro, suddenly turned round, and without any motion to approach his son, who stood with a dutiful look, as if to await his will, he fixed his eyes upon him with a long, steady, and scrutinizing gaze. There they stood, contemplating each other with earnestness, and so striking, so extraordinary was the similarity between their respective features, that, in everything but years, they appeared more like two counterparts than father and son. Each, on looking at the other, felt, in fact, the truth of this

unusual resemblance, and the baronet at once acknowledged its influence.

"Yes," he exclaimed, approaching Mr. Gray, "yes, there is no mistake here; he is my son. I acknowledge him." He extended his hand, and shook that of the other, then seized both with a good deal of warmth, and welcomed him. Ambrose, however, was not satisfied with this, but, extricating his hands, he threw his arms round the baronet's neck, and exclaimed in the words of an old play, in which he had been studying a similar scene for the present occasion, "My father! my dear father! Oh, and have I a father! Oh, let me press him to my heart!" And as he spoke he contrived to execute half a dozen dry sobs (for he could not accomplish the tears), that would have done credit to the best actor of the day.

The baronet, who never relished any exhibition of emotion or tenderness, began to have misgivings as to his character, and consequently suffered these dutiful embraces instead of returning them.

"There, Tom," he exclaimed, laughing, "that will do. There, man," he repeated, for he felt that Tom was about recommencing another rather vigorous attack, whilst the sobs were deafening, "there, I say; don't throttle me; that will do, sirrah; there now. On this occasion it is natural; but in general I detest snivelling—it's unmanly."

Tom at once took the hint, wiped his eyes, a work in this instance of the purest supererogation, and replied, "So do I, father; it's decidedly the province of an old woman when she is past everything else. But on such an occasion I should be either more or less than man not to feel as I ought."

"Come, that is very well said. I hope you are not a fool like your—Corbet, go out. I shall send for you when we want you. I hope," he repeated, after Corbet had disappeared, "I hope you are not a fool, like your sister. Not that I can call her a fool, either; but she is obstinate and self-willed."

"I am sorry to hear this, sir. My sister ought to have no will but yours."

"Why, that is better," replied the baronet, rubbing his hands cheerfully. "Hang it, how like?" he exclaimed, looking at him once more. "You resemble me confoundedly, Tom—at least in person; and if you do in mind and purpose, we'll harmonize perfectly. Well, then, I have a thousand questions to ask you, but I will have time enough for that again; in the meantime, Tom, what's your opinion of life—of the world—of man, Tom, and of woman? I wish to know what kind of stuff you're made of."

"Of life, sir—why, that we are to take the most we can out of it. Of the world—that I despise it. Of man—that every one is a rogue when he's found out, and that if he suffers himself to be found out he's a fool; so that the fools and the rogues have it between them."

"And where do you leave the honest men, Tom?"

"The what, sir?"

"The honest men."

"I'm not acquainted, sir, nor have I ever met a man who was, with any animal of that class. The world, sir, is a moral fiction; a mere term in language that represents negation."

"Well, but woman?"

"Born to administer to our pleasure, our interest, or our ambition, with no other purpose in life. Have I answered my catechism like a good boy, sir?"

"Very well, indeed, Tom. Why, in your notions of life and the world, you seem to be quite an adept."

"I am glad, sir, that you approve of them. So far we are likely to agree. I feel quite proud, sir, that my sentiments are in unison with yours. But where is my sister, sir? I am quite impatient to see her."

"I will send for her immediately. And now that I have an opportunity, let me guard you against her influence. I am anxious to bring about a marriage between her and a young nobleman—Lord Dunroe—who will soon be the Earl of Cullamore, for his old father is dying, or near it, and then Lucy will be a countess. To effect this has been the great ambition of my life. Now, you must not only prevent Lucy from gaining you over to her interests, for she would nearly as soon die as marry him."

"Pshaw!"

"What do you pshaw for, Tom?"

"All nonsense, sir. She doesn't know her own mind; or, rather, she ought to have no mind on the subject."

"Perfectly right; my identical sentiments. Lucy, however, detests this lord, notwithstanding—ay, worse than she does the deuce himself. You must, therefore, not permit yourself to be changed or swayed by her influence, but support me by every argument and means in your power."

"Don't fear me, sir. Your interests, or rather the girl's own, if she only knows them, shall have my most strenuous support."

"Thank you, Tom. I see that you and I are likely to agree thoroughly. I shall now send for her. She is a superb creature, and less than a countess I shall not have her."

Lucy, when the servant announced her father's wish to see her, was engaged in pic-

turing to herself the subject of her brother's personal appearance. She had always heard that he resembled her mother, and on this account alone she felt how very dear he should be to her. With a flushing, joyful, but palpitating heart, she descended the stairs, and with a trembling hand knocked at the door. On entering, she was about to rush into her newly-found relative's arms, but, on casting her eyes around, she perceived her father and him standing side by side, so startlingly alike in feature, expression, and personal figure, that her heart, until then bounding with rapture, sank at once, and almost became still. The quick but delicate instincts of her nature took the alarm, and a sudden weakness seized her whole frame. "In this young man," she said to herself, "I have found a brother, but not a friend; not a feature of my dear mother in *that* face."

This change, and this rush of reflection, took place almost in a moment, and ere she had time to speak she found herself in Mr. Ambrose Gray's arms. The tears at once rushed to her eyes, but they were not such tears as she expected to have shed. Joy there was, but, alas, how much mitigated was its fervency! And when her brother spoke, the strong, deep, harsh tones of his voice so completely startled her, that she almost believed she was on the breast of her father. Her tears flowed; but they were mingled with a sense of disappointment that amounted almost to bitterness.

Tom on this occasion forebore to enact the rehearsal scene, as he had done in the case of his father. His sister's beauty, at once melancholy but commanding, her wonderful grace, her dignity of manner, added to the influence of her tall, elegant figure, awed him so completely, that he felt himself incapable of aiming at anything like dramatic effect. Nay, as her warm tears fell upon his face, he experienced a softening influence that resembled emotion, but, like his father, he annexed associations to it that were selfish, and full of low, ungenerous caution.

"My father's right," thought he; "I must be both cool and firm here, otherwise it will be difficult not to support her."

"Well, Lucy," said her father, with unusual cheerfulness, after Tom had handed her to a seat, "I hope you like your brother. Is he not a fine, manly young fellow?"

"Is he not my brother, papa?" she replied, "restored to us after so many years; restored when hope had deserted us—when we had given him up for lost."

As she uttered the words her voice quivered; a generous reaction had taken place in her breast; she blamed herself for having withheld from him, on account of a circumstance over which he had no control, that fulness of affection, with which she had prepared herself to welcome him. A sentiment, first of compassion, then of self-reproach, and ultimately of awakened affection, arose in her mind, associated with and made still more tender by the melancholy memory of her departed mother. She again took his hand, on which the tears now fell in showers, and after a slight pause said,

"I hope, my dear Thomas, you have not suffered, nor been subject to the wants and privations which usually attend the path of the young and friendless in this unhappy world? Alas, there is one voice—but is now forever still—that would, oh, how rapturously! have welcomed you to a longing and a loving heart."

The noble sincerity of her present emotion was not without its effect upon her brother. His eyes, in spite of the hardness of his nature, swam in something like moisture, and he gazed upon her with wonder and pride, that he actually was the brother of so divine a creature; and a certain description of affection, such as he had never before felt, for it was pure, warm, and unselfish.

"Oh, how I do long to hear the history of your past life!" she exclaimed. "I dare say you had many an early struggle to encounter; many a privation to suffer; and in sickness, with none but the cold hand of the stranger about you; but still it seems that God has not deserted you. Is it not a consolation, papa, to think that he returns to us in a condition of life so gratifying?"

"Gratifying it unquestionably is, Lucy. He is well educated; and will soon be fit to take his proper position in society."

"Soon! I trust immediately, papa; I hope you will not allow him to remain a moment longer in obscurity; compensate him at least for his sufferings. But, my dear Thomas," she proceeded, turning to him, "let me ask, do you remember mamma? If she were now here, how her affectionate heart would rejoice! Do you remember her my dear Thomas?"

"Not distinctly," he replied; "something of a pale, handsome woman comes occasionally like a dream of my childhood to my imagination—a graceful woman, with auburn hair, and a melancholy look, I think."

"You do," replied Lucy, as her eyes sparkled, "you do remember her; that is exactly a sketch of her—gentle, benignant, and affectionate, with a fixed sorrow mingled with resignation in her face. Yes, you remember her!"

"Now, Lucy," said her father, who never could bear any particular allusion to his wife;

"now that you have seen your brother, I think you may withdraw, at least for the present. He and I have matters of importance to talk of; and you know you will have enough of him again—plenty of time to hear his past history, which, by the way, I am as anxious to hear as you are. You may now withdraw, my love."

"Oh, not so soon, father, if you please," said Thomas; "allow us a little more time together."

"Well, then, a few minutes only, for I myself must take an airing in the carriage, and I must also call upon old Cullamore."

"Papa," said Lucy, "I am about to disclose a little secret to you which I hesitated to do before, but this certainly is a proper occasion for doing it; the secret I speak of will disclose itself. Here is where it lay both day and night since mamma's death," she added, putting her hand upon her heart; "it is a miniature portrait of her which I myself got done."

She immediately drew it up by a black silk ribbon, and after contemplating it with tears, she placed it in the hands of her brother.

This act of Lucy's placed him in a position of great pain and embarrassment. His pretended recollection of Lady Gourlay was, as the reader already guesses, nothing more than the description of her which he had received from Corbet, that he might be able to play his part with an appearance of more natural effect. With the baronet, the task of deception was by no means difficult; but with Lucy, the case was altogether one of a different complexion. His father's principles, as expounded by his illegitimate son's worthy uncle, were not only almost familiar to him, but also in complete accordance with his own. With him, therefore, the deception consisted in little else than keeping his own secret, and satisfying his father that their moral views of life were the same. He was not prepared, however, for the effect which Lucy's noble qualities produced upon him so soon. To him who had never met with or known any other female, combining in her own person such extraordinary beauty and dignity—such obvious candor of heart—such graceful and irresistible simplicity, or who was encompassed by an atmosphere of such truth and purity—the effect was such as absolutely confounded himself, and taught him to feel how far they go in purifying, elevating, and refining those who come within the sphere of their influence. This young man, for instance, was touched, softened, and awed into such an involuntary respect for her character and virtues, that he felt himself almost unable to sustain the part he had undertaken to play, so far at least as she was concerned. In fact, he felt himself changed for the better, and was forced, as it were, to look in upon his own heart, and contemplate its deformity by the light that emanated from her character. Nor was this singular but natural influence unperceived by her father, who began to fear that if they were to be much together, he must ultimately lose the connivance and support of his son.

Thomas took the portrait from her hand, and, after contemplating it for some time, felt himself bound to kiss it, which he did, with a momentary consciousness of his hypocrisy that felt like guilt.

"It is most interesting," said he; "there is goodness, indeed, and benignity, as you say, in every line of that placid but sorrowful face. Here," said he, "take it back, my dear sister; I feel that it is painful to me to look upon it."

"It has been my secret companion," said Lucy, gazing at it with deep emotion, "and my silent monitress ever since poor mamma's death. It seemed to say to me with those sweet lips that will never more move: Be patient, my child, and put your firm trust in the hopes of a better life, for this world is one of trial and suffering."

"That is all very fine, Lucy," said her father, somewhat fretfully; "but it would have been as well if she had preached a lesson of obedience at the same time. However, you had better withdraw, my dear; as I told you, Thomas and I have many important matters to talk over."

"I am ready to go, papa," she replied; "but, by the way, my dear Thomas, I had always heard that you resembled her very much; instead of that, you are papa's very image."

"A circumstance which will take from his favor with you, Lucy, I fear," observed her father; "but, indeed, I myself am surprised at the change that has come over you, Thomas; for, unquestionably, when young you were very like her."

"These changes are not at all unfrequent, I believe," replied his son. "I have myself known instances where the individual when young resembled one parent, and yet, in the course of time, became as it were the very image and reflex of the other."

"You are perfectly right, Tom," said his father; "every family is aware of the fact, and you yourself are a remarkable illustration of it."

"I am not sorry for resembling my dear father, Lucy," observed her brother; "and I know I shall lose nothing in your good will on that account, but rather gain by it."

Lucy's eyes were already filled with tears

at the ungenerous and unfeeling insinuation of her father.

"You shall not, indeed, Thomas," she replied; "and you, papa, are scarcely just to me in saying so. I judge no person by their external appearance, nor do I suffer myself to be prejudiced by looks, although I grant that the face is very often, but by no means always, an index to the character. I judge my friends by my experience of their conduct—by their heart—their principles—their honor. Good-by, now, my dear brother; I am quite impatient to hear your history, and I am sure you will gratify me as soon as you can."

She took his hand and kissed it, but, in the act of doing so, observed under every nail a semicircular line of black drift that jarred very painfully on her feelings. Tom then imprinted a kiss upon her forehead, and she withdrew.

When she had gone out, the baronet bent his eyes upon her brother with a look that seemed to enter into his very soul—a look which his son, from his frequent teachings, very well understood.

"Now, Tom," said he, "that you have seen your sister, what do you think of her? Is it not a pity that she should ever move under the rank of a countess?"

"Under the rank of a queen, sir. She would grace the throne of an empress."

"And yet she has all the simplicity of a child; but I can't get her to feel ambition. Now, mark me, Tom; I have seen enough in this short interview to convince me that if you are not as firm as a rock, she will gain you over."

"Impossible, sir; I love her too well to lend myself to her prejudices against her interests. Her objections to this marriage must proceed solely from inexperience. It is true, Lord Dunroe bears a very indifferent character, and if you could get any other nobleman with a better one as a husband for her, it would certainly be more agreeable."

"It might, Tom; but I cannot. The truth is, I am an unpopular man among even the fashionable circles, and the consequence is, that I do not mingle much with them. The disappearance of my brother's heir has attached suspicions to me which your discovery will not tend to remove. Then there is Lucy's approaching marriage, which your turning up at this particular juncture may upset. Dunroe, I am aware, is incapable of appreciating such a girl as Lucy."

"Then why, sir, does he marry her?"

"In consequence of her property. You perceive, then, that unless you lie by until after this marriage, my whole schemes for this girl may be destroyed."

"But how, sir, could my appearance or reappearance effect such a catastrophe?"

"Simply because you come at the most unlucky moment."

"Unlucky, sir!" exclaimed the youth, with much affected astonishment, for he had now relapsed into his original character, and felt himself completely in his element.

"Don't misunderstand me," said his father; "I will explain myself. Had you never appeared, Lucy would have inherited the family estates, which, in right of his wife, would have passed into the possession of Dunroe. Your appearance, however, if made known, will prevent that, and probably cause Dunroe to get out of it; and it is for this reason that I wish to keep your very existence a secret until the marriage is over."

"I am willing to do anything, sir," replied worthy Tom, with a very dutiful face, "anything to oblige you, and to fall in with your purposes, provided my own rights are not compromised. I trust you will not blame me, sir, for looking to them, and for a natural anxiety to sustain the honor and prolong the name of my family."

"Blame you, sirrah!" said his father, laughing. "Confound me, but you're a trump, and I am proud to hear you express such sentiments. How the deuce did you get such a shrewd notion of the world? But, no matter, attend to me. Your rights shall not be compromised. A clause shall be inserted in the marriage articles to the effect that in case of your recovery and restoration, the estates shall revert to you, as the legitimate heir. Are you satisfied?"

"Perfectly, sir," replied Thomas, "perfectly; on the understanding that these provisions are duly and properly carried out."

"Undoubtedly they shall; and besides," replied his father with a grin of triumph, "it will be only giving Dunroe a *quid pro quo*, for, as I told you, he is marrying your sister merely for the property, out of which you cut him."

"Of course, my dear father," replied the other, "I am in your hands; but, in the meantime, how and where am I to dispose of myself?"

"In the first place, keep your own secret—that is the principal point—in which case you may live wherever you wish; I will give you a liberal allowance until you can make your appearance with safety to Lucy's prosperity. The marriage will take place very soon; after which you can come and claim your own, when it will be too late for Dunroe to retract. Here, for the present, is a check for two hundred and fifty; but, Tom, you

must be frugal and cautious in its expenditure. Don't suffer yourself to break out: always keep a firm hold of the helm. Get a book in which you will mark down your expenses; for, mark me, you must render a strict account of this money. On the day after to-morrow you must dine with Lucy and me; but, if you take my advice, you will see her as seldom as possible until after her marriage. She wishes me to release her from her engagement, and she will attempt to seduce you to her side; but I warn you that this would be a useless step for you to take, as my mind is immovable on the subject."

They then separated, each, but especially Mr. Ambrose Gray, as we must again call him, feeling very well satisfied with the result of the interview.

"Now," said the baronet, as he paced the floor, after his son had gone, "am I not right, after all, in the views which I entertain of life? I have sometimes been induced to fear that Providence has placed in human society a moral machinery which acts with retributive effect upon those who, in the practice of their lives, depart from what are considered his laws. And yet here am I, whose whole life has been at variance with and disregarded them—here I am, I say, with an easier heart than I've had for many a day: my son restored to me—my daughter upon the point of being married according to my highest wishes—all my projects prospering; and there is my brother's wife—wretched Lady Gourlay—who, forsooth, is religious, benevolent, humane, and charitable—ay, and if report speak true, who loves her fellow-creatures as much as I scorn and detest them. Yes—and what is the upshot? Why, that all these virtues have not made her one whit happier than another, nor so happy as one in ten thousand. *Cui bono*, then I ask—where is this moral machinery which I sometimes dreaded? I cannot perceive its operations. It has no existence; it is a mere chimera; like many another bugbear, the foul offspring of credulity and fear on the one side—of superstition and hypocrisy on the other. No; life is merely a thing of chances, and its incidents the mere combinations that result from its evolutions, just like the bits of glass in the kaleidoscope, which, when viewed naked, have neither order nor beauty, but when seen through our own mistaken impressions, appear to have properties which they do not possess, and to produce results that are deceptive, and which would mislead us if we drew any absolute inference from them. Here the priest advances, kaleidoscope in hand, and desires you to look at his tinsel and observe its order. Well, you do so, and imagine that the beauty and order you see lie in the things themselves, and not in the prism through which you view them. But you are not satisfied—you must examine. You take the kaleidoscope to pieces, and where then are the order and beauty to be found? Away! I am right still. The doctrine of life is a doctrine of chances; and there is nothing certain but death—death, the gloomy and terrible uncreator—heigho!"

Whilst the unbelieving baronet was congratulating himself upon the truth of his principles and the success of his plans, matters were about to take place that were soon to subject them to a still more efficient test than the accommodating but deceptive spirit of his own scepticism. Lord Cullamore's mind was gradually sinking under some secret sorrow or calamity, which he refused to disclose even to his son or Lady Emily. M'Bride's visit had produced a most melancholy effect upon him; indeed, so deeply was he weighed down by it, that he was almost incapable of seeing any one, with the exception of his daughter, whom he caressed and wept over as one would over some beloved being whom death was about to snatch from the heart and eyes forever.

Sir Thomas Gourlay, since the discovery of his son, called every day for a week, but the reply was, "His lordship is unable to see any one."

One evening, about that time, Ginty Cooper had been to see her brother, Tom Corbet, at the baronet's, and was on her way home, when she accidentally spied M'Bride in conversation with Norton, at Lord Cullamore's hall-door, which, on her way to Sir Thomas's, she necessarily passed. It was just about dusk, or, as they call it in the country, between the two lights, and as the darkness was every moment deepening, she resolved to watch them, for the purpose of tracing M'Bride home to his lodgings. They, in the meantime, proceeded to a public-house in the vicinity, into which both entered, and having ensconced themselves in a little back closet off the common tap-room, took their seats at a small round table, Norton having previously ordered some punch. Ginty felt rather disappointed at this caution, but in a few minutes a red-faced girl, with a blowzy head of hair strong as wire, and crisped into small obstinate undulations of surface which neither comb nor coaxing could smooth away, soon followed them with the punch and a candle. By the light of the latter, Ginty perceived that there was nothing between them but a thin partition of boards, through the slits of which she could, by applying her eye or ear, as the case might be,

both see and hear them. The tap-room at the time was empty, and Ginty, lest her voice might be heard, went to the bar, from whence she herself brought in a glass of porter, and having taken her seat close to the partition, overheard the following conversation :

"In half an hour he's to see you, then ?" said Norton, repeating the words with a face of inquiry.

"Yes, sir ; in half an hour."

"Well, now," he continued, "I assure you I'm neither curious nor inquisitive ; yet, unless it be a very profound secret indeed, I give my honor I should wish to hear it."

"There's others in your family would be glad to hear it as well as you," replied M'Bride.

"The earl has seen you once or twice before on the subject, I think ?"

"He has, sir ?"

"And this is the third time, I believe ?"

"It *will* be the third time, at all events."

"Come, man," said Norton, "take your punch ; put yourself in spirits for the interview. It requires a man to pluck up to be able to speak to a nobleman."

"I have spoken to as good as ever he was ; not that I say anything to his lordship's disparagement," replied M'Bride ; "but I'll take the punch for a better reason—because I have a fellow feeling for it. And yet it was my destruction, too ; however, it can't be helped. Yes, faith, it made me an ungrateful scoundrel ; but, no matter !—sir, here's your health ! I must only, as they say, make the best of a bad bargain—must bring my cattle to the best market."

"Ay," said Norton, dryly and significantly ; "and so you think the old earl, the respectable old nobleman, is your best chapman ? Am I right ?"

"I may go that far, any way," replied the fellow, with a knowing grin ; "but I don't lave you much the wiser."

"No, faith, you don't," replied Norton, grinning in his turn. "However, listen to me. Do you not think, now, that if you placed your case in the hands of some one that stands well with his lordship, and who could use his influence in your behalf, you might have better success ?"

"I'm the best judge of that myself," replied M'Bride. "As it is, I have, or can have, two strings to my bow. I have only to go to a certain person, and say I'm sorry for what I've done, and I've no doubt but I'd come well off."

"Well, and why don't you ? If I were in your case, I'd consider *myself* first, though."

"I don't know," replied the other, as if undecided. "I think, after all, I'm in better hands. Unless Lord Cullamore is doting, I'm sure of that fact. I don't intend to remain in this country. I'll go back to France or to America ; I can't yet say which."

"Take your punch in the meantime ; take off your liquor, I say, and it'll clear your head. Come, off with it. I don't know why, but I have taken a fancy to you. Your face is an honest one, and if I knew what your business with his lordship is, I'd give you a lift."

"Thank you, sir," replied the other ; "but the truth is, I'm afeard to take much till after I see him. I must have all my wits about me, and keep myself steady."

"Do put it in my power to serve you. Tell me what your business is, and, by the honor of my name, I'll assist you."

"At present," replied M'Bride, "I can't ; but if I could meet you after I see his lordship, I don't say but we might talk more about it."

"Very well," replied Norton ; "you won't regret it. In the course of a short time I shall have the complete management of the whole Cullamore property ; and who can say that, if you put confidence in me now, I may not have it in my power to emply you beneficially for yourself ?"

"Come then, sir," replied M'Bride, "let me have another tumbler, on the head of it. I think one more will do me no harm ; as you say, sir, it'll clear my head."

This was accordingly produced, and M'Bride began to become, if not more communicative, at least more loquacious, and seemed disposed to place confidence in Norton, to whom, however, he communicated nothing of substantial importance.

"I think," said the latter, "if I don't mistake, that I am acquainted with some of your relations."

"That may easily be," replied the other ; "and it has struck me two or three times that I have seen your face before, but I can't tell where."

"Very likely," replied Norton ; "but I'll tell you what, we must get better acquainted. Are you in any employment at present ?"

"I'm doing nothing," said the other ; "and the few pounds I had are now gone to a few shillings ; so that by to-morrow or next day, I'll be forced to give my teeth a holiday."

"Poor fellow," replied Norton, "that's too bad. Here's a pound note for you, at all events. Not a word now ; if we can understand each other you sha'n't want ; and I'll tell you what you'll do. After leaving his lordship you must come to my room, where you can have punch to the eyes, and there will be no interruption to our chat. You

can then tell me anything you like; but it must come willingly, for I'd scorn to force a secret from any man—that is, if it *is* a secret. Do you agree to this?"

"I agree to it, and many thanks, worthy sir," replied M'Bride, putting the pound note in his pocket; after which they chatted upon indifferent matters until the period for his interview with Lord Cullamore had arrived.

Ginty, who had not lost a syllable of this dialogue, to whom, as the reader perhaps may suspect, it was no novelty, followed them at a safe distance, until she saw them enter the house. The interest, however, which she felt in M'Bride's movements, prevented her from going home, or allowing him to slip through her finger without accomplishing a project that she had for some time before meditated, but had hitherto found no opportunity to execute.

Lord Cullamore, on M'Bride's entrance, was in much the same state which we have already described, except that in bodily appearance he was somewhat more emaciated and feeble. There was, however, visible in his features a tone of solemn feeling, elevated but sorrowful, that seemed to bespeak a heart at once resigned and suffering, and disposed to receive the dispensations of life as a man would whose philosophy was softened by a Christian spirit. In the general plan of life he clearly recognized the wisdom which, for the example and the benefit of all, runs with singular beauty through the infinite combinations of human action, verifying the very theory which the baronet saw dimly, but doubted; we mean that harmonious adaptation of moral justice to those actions by which the original principles that diffuse happiness through social life are disregarded and violated. The very order that characterizes all creation, taught him that we are not here without a purpose, and when human nature failed to satisfy him upon the mystery of life, he went to revelation, and found the problem solved. The consequence was, that whilst he felt as a man, he endured as a Christian—aware that this life is, for purposes which we cannot question, chequered with evils that teach us the absolute necessity of another, and make us, in the meantime, docile and submissive to the will of him who called us into being.

His lordship had been reading the Bible as M'Bride entered, and, after having closed it, and placed his spectacles between the leaves as a mark, he motioned the man to come forward.

"Well," said he, "have you brought those documents with you?"

"I have, my lord."

"Pray," said he, "allow me to see them."

M'Bride hesitated; being a knave himself, he naturally suspected every other man of trick and dishonesty; and yet, when he looked upon the mild but dignified countenance of the old man, made reverend by age and suffering, he had not the courage to give any intimation of the base suspicions he entertained.

"Place the papers before me, sir," said his lordship, somewhat sharply. "What opinion can I form of their value without having first inspected and examined them?"

As he spoke he took the spectacles from out the Bible, and settled them on his face.

"I know, my lord," replied M'Bride, taking them out of a pocket-book rather the worse for wear, "that I am placing them in the hands of an honorable man."

His lordship took them without seeming to have heard this observation; and as he held them up, M'Bride could perceive that a painful change came over him. He became ghastly pale, and his hands trembled so violently, that he was unable to read their contents until he placed them flat upon the table before him. At length, after having read and examined them closely, and evidently so as to satisfy himself of their authenticity, he turned round to M'Bride, and said, "Is any person aware that you are in possession of these documents?"

"Aha," thought the fellow, "there's an old knave for you. He would give a round sum that they were in ashes, I'll engage; but I'll make him shell out for all that.—I don't think there is, my lord, unless the gentleman—your lordship knows who I mean—that I took them from."

"Did you take them deliberately from him?"

The man stood uncertain for a moment, and thought that the best thing he could do was to make a merit of the affair, by affecting a strong disposition to serve his lordship.

"The truth is, my lord, I was in his confidence, and as I heard how matters stood, I thought it a pity that your lordship should be annoyed at your time of life, and I took it into my head to place them in your lordship's hands."

"These are genuine documents," observed his lordship, looking at them again. "I remember the handwriting distinctly, and have in my possession some letters written by the same individual. Was your master a kind one?"

"Both kind and generous, my lord; and I have no doubt at all but he'd forgive me everything, and advance a large sum besides,

in order to get these two little papers back. Your lordship knows he can do nothing against you without them; and I hope you'll consider that, my lord."

"Did he voluntarily, that is, willingly, and of his own accord, admit you to his confidence? and, if so, upon what grounds?"

"Why, my lord, my wife and I were servants to his father for years, and he, when a slip of a boy, was very fond of me. When he came over here, my lord, it was rather against his will, and not at all for his own sake. So, as he knew that he'd require some one in this country that could act prudently for him, he made up his mind to take me with him, especially as my wife and myself were both anxious to come back to our own country. 'I must trust some one, M'Bride,' said he, 'and I will trust you'; and then he tould me the raison of his journey here."

"Well," replied his lordship, "proceed; have you anything more to add!"

"Nothing, my lord, but what I've tould you. I thought it a pitiful case to see a nobleman at your time of life afflicted by the steps he was about to take, and I brought these papers accordingly to your lordship. I hope you'll not forget that, my lord."

"What value do you place on these two documents?"

"Why, I think a thousand pounds, my lord."

"Well, sir, your estimate is a very low one—ten thousand would come somewhat nearer the thing."

"My lord, I can only say," said M'Bride, "that I'm willin' to take a thousand; but, if your lordship, knowin' the value of the papers as you do, chooses to add anything more, I'll be very happy to accept it."

"I have another question to ask you, sir," said his lordship, "which I do with great pain, as I do assure you that this is as painful a dialogue as I ever held in my life. Do you think now, that, provided you had not taken—that is, stolen—these papers from your master, he would, upon the success of the steps he is taking, have given you a thousand pounds?"

The man hesitated, as if he had caught a glimpse of the old man's object in putting the question. "Why—hem—no; I don't think I could expect that, my lord; but a handsome present, I dare say, I might come in for."

Lord Cullamore raised himself in his chair, and after looking at the treacherous villain with a calm feeling of scorn and indignation, to which his illness imparted a solemn and lofty severity, that made M'Bride feel as if he wished to sink through the floor, "Go," said he, looking at him with an eye that was kindled into something of its former fire. "Begone, sir: take away your papers; I will not—I cannot enter into any compact with an ungrateful and perfidious villain like you. These papers have come into your hands by robbery or theft—that is sufficient; there they are, sir—take them away. I shall defend myself and my rights upon principles of justice, but never shall stoop to support them by dishonor."

On concluding, he flung them across the table with a degree of energy that surprised M'Bride, whilst his color, hitherto so pale, was heightened by a flash of that high feeling and untarnished integrity which are seldom so beautifully impressive as when exhibited in the honorable indignation of old age. It might have been compared to that pale but angry red of the winter sky which flashes so transiently over the snow-clad earth, when the sun, after the fatigues of his short but chilly journey, is about to sink from our sight at the close of day.

M'Bride slunk out of the room crestfallen, disappointed, and abashed; but on reaching the outside of the door he found Norton awaiting him. This worthy gentleman, after beckoning to him to follow, having been striving, with his whole soul centred in the key-hole, to hear the purport of their conference, now proceeded to his own room, accompanied by M'Bride, where we shall leave them without interruption to their conversation and enjoyment, and return once more to Ginty Cooper.

Until the hour of half-past twelve that night Ginty most religiously kept her watch convenient to the door. Just then it opened very quietly, and a man staggered down the hall steps, and bent his course toward the northern part of the city suburbs. A female might be observed to follow him at a distance, and ever as he began to mutter his drunken meditations to himself, she approached him more closely behind, in order, if possible, to lose nothing of what he said.

"An ould fool," he hiccupped, "to throw them back to me—hic—an' the other a kna-a-ve to want to—to look at them; but I was *up*—up; if the young-oung l-lor-ord will buy them, he mu-must-ust pay for them, for I hav-ave them safe. Hang it, my head's turn-turn-turnin' about like the——"

At this portion of his reflections he turned into a low, dark line of cabins, some inhabited, and others ruined and waste, followed by the female in question; and if the reader cannot ascertain her object in dogging him, he must expect no assistance in guessing it from us.

CHAPTER XXXV.

Lucy's Vain but Affecting Expostulation with her Father—Her Terrible Denunciation of Ambrose Gray.

The next morning, after breakfast, Lord Dunroe found Norton and M'Bride in the stable yard, when the following conversation took place.

"Norton," said his lordship, "I can't understand what they mean by the postponement of this trial about the mare. I fear they will beat us, and in that case it is better, perhaps, to compromise it. You know that that attorney fellow Birney is engaged against us, and by all accounts he has his wits about him."

"Yes, my lord; but Birney is leaving home, going to France, and they have succeeded in getting it postponed until the next term. My lord, this is the man, M'Bride, that I told you of this morning. M'Bride, have you brought those documents with you? I wish to show them to his lordship, who, I think, you will find a more liberal purchaser than his father."

"What's that you said, sir," asked M'Bride, with an appearance of deep interest, "about Mr. Birney going to France?"

"This is no place to talk about these matters," said his lordship; "bring the man up to your own room, Norton, and I will join you there. The thing, however, is a mere farce, and my father a fool, or he would not give himself any concern about it. Bring him to your room, where I will join you presently. But, observe me, Norton, none of these tricks upon me in future. You said you got only twenty-five for the mare, and now it appears you got exactly double the sum. Now, upon my honor, I won't stand any more of this."

"But, my lord," replied Norton, laughing, "don't you see how badly you reason? I got fifty for the mare; of this I gave your lordship twenty-five—the balance I kept myself. Of course, then, you can fairly say, or swear, if you like, that she brought you in nothing but the fair value. In fact, I kept you completely out of the transaction; but, after all, I only paid myself for the twenty-five I won of you."

Dunroe was by no means in anything like good-humor this morning. The hints which Norton had communicated to him at breakfast, respecting the subject of M'Bride's private interviews with his father, had filled him with more alarm than he wished to acknowledge. Neither, on the other hand, had he any serious apprehensions, for, unhappily for himself, he was one of those easy and unreflecting men who seldom look beyond the present moment, and can never be brought to a reasonable consideration of their own interests, until, perhaps, it is too late to secure them.

All we can communicate to the reader with respect to the conference between these three redoubtable individuals is simply its results. On that evening Norton and M'Bride started for France, with what object will be seen hereafter, Birney having followed on the same route the morning but one afterwards, for the purpose of securing the documents in question.

Dunroe now more than ever felt the necessity of urging his marriage with Lucy. He knew his father's honorable spirit too well to believe that he would for one moment yield his consent to it under the circumstances which were now pending. With the full knowledge of these circumstances he was not acquainted. M'Bride had somewhat overstated the share of confidence to which in this matter he had been admitted by his master. His information, therefore, on the subject, was not so accurate as he wished, although, from motives of dishonesty and a desire to sell his documents to the best advantage, he made the most of the knowledge he possessed. Be this as it may, Dunroe determined, as we said, to bring about the nuptials without delay, and in this he was seconded by Sir Thomas Gourlay himself, who also had his own motives for hastening them. In fact, here were two men, each deliberately attempting to impose upon the other, and neither possessed of one spark of honor or truth, although the transaction between them was one of the most solemn importance that can occur in the great business of life. The world, however, is filled with similar characters; and not all the misery and calamity that ensue from such fraudulent and dishonest practices will, we fear, ever prevent the selfish and ambitious from pursuing the same courses.

"Sir Thomas," said Dunroe, in a conversation with the baronet held on the very day after Norton and M'Bride had set out on their secret expedition, "this marriage is unnecessarily delayed. I am anxious that it should take place as soon as it possibly can."

"But," replied the baronet, "I have not been able to see your father on the subject, in consequence of his illness."

"It is not necessary," replied his lordship. "You know what kind of a man he is. In fact, I fear he is very nearly *non compos* as it is. He has got so confoundedly crotchety of late, that I should not feel surprised if, under some whim or other, he set his face against it altogether. In fact, it is useless,

and worse than useless, to consult him at all about it. I move, therefore, that we go on without him."

"I think you are right," returned the other; "and I have not the slightest objection: name the day. The contract is drawn up, and only requires to be signed."

"I should say, on Monday next," replied his lordship; "but I fear we will have objections and protestations from Miss Gourlay; and if so, how are we to manage?"

"Leave the management of Miss Gourlay to me, my lord," replied her father. "I have managed her before and shall manage her now."

His lordship had scarcely gone, when Lucy was immediately sent for, and as usual found her father in the library.

"Lucy," said he, with as much blandness of manner as he could assume, "I have sent for you to say that you are called upon to make your father happy at last."

"And myself wretched forever, papa."

"But your word, Lucy—your promise—your honor: remember that promise so solemnly given; remember, too, your duty of obedience as a daughter."

"Alas! I remember everything, papa; too keenly, too bitterly do I remember all."

"You will be prepared to marry Dunroe on Monday next. The affair will be comparatively private. That is to say, we will ask nobody—no *déjeuner*—no nonsense. The fewer the better at these matters. Would you wish to see your brother—hem—I mean Mr. Gray?"

Lucy had been standing while he spoke; but she now staggered over to a seat, on which she fell rather than sat. Her large, lucid eyes lost their lustre; her frame quivered; her face became of an ashy paleness; but still those eyes were bent upon her father.

"Papa," she said, at length, in a low voice that breathed of horror, "do not kill me."

"Kill you, foolish girl! Now really, Lucy, this is extremely ridiculous and vexatious too. Is not *my* daughter a woman of honor?"

"Papa," she said, solemnly, going down upon her two knees, and joining her lovely and snowy hands together, in an attitude of the most earnest and heart-rending supplication; "papa, hear me. You have said that I saved your life; be now as generous as I was—save mine."

"Lucy," he replied, "this looks like want of principle. You would violate your promise. I should not wish Dunroe to hear this, or to know it. He might begin to reason upon it, and to say that the woman who could deliberately break a solemn promise might not hesitate at the marriage vow. I do not apply this reasoning to you, but he or others might. Of course, I expect that, as a woman of honor, you will keep your word with me, and marry Dunroe on Monday. You will have no trouble—everything shall be managed by them; a brilliant *trousseau* can be provided as well afterwards as before."

Lucy rose up; and as she did, the blood, which seemed to have previously gathered to her heart, now returned to her cheek, and began to mantle upon it, whilst her figure, before submissive and imploring, dilated to its full size.

"Father," said she, "since you will not hear the voice of supplication, hear that of reason and truth. Do not entertain a doubt, no, not for a moment, that if I am *urged—driven*—to this marriage, hateful and utterly detestable to me as it is, I shall hesitate to marry this man. I say this, however, because I tell you that I am about to appeal to your interest in my true happiness for the last time. Is it, then, kind; is it fatherly in you, sir, to exact from me the fulfilment of a promise given under circumstances that ought to touch your heart into a generous perception of the sacrifice which in giving it I made for *your* sake alone? You were ill, and laboring under the apprehension of sudden death, principally, you said, in consequence of my refusal to become the wife of that man. I saw this; and although the effort was infinitely worse than death to me, I did not hesitate one moment in yielding up what is at any time dearer to me than life—my happiness—that you might be spared. Alas, my dear father, if you knew how painful it is to me to be forced to plead all this in my own defence, you would, you must, pity me. A generous heart, almost under any circumstances, scorns to plead its own acts, especially when they are on the side of virtue. But I, alas, am forced to it; am forced to do that which I would otherwise scorn and blush to do."

"Lucy," replied her father, who felt in his ambitious and tyrannical soul the full force, not only of what she said, but of the fraud he had practised on her, but which she never suspected: "Lucy, my child, you will drive me mad. Perhaps I am wrong; but at the same time my heart is so completely fixed upon this marriage, that if it be not brought about I feel I shall go insane. The value of life would be lost to me, and most probably I shall die the dishonorable death of a suicide."

"And have you no fear for me, my father—no apprehension that I may escape from this my wretched destiny to the peace of the

grave? But you need not. Thank God, I trust and feel that my regard for His precepts, and my perceptions of His providence, are too clear and too firm ever to suffer me to fly like a coward from the post in life which He has assigned me. But why, dear father, should you make me the miserable victim of your ambition?—I am not ambitious."

"I know you are not: I never could get an honorable ambition instilled into you."

"I am not mean, however—nay, I trust that I possess all that honest and honorable pride which would prevent me from doing an unworthy act, or one unbecoming either my sex or my position."

"You would not break your word, for instance, nor render your father wretched, insane, mad, or, perhaps, cause his dreadful malady to return. No—no—but yet fine talking is a fine thing. Madam, cease to plead your virtues to me, unless you prove that you possess them by keeping your honorable engagement made to Lord Dunroe, through the sacred medium of your own father. Whatever you may do, don't attempt to involve me in your disgrace."

"I am exhausted," she said, "and cannot speak any longer; but I will not despair of you, father. No, my dear papa," she said, throwing her arms about his neck, laying her head upon his bosom, and bursting into tears, "I will not think that you could sacrifice your daughter. You will relent for Lucy as Lucy did for you—but I feel weak. You know, papa, how this fever on my spirits has worn me down; and, after all, the day might come—and come with bitterness and remorse to your heart—when you may be forced to feel that although you made your Lucy a countess she did not remain a countess long."

"What do you mean now?"

"Don't you see, papa, that my heart is breaking fast? If you will not hear my words—if they cannot successfully plead for me—let my declining health—let my pale and wasted cheek—let my want of spirits, my want of appetite—and, above all, let that which you cannot see nor feel—the sickness of my unhappy heart—plead for me. Permit me to go, dear papa; and will you allow me to lean upon you to my own room?—for, alas! I am not, after this painful excitement, able to go there myself. Thank you, papa, thank you."

He was thus compelled to give her his arm, and, in doing so, was surprised to feel the extraordinary tremor by which her frame was shaken. On reaching her room, she turned round, and laying her head, with an affectionate and supplicating confidence, once more upon his breast, she whispered with streaming eyes, "Alas! my dear papa, you forget, in urging me to marry this hateful profligate, that my heart, my affections, my love—in the fullest, and purest, and most disinterested sense—are irrevocably fixed upon another; and Dunroe, all mean and unmanly as he is, knows this."

"He knows that—there, sit down—why do you tremble so?—Yes, but he knows that what you consider an attachment is a mere girlish fancy, a whimsical predilection that your own good-sense will show you the folly of at a future time."

"Recollect, papa, that he has been extravagant, and is said to be embarrassed; the truth is, sir, that the man values not your daughter, but the property to which he thinks he will become entitled, and which I have no doubt will be very welcome to his necessities. I feel that I speak truth, and as a test of his selfishness, it will be only necessary to acquaint him with the reappearance of my brother—your son and heir—and you will be no further troubled by his importunities."

"Troubled by his importunity! Why, girl, it's I that am troubled with apprehension lest he might discover the existence of your brother, and draw off."

One broad gaze of wonder and dismay she turned upon him, and her face became crimsoned with shame. She then covered it with her open hands, and, turning round, placed her head upon the end of the sofa, and moaned with a deep and bursting anguish, on hearing this acknowledgment of deliberate baseness from his own lips.

The baronet understood her feelings, and regretted the words he had uttered, but he resolved to bear the matter out.

"Don't be surprised, Lucy," he added, "nor alarmed at these sentiments; for I tell you, that rather than be defeated in the object I propose for your elevation in life, I would trample a thousand times upon all the moral obligations that ever bound man. Put it down to what you like—insanity—monomania, if you will—but so it is with me: I shall work my purpose out, or either of us shall die for it; and from this you may perceive how likely your resistance and obduracy are to become available against the determination of such a man as I am. Compose yourself, girl, and don't be a fool. The only way to get properly through life is to accommodate ourselves to its necessities, or, in other words, to have shrewdness and common sense, and foil the world, if we can, at its own weapons. Give up your fine sentiment, I desire you, and go down to the drawing-room, to receive your brother; he

will be here very soon. I am going to the assizes, and shall not return till about four o'clock. Come, come, all will end better than you imagine."

The mention of her brother was anything but a comfort to Lucy. Her father at first entertained apprehensions, as we have already said, that this promising youth might support his sister in her aversion against the marriage. Two or three conversations on the subject soon undeceived him, however, in the view he had taken of his character; and Lucy herself now dreaded him, on this subject, almost as much as she did her father.

With respect to this same brother, it is scarcely necessary now to say, that Lucy's feelings had undergone a very considerable change. On hearing that he not only was in existence, but that she would soon actually behold him, her impassioned imagination painted him as she wished and hoped he might prove to be—that is, in the first place—tall, elegant, handsome, and with a strong likeness to the mother whom he had been said so much to resemble; and, in the next—oh, how her trembling heart yearned to find him affectionate, tender, generous, and full of all those noble and manly virtues on which might rest a delightful sympathy, a pure and generous affection, and a tender and trusting confidence between them. On casting her eyes upon him for the first time, however, she felt at the moment like one disenchanted, or awakening from some delightful illusion to a reality so much at variance with the *beau ideal* of her imagination, as to occasion a feeling of disappointment that amounted almost to pain. There stood before her a young man, with a countenance so like her father's, that the fact startled her. Still there was a difference, for—whether from the consciousness of birth, or authority, or position in life—there was something in her father's features that redeemed them from absolute vulgarity. Here, however, although the resemblance was extraordinary, and every feature almost identical, there might be read in the countenance of her brother a low, commonplace expression, that looked as if it were composed of effrontery, cunning, and profligacy. Lucy for a moment shrank back from such a countenance, and the shock of disappointment chilled the warmth with which she had been prepared to receive him. But, then, her generous heart told her that she might probably be prejudging the innocent—that neglect, want of education, the influence of the world, and, worst of all, distress and suffering, might have caused the stronger, more vulgar, and exceedingly disagreeable expression which she saw before her; and the reader is already aware of the consequences which these struggles, at their first interview, had upon her. Subsequently to that, however, Mr. Ambrose, in supporting his father's views, advanced principles in such complete accordance with them, as to excite in his sister's breast, first a deep regret that she could not love him as she had hoped to do; then a feeling stronger than indifference itself, and ultimately one little short of aversion. Her father had been now gone about half an hour, and she hoped that her brother might not come, when a servant came to say that Mr. Gray was in the drawing-room, and requested to see her.

She felt that the interview would be a painful one to her; but still he was her brother, and she knew she could not avoid seeing him.

After the first salutations were over,

"What is the matter with you, Lucy?" he asked; "you look ill and distressed. I suppose the old subject of the marriage—eh?"

"I trust it is one which you will not renew, Thomas. I entreat you to spare me on it."

"I am too much your friend to do so, Lucy. It is really inconceivable to me why you should oppose it as you do. But the truth is, you don't know the world, or you would think and act very differently."

"Thomas," she replied, whilst her eyes filled with tears, "I am almost weary of life. There is not one living individual to whom I can turn for sympathy or comfort. Papa has forbidden me to visit Lady Gourlay or Mrs. Mainwaring; and I am now utterly friendless, with the exception of God alone. But I will not despair—so long, at least, as reason is left to me."

"I assure you, Lucy, you astonish me. To you, whose imagination is heated with a foolish passion for an adventurer whom no one knows, all this suffering may seem very distressing and romantic; but to me, to my father, and to the world, it looks like great folly—excuse me, Lucy—or rather like great weakness of character, grounded upon strong obstinacy of disposition. Believe me, if the world were to know this you would be laughed at; and there is scarcely a mother or daughter, from the cottage to the castle, that would not say, 'Lucy Gourlay is a poor, inexperienced fool, who thinks she can find a world of angels, and paragons, and purity to live in.'"

"But I care not for the world, Thomas: it is not my idol—I do not worship it, nor shall I ever do so. I wish to guide myself by the voice of my own conscience, by s

sense of what is right and proper, and by the principles of Christian truth."

"These doctrines, Lucy, are very well for the closet; but they will never do in life, for which they are little short of a disqualification. Where, for instance, will you find them acted on? Not by people of sense, I assure you. Now listen to me."

"Spare me, if you please, Thomas, the advocacy of such principles. You occasion me great pain—not so much on my own account as on yours—you alarm me."

"Don't be alarmed, I tell you; but listen to me, as I said. Here, now, is this marriage: you don't love this Dunroe—you dislike, you detest him. Very well. What the deuce has that to do with the prospects of your own elevation in life? Think for yourself—become the centre of your own world; make this Dunroe your footstool—put him under your foot, I say, and mount by him; get a position in the world—play your game in it as you see others do; and——"

"Pray, sir," said Lucy, scarcely restraining her indignation, "where, or when, or how did *you* come by these odious and detestable doctrines?"

"Faith, Lucy, from honest nature—from experience and observation. Is there any man with a third idea, or that has the use of his eyes, who does not know and see that this is the game of life? Dunroe, I dare say, deserves your contempt; report goes, certainly, that he is a profligate; but what ought especially to reconcile him to you is this simple fact—that the man's a fool. Egad, I think that ought to satisfy you."

Lucy rose up and went to the window, where she stood for some moments, her eyes sparkling and scintillating, and her bosom heaving with a tide of feelings which were repressed by a strong and exceedingly difficult effort. She then returned to the sofa, her cheeks and temples in a blaze, whilst ever and anon she eyed her brother as if from a new point of view, or as if something sudden and exceedingly disagreeable had struck her.

"You look at me very closely, Lucy," said he, with a confident grin.

"I do," she replied. "Proceed, sir."

"I will. Well, as I was saying, you will find it remarkably comfortable and convenient in many ways to be married to a fool: he will give you very little trouble; fools are never suspicious; but, on the contrary, distinguished for an almost sublime credulity. Then, again, you love this other gentleman; and, with a fool for your husband, and the example of the world before you, what the deuce difficulty can you see in the match?"

Lucy rose up, and for a few moments the very force of her indignation kept her silent; at length she spoke.

"Villain — impostor — cheat! you stand there convicted of an infamous attempt to impose yourself on me as my legitimate brother—on my father as his legitimate son; but know that I disclaim you, sir. What! the fine and gentle blood of my blessed mother to flow in the veins of the profligate monster who could give utterance to principles worthy of hell itself, and attempt to pour them into the ears and heart of his own sister! Sir, I feel, and I thank God for it, that you are not the son of my blessed mother—no; but you stand there a false and spurious knave, the dishonest instrument of some fraudulent conspiracy, concocted for the purpose of putting you into a position of inheriting a name and property to which you have no claim. I ought, on the moment I first saw you, to have been guided by the instincts of my own heart, which prompted me to recoil from and disclaim you. I know not, nor do I wish to know, in what low haunts of vice and infamy you have been bred; but one thing is certain, that, if it be within the limits of my power, you shall be traced and unmasked. I now remember me that—that—there existed an early scandal—yes, sir, I remember it, but I cannot even repeat it; be assured, however, that this inhuman and devilish attempt to poison my principles will prove the source of a retributive judgment on your head. Begone, sir, and leave the house!"

The pallor of detected guilt, the consciousness that in this iniquitous lecture he had overshot the mark, and made a grievous miscalculation in pushing his detestable argument too far—but, above all, the startling suspicions so boldly and energetically expressed by Lucy, the truth of which, as well as the apprehensions that filled him of their discovery, all united, made him feel as if he stood on the brink of a mine to which the train had been already applied. And yet, notwithstanding all this, such was the natural force of his effrontery—such the vulgar insolence and bitter disposition of his nature, that, instead of soothing her insulted feelings, or offering either explanation or apology, he could not restrain an impudent exhibition of ill-temper.

"You forget yourself, Lucy," he replied; "you have no authority to order me out of this house, in which I stand much firmer than yourself. Neither do I comprehend your allusions, nor regard your threats. The proofs of my identity and legitimacy are abundant and irresistible. As to the advice I gave you, I gave it like one who knows the world."

"No, sir," she replied, indignantly; "you gave it like a man who knows only its vices. It is sickening to hear every profligate quote his own experience of life, as if it were composed of nothing but crimes and vices, simply because they constitute the guilty phase of it with which he is acquainted. But the world, sir, is not the scene of general depravity which these persons would present it. No: it is full of great virtues, noble actions, high principles; and, what is better still, of true religion and elevated humanity. What right, then, sir, have you to libel a world which you do not understand? You are merely a portion of its dregs, and I would as soon receive lessons in honesty from a thief as principles for my guidance in it from you. As for me, I shall disregard the proofs of your identity and legitimacy, which, however, must be produced and investigated; for, from this moment, establish them as you may, I shall never recognize you as a brother, as an acquaintance, as a man, nor as anything but a selfish and abandoned villain, who would have corrupted the principles of his sister."

Without another word, or the slightest token of respect or courtesy, she deliberately, and with an air of indignant scorn, walked out of the drawing-room, leaving Mr. Ambrose Gray in a position which we dare say nobody will envy him.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Which contains a Variety of Matters, some to Laugh and some to Weep at.

Our readers may have observed that Sir Thomas Gourlay led a secluded life ever since the commencement of our narrative. The fact was, and he felt it deeply, that he had long been an unpopular man. That he was a bad, overbearing husband, too, had been well known, for such was the violence of his temper, and the unvaried harshness of his disposition toward his wife, that the general tenor of his conduct, so far even as she was concerned, could not be concealed. His observations on life and personal character were also so cynical and severe, not to say unjust, that his society was absolutely avoided, unless by some few of his own disposition. And yet nothing could be more remarkable than the contrast that existed between his principles and conduct in many points, thus affording, as they did, an involuntary acknowledgment of his moral errors. He would not, for instance, admit his sceptical friends, who laughed at the existence of virtue and religion, to the society of his daughter, with the exception of Lord Dunroe, to whose vices his unaccountable ambition for her elevation completely blinded him. Neither did he wish her to mingle much with the world, from a latent apprehension that she might find it a different thing from what he himself represented it to be; and perhaps might learn there the low estimate which it had formed of her future husband. Like most misanthropical men, therefore, whose hatred of life is derived principally from that uneasiness of conscience which proceeds from their own vices, he kept aloof from society as far as the necessities of his position allowed him.

Mrs. Mainwaring had called upon him several times with an intention of making some communication which she trusted would have had the effect of opening his eyes to the danger into which he was about to precipitate his daughter by her contemplated marriage with Dunroe. He uniformly refused, however, to see her, or to allow her any opportunity of introducing the subject. Finding herself deliberately and studiously repulsed, this good lady, who still occasionally corresponded with Lucy, came to the resolution of writing to him on the subject, and, accordingly, Gibson, one morning, with his usual cool and deferential manner, presented him with the following letter:

"Summerfield Cottage.

"Sir,—I should feel myself utterly unworthy of the good opinion which I trust I am honored with by your admirable daughter, were I any longer to remain silent upon a subject of the deepest importance to her future happiness. I understand that she is almost immediately about to become the wife of Lord Dunroe. Now, sir, I entreat your most serious attention; and I am certain, if you will only bestow it upon the few words I am about to write, that you, and especially Miss Gourlay, will live to thank God that I interposed to prevent this unhallowed union. I say then, emphatically, as I shall be able to prove most distinctly, that if you permit Miss Gourlay to become the wife of this young nobleman you will seal her ruin—defeat the chief object which you cherish for her in life, and live to curse the day on which you urged it on. The communications which I have to make are of too much importance to be committed to paper; but if you will only allow me, and I once more implore it for the sake of your child, as well as for your own future ease of mind, the privilege of a short interview, I shall

completely satisfy you as to the truth of what I state.

"I have the honor to be, sir,

"Your obliged and obedient servant,

"MARTHA MAINWARING."

Having perused the first sentence of this earnest and friendly letter, Sir Thomas indignantly flung it into a drawer where he kept all communications to which it did not please him at the moment to pay particular attention.

Lucy's health in the meantime was fast breaking: but so delicate and true was her sense of honor and duty that she would have looked upon any clandestine communication with her lover as an infraction of the solemn engagement into which she had entered for her father's sake, and by which, even at the expense of her own happiness, she considered herself bound. Still, she felt that a communication on the subject was due to him, and her principal hope now was that her father would allow her to make it. If he, however, refused this sanction to an act of common justice, then she resolved to write to him openly, and make the wretched circumstances in which she was involved, and the eternal barrier that had been placed between them, known to him at once.

Her father, however, now found, to his utter mortification, that he was driving matters somewhat too fast, and that his daughter's health must unquestionably be restored before he could think of outraging humanity and public decency by forcing her from the sick bed to the altar.

After leaving her brother on the occasion of their last remarkable interview, she retired to her room so full of wretchedness, indignation, and despair of all human aid or sympathy, that she scarcely knew whether their conversation was a dream or a reality. Above all things, the shock she received through her whole moral system, delicately and finely tempered as it was, so completely prostrated her physical strength, and estranged all the virtuous instincts of her noble nature, that it was with difficulty she reached her own room. When there, she immediately rang for her maid, who at once perceived by the indignant sparkle of her eye, the heightened color of her cheek, and the energetic agitation of her voice, that something exceedingly unpleasant had occurred.

"My gracious, miss," she exclaimed, "what has happened? You look so disturbed! Something, or somebody, has offended you."

"I *am* disturbed, Alice," she replied, "I am disturbed; come and lend me your arm; my knees are trembling so that I cannot walk without assistance; but must sit down for a moment. Indeed, I feel that my strength is fast departing from me. I scarcely know what I am thinking. I am all confused, agitated, shocked. Gracious heaven! Come, my dear Alice, help your mistress; you, Alice, are the only friend I have left now. Are you not my friend, Alice?"

She was sitting on a lounger as she spoke, and the poor affectionate girl, who loved her as she did her life, threw herself over, and leaning her head upon her mistress's knees wept bitterly.

"Sit beside me, Alice," said she; "whatever distance social distinctions may have placed between us, I feel that the truth and sincerity of those tears justify me in placing you near my heart. Sit beside me, but compose yourself; and then you must assist me to bed."

"They are killing you," said Alley, still weeping. "What devil can tempt them to act as they do? As for me, miss, it's breaking my heart, that I see what you are suffering, and can't assist you."

"But I have your love and sympathy, your fidelity, too, my dear Alice; and that now is all I believe the world has left me."

"No, miss," replied her maid, wiping her eyes, and striving to compose herself, "no, indeed; there is another—another gentleman, I mean—as well as myself, that feels deeply for your situation."

Had Lucy's spirit been such as they were wont to be, she could have enjoyed this little blunder of Alice's; but now her heart, like some precious jewel that lies too deep in the bosom of the ocean for the sun's strongest beams to reach, had sunk beneath the influence of either cheefulness or mirth.

"There is indeed, miss," continued Alice,

"And pray, Alice," asked her mistress, "how do you know that?"

"Why, miss," replied the girl, "I am told that of late he is looking very ill, too. They say he has lost his spirits all to pieces, and seldom laughs—the Lord save us!"

"They say!—who say, Alice?"

"Why," replied Alice, with a perceptible heightening of her color, "ahem! ahem! why, Dandy Dulcimer, miss."

"And where have you seen him? Dulcimer, I mean. He, I suppose, who used occasionally to play upon the instrument of that name in the Hall?"

"Yes, ma'am, the same. Don't you remember how beautiful he played it the night we came in the coach to town?"

"I remember there was something very unpleasant between him and a farmer, I believe; but I did not pay much attention to it at the time."

"I am sorry for that, miss, for I declare to goodness, Dandy's dulcimer isn't such an unpleasant instrument as you think; and, besides, he has got a new one the other day that plays lovely."

Lucy felt a good deal anxious to hear some further information from Alley upon the subject she had introduced, but saw that Dandy and his dulcimer were likely to be substituted for it, all unconscious as the poor girl was of the preference of the man to the master.

"He looks ill, you say, Alice?"

"Never seen him look so rosy in my life, miss, nor in such spirits."

Lucy looked into her face, and for a moment's space one slight and feeble gleam, which no suffering could prevent, passed over it, at this intimation of the object which Alley's fancy then dwelt upon.

"He danced a hornpipe, miss, to the tune of the Swaggerin' Jig, upon the kitchen table," she proceeded; "and, sorra be off me, but it would do your heart good to see the springs he would give—every one o' them a yard high—and to hear how he'd crack his fingers as loud as the shot of a pistol."

A slight gloom overclouded Lucy's face; but, on looking at the artless transition from the honest sympathy which Alley had just felt for her to a sense of happiness which it was almost a crime to disturb, it almost instantly disappeared.

"I must not be angry with her," she said to herself; "this feeling, after all, is only natural, and such as God in his goodness bestows upon every heart as the greatest gift of life, when not abused. I cannot be displeased at the *naïveté* with which she has forgotten my lover for her own; for such I perceive this person she speaks of evidently is."

She looked once more at her maid, whose eyes, with true Celtic feeling, were now dancing with delight, whilst yet red with tears. "Alice," said she, in a voice of indulgent reproof, "who are you thinking of?"

"Why, of Dandy, miss," replied Alley; but in an instant the force of the reproof as well as of the indulgence was felt, and she acknowledged her error by a blush.

"I beg your pardon, miss," she said; "I'm a thoughtless creature. What can you care about what I was sayin'? But—hem—well, about *him*—sure enough, poor Dandy told me that everything is going wrong with him. He doesn't, as I said, speak or smile as he used to do."

"Do you know," asked her mistress, "whether he goes out much?"

"Not much, miss, I think; he goes sometimes to Lady Gourlay's and to Dean Palmer's. But do you know what I heard, miss? I hope you won't grow jealous, though?"

Lucy gave a faint smile. "I hope not, Alice. What is it?" But here, on recollecting again the scene she had just closed below stairs, she shuddered, and could not help exclaiming, "Oh, gracious heaven!" Then suddenly throwing off, as it were, all thought and reflection connected with it, she looked again at her maid, and repeated the question, "What is it, Alice?"

"Why, miss, have you ever seen Lord Dunroe's sister?"

"Yes, in London; but she was only a girl, though a lovely girl."

"Well, miss, do you know what? She's in love with some one."

"Poor girl!" exclaimed Lucy, "I trust the course of her love may run smoother than mine; but who is she supposed to be in love with?" she asked, not, however, without a blush, which, with all her virtues, was, as woman, out of her power to suppress.

"Oh," replied Alley, "not with *him*—and dear knows it would be no disgrace to her, but the contrary, to fall in love with such a gentleman—no; but with a young officer of the Thirty-third, who they say is lovely."

"What is his name, do you not know, Alice?"

"Roberts, I think. They met at Dean Palmer's and Lady Gourlay's; for it seems that Colonel Dundas was an old brother officer of Sir Edward's, when he was young and in the army."

"I have met that young officer, Alice," replied Lucy, "and I know not how it was, but I felt an—a—a—in fact, I cannot describe it. Those who were present observed that he and I resembled each other very much, and indeed the resemblance struck myself very forcibly."

"Troth, and if he resembled you, miss, I'm not surprised that Lady Emily fell in love with him."

"But how did you come to hear all this, Alice?" asked Lucy with a good deal of anxiety.

"Why, miss, there's a cousin of my own maid to Mrs. Palmer, and you may remember the evenin' you gave me lave to spend with her. She gave a party on the same evenin' and Dandy was there. I think I never looked better; I had on my new stays, and my hair was done up Grecian. Any way, I wasn't the worst of them."

"I am fatigued, Alice," said Lucy; "make your narrative as short as you can."

"I haven't much to add to it now, miss," she replied. "It was observed that Lady Emily's eyes and his were never off one another. She refused, it seems, to dance

with some major that's a great lord in the regiment, and danced with Mr. Roberts afterwards. He brought her down to supper, too, and sat beside her, and you know what that looks like."

Lucy paused, and seemed as if anxious about something, but at length asked,

"Do you know, Alice, was *he* there?"

"No, miss," replied the maid; "Dandy tells me he goes to no great parties at all, he only dines where there's a few. But, indeed, by all accounts he's very unhappy."

"What do you mean by all accounts," asked Lucy, a little startled.

"Why, Dandy, miss; so he tells me."

"Poor Alice!" exclaimed Lucy, looking benignantly upon her. "I did not think, Alice, that any conversation could have for a moment won me from the painful state of mind in which I entered the room. Aid me me now to my bedchamber. I must lie down, for I feel that I should endeavor to recruit my strength some way. If I could sleep, I should be probably the better for it; but, alas, Alice, you need not be told that misery and despair are wretched bedfellows."

"Don't say despair," replied Alice; "remember there's a good God above us, who can do better for us than ever we can for ourselves. Trust in him. Who knows but he's only trying you; and severely tried you are, my darlin' mistress."

Whilst uttering the last words, the affectionate creature's eyes filled with tears. She rose, however, and having assisted Lucy to her sleeping-room, helped to undress her, then fixed her with tender assiduity in her bed, where, in a few minutes, exhaustion and anxiety of mind were for the time forgotten, and she fell asleep.

The penetration of servants, in tracing, at fashionable parties, the emotions of love through all its various garbs and disguises, constitutes a principal and not the least disagreeable portion of their duty. The history of Lady Emily's attachment to Ensign Roberts, though a profound secret to the world, in the opinion of the parties themselves, and only hoped for and suspected by each, was nevertheless perfectly well known by a good number of the quality below stairs. The circumstance, at all events, as detailed by Alley, was one which in this instance justified their sagacity. Roberts and she had met, precisely as Alley said, three or four times at Lady Gourlay's and the Dean's, where their several attractions were, in fact, the theme of some observation. Those long, conscious glances, however, which, on the subject of love are such traitors to the heart, by disclosing its most secret operations, had sufficiently well told them the state of everything within that mysterious little garrison, and the natural result was that Lady Emily seldom thought of any one or anything but Ensign Roberts and the aforesaid glances, nor Mr. Roberts of anything but hers; for it so happened, that, with the peculiar oversight in so many things by which the passion is characterized, Lady Emily forgot that she had herself been glancing at the ensign, or she could never have observed and interpreted his looks. With a similar neglect of his own offences, in the same way must we charge Mr. Roberts, who in his imagination saw nothing but the blushing glances of this fair patrician.

Time went on, however, and Lucy, so far from recovering, was nearly one-half of the week confined to her bed, or her apartment. Sometimes, by way of varying the scene, and, if possible, enlivening her spirits, she had forced herself to go down to the drawing-room, and occasionally to take an airing in the carriage. A fortnight had elapsed, and yet neither Norton nor his fellow-traveler had returned from France. Neither had Mr. Birney; and our friend the stranger had failed to get any possible intelligence of unfortunate Fenton, whom he now believed to have perished, either by foul practices or the influence of some intoxicating debauch. Thanks to Dandy Dulcimer, however, as well as to Alley Mahon, he was not without information concerning Lucy's state of health; and, unfortunately, all that he could hear about it was only calculated to depress and distract him.

Dandy came to him one morning, about this period, and after rubbing his head slightly with the tips of his fingers, said,

"Bedad, sir, I was very near havin' *cotch* the right Mrs. Norton yestherday—I mane, I thought I was."

"How was that?" asked his master.

"Why, sir, I heard there was a fine, good-looking widow of that name, livin' in Mecklenburgh street, where she keeps a dairy; and sure enough there I found her. Do you undherstand, sir?"

"Why should I not, sirra? What mystery is there in it that I should not?"

"Deuce a sich a blazer of a widow I seen this seven years. I went early to her place, and the first thing I saw was a lump of a six-year-ould—a son of hers—playin' the Pandean pipes upon a whack o' bread and butther that he had aiten at the top into canes. Somehow, although I can't tell exactly why, I tuck a fancy to become acquainted with her, and proposed, if she had no objection, to take a cup o' tay with her yestherday evenin', statin' at the time that I had

something to say that might turn out to her advantage."

"But what mystery is there in all this?" said his master.

"Mysthery, sir—why, where was there ever a widow since the creation of Peter White, that hadn't more or less of mysthery about her?"

"Well, but what was the mystery here?" asked the other. "I do not perceive any, so far."

"Take your time, sir," replied Dandy; "it's comin'. The young performer on the Pandeans that I tould you of wasn't more than five or six at the most, but a woman over the way, that I made inquiries of, tould me the length o' time the husband was dead. Do you undherstand the mysthery now, sir?"

"Go on," replied the other; "I am amused by you; but I don't see the mystery, notwithstanding. What was the result?"

"I tell you the truth—she was a fine, comely, *flaghoola* woman; and as I heard she had the shiners, I began to think I might do worse."

"I thought the girl called Alley Mahon was your favorite?"

"So she is, sir—that is, she's one o' them: but, talkin' o' favorites, I am seldom without half-a-dozen."

"Very liberal, indeed, Dandy; but I wish to hear the upshot."

"Why, sir, we had a cup o' tay together yestherday evenin', and, between you and me, I began, as it might be, to get fond of her. She's very pretty, sir; but I must say, that the man who marries her will get a mouth, plaise goodness, that he must kiss by instalments. Faith, if it could be called property, he might boast that his is extensive; and divil a mistake in it."

"She has a large mouth, then?"

"Upon my soul, sir, if you stood at the one side of it you'd require a smart telescope to see to the other. No man at one attempt could ever kiss her. I began, sir, at the left side—that's always the right side to kiss at and went on successfully enough till I got half way through; but you see, sir, the evenin's is but short yet, and as I had no time to finish, I'm to go back this evenin' to get to the other side.

"Still I'm at a loss, Dandy," replied his master, not knowing whether to smile or get angry; "finish it without going about in this manner."

"Faith, sir, and that's more than I could do in kissing the widow. Divil such a circumbendibus ever a man had as I had in gettin' as far as the nose, where I had to give up until this evenin' as I said. Now, sir, whether to consider that an advantage or disadvantage is another mysthery to me. There's some women, and they have such a small, rosy, little mouth, that a man must gather up his lips into a bird's bill to kiss them. Now, there's Miss Gour——"

A look of fury from his master divided the word in his mouth, and he paused from terror. His master became more composed, however, and said, "To what purpose have you told me all this?"

"Gad, sir to tell you the truth, I saw you were low-spirited, and wanted something to rouse you. It's truth for all that."

"Is this Mrs. Norton, however, the woman whom we are seeking?"

"Well, well," exclaimed Dandy, casting down his hand, with vexatious vehemence, against the open air; "by the piper o' Moses, I'm the stupidest man that ever peeled a phatie. Troth, I was so engaged, sir, that I forgot it; but I'll remember it to-night, plaise goodness."

"Ah, Dandy," exclaimed his master, smiling, "I fear you are a faithless swain. I thought Alley Mahon was at least the first on the list."

"Troth, sir," replied Dandy, "I believe she is, too. Poor Alley! By the way, sir, I beg your pardon, but I have news for you that I fear will give you a heavy heart."

"How," exclaimed his master, "how—what is it? Tell me instantly."

"Miss Gourlay is ill, sir. She was goin' to be married to this lord; her father, I believe, had the day appointed, and she had given her consent."

His master seized him by the collar with both hands, and peering into his eyes, whilst his own blazed with actual fire, he held him for a moment as if in a vise, exclaiming, "Her consent, you villain!" But, as if recollecting himself, he suddenly let him go, and said, calmly, "Go on with what you were about to say."

"I have very little more to say, sir," replied Dandy; "herself and Lord Dunroe is only waitin' till she gets well and then they're to be married?"

"You said she gave her consent, did you not!"

"No doubt of it, sir, and that, I believe, is what's breakin' her heart. However, it's not my affair to direct any one; still, if I was in somebody's shoes, I know the tune I'd sing."

"And what tune would you sing?" asked his master.

Dandy sung the following stave, and, as he did it, he threw his comic eye upon his master with such humorous significance that the latter, although wrapped in deep reflec-

tion at the moment, on suddenly observing it, could not avoid smiling:

"Will you list, and come with me, fair maid?
Will you list, and come with me, fair maid?
Will you list, and come with me, fair maid?
And folly the lad with the white cockade?"

"If you haven't a good voice, sir, you could whisper the words into her ear, and as you're so near the mouth—hem—a word to the wise—then point to the chaise that you'll have standin' outside, and my life for you, there's an end to the fees o' the doctther."

His master, who had relapsed into thought before he concluded his advice, looked at him without seeming to have heard it. He then traversed the room several times, his chin supported by his finger and thumb, after which he seemed to have formed a resolution.

"Go, sir," said he, "and put that letter to Father M'Mahon in the post-office. I shall not want you for some time."

"Will I ordher a chaise, sir?" replied Dandy, with a serio-comic face.

One look from his master, however, sent him about his business; but the latter could hear him lilting the "White Cockade," as he went down stairs.

"Now," said he, when Dandy was gone, "can it be possible that she has at length given her consent to this marriage? Never voluntarily. It has been extorted by foul deceit and threatening, by some base fraud practised upon her generous and unsuspecting nature. I am culpable to stand tamely by and allow this great and glorious creature to be sacrificed to a bad ambition, and a worse man, without coming to the rescue. But, in the meantime, is this information true? Alas, I fear it is; for I know the unscrupulous spirit the dear girl has, alone and unassisted, to contend with. Yet if it be true, oh, why should she not have written to me? Why not have enabled me to come to her defence? I know not what to think. At all events, I shall, as a last resource, call upon her father. I shall explain to him the risk he runs in marrying his daughter to this man who is at once a fool and a scoundrel. But how can I do so? Birney has not yet returned from France, and I have no proofs on which to rest such serious allegations; nothing at present but bare assertions, which her father, in the heat and fury of his ambition, might not only disbelieve, but misinterpret. Be it so; I shall at least warn him, take it as he will: and if all else should fail, I will disclose to him my name and family, in order that he may know, at all events, that I am no impostor. My present remonstrance may so far alarm him as to cause the persecution against Lucy to be suspended for a time, and on Birney's return, we shall, I trust, be able to speak more emphatically."

He accordingly sent for a chaise, into which he stepped and ordered the driver to leave him at Sir Thomas Gourlay's and to wait there for him.

Lord Dunroe was at this period perfectly well aware that Birney's visit to France was occasioned by purposes that boded nothing favorable to his interests; and were it not for Lucy's illness, there is little doubt that the marriage would, ere now, have taken place. A fortnight had elapsed, and every day so completely filled him with alarm, that he proposed to Sir Thomas Gourlay the expediency of getting the license at once, and having the ceremony performed privately in her father's house. To this the father would have assented, were it not that he had taken it into his head that Lucy was rallying, and would soon be in a condition to go through it, in the parish church, at least. A few days, he hoped, would enable her to bear it; but if not, he was willing to make every concession to his lordship's wishes. Her delicate health, he said, would be a sufficient justification. At all events, both agreed that there could be no harm in having the license provided: and, accordingly, upon the morning of the stranger's visit, Sir Thomas and Lord Dunroe had just left the house of the former for the Ecclesiastical Court, in Henrietta street, a few minutes before his arrival. Sir Thomas was mistaken, however, in imagining that his daughter's health was improving, The doctor, indeed, had ordered carriage exercise essentially necessary; and Lucy being none of those weak and foolish girls, who sink under illness and calamity by an apathetic neglect of their health, or a criminal indifference to the means of guarding and prolonging the existence into which God has called them, left nothing undone on her part to second the efforts of the physician. Accordingly, whenever she was able to be up, or the weather permitted it, she sat in the carriage for an hour or two as it drove through some of the beautiful suburban scenery by which our city is surrounded.

The stranger, on the door being opened, was told by a servant, through mistake, that Sir Thomas Gourlay was within. The man then showed him to the drawing-room, where he said there was none but Miss Gourlay, he believed, who was waiting for the carriage to take her airing.

On hearing this piece of intelligence the stranger's heart began to palpitate, and his whole system, physical and spiritual, was disturbed by a general commotion that

amounted to pain, and almost banished his presence of mind for the moment. He tapped at the drawing-room door, and a low, melancholy voice, that penetrated his heart, said, "Come in." He entered, and there on a sofa sat Lucy before him. He did not bow—his heart was too deeply interested in her fate to remember the formalities of ceremony—but he stood, and fixed his eyes upon her with a long and anxious gaze. There she sat; but, oh! how much changed in appearance from what he had known her on every previous interview. Not that the change, whilst it spoke of sorrow and suffering, was one which diminished her beauty; on the contrary, it had only changed its character to something far more touching and impressive than health itself with all its blooming hues could have bestowed. Her features were certainly thinner, but there was visible in them a serene but mournful spirit—a voluptuous languor, heightened and spiritualized by purity and intellect into an expression that realized our notions rather of angelic beauty than of the loveliness of mere woman. To all this, sorrow had added a dignity so full of melancholy and commanding grace—a seriousness indicative of such truth and honor—as to make the heart of the spectator wonder, and the eye almost to weep on witnessing an association so strange and incomprehensible, as that of such beauty and evident goodness with sufferings that seem rather like crimes against purity and innocence, and almost tempt the weak heart to revolt against the dispensations of Providence.

When their eyes rested on each other, is it necessary to say that the melancholy position of Lucy was soon read in those large orbs that seemed about to dissolve into tears? The shock of the stranger's sudden and unexpected appearance, when taken in connection with the loss of him forever, and the sacrifice of her love and happiness, which, to save her father's life, she had so heroically and nobly made, was so strong, she felt unable to rise. He approached her, struck deeply by the dignified entreaty for sympathy and pardon that was in her looks.

"I am not well able to rise, dear Charles," she said, breaking the short silence which had occurred, and extending her hand; "and I suppose you have come to reproach me. As for me, I have nothing to ask you for now—nothing to hope for but pardon, and that you will forget me henceforth. Will you be noble enough to forgive her who was once your Lucy, but who can never be so more?"

The dreadful solemnity, together with the pathetic spirit of tenderness and despair that breathed in these words, caused a pulsation in his heart and a sense of suffocation about his throat that for the moment prevented him from speaking. He seized her hand, which was placed passively in his, and as he put it to his lips, Lucy felt a warm tear or two fall upon it. At length he spoke:

"Oh, why is this, Lucy?" he said; "your appearance has unmanned me; but I see it and feel it all. I have been sacrificed to ambition, yet I blame you not."

"No, dear Charles," she replied; "look upon me and then ask yourself who is the victim."

"But what has happened?" he asked; "what machinery of hell has been at work to reduce you to this? Fraud, deceit, treachery have done it. But, for the sake of God, let me know, as I said, what has occurred since our last interview to occasion this deplorable change—this rooted sorrow—this awful spirit of despair that I read in your face?"

"Not despair, Charles, for I will never yield to *that;* but it is enough to say, that a barrier deep as the grave, and which only that can remove, is between us forever in this life."

"You mean to say, then, that you never can be mine?"

"That, alas, is what I mean to say—what I must say."

"But why, Lucy—why, dearest Lucy—for still I must call you so; what has occasioned this? I cannot understand it."

She then related to him, briefly, but feelingly, the solemn promise, which, as our readers are aware of, she had given her father, and under what circumstances she had given it, together with his determination, unchanged and irrevocable, to force her to its fulfilment. Having heard it he paused for some time, whilst Lucy's eyes were fixed upon him, as if she expected a verdict of life or death from his lips.

"Alas, my dear Lucy," he said; "noble girl! how can I quarrel with your virtues? You did it to save a father's life, and have left me nothing to reproach you with; but in increasing my admiration of you, my heart is doubly struck with anguish at the thought that I must lose you."

"Ah, yes," she replied; "but you must take comfort from the difference in our fates. You merely have to endure the pain of loss; but I—oh, dear Charles—what have *I* to encounter? You are not forced into a marriage with one who possesses not a single sentiment or principle of virtue or honor in common with yourself. No; you are merely deprived of a woman whom you love; but

you are not forced into marriage with a woman, abandoned and unprincipled, whom you hate. Yes, Charles, you must take comfort, as I said, from the difference of our fates."

"What, Lucy! do you mean to say I can take comfort from your misery? Am I so selfish or ungenerous as to thank God that you, whose happiness I prefer a thousand times to my own, are more miserable than I am? I thought you knew me better."

"Alas, Charles," she replied, "have compassion on me. The expression of these generous sentiments almost kills me. Assume some moral error—some semblance of the least odious vice—some startling blemish of character—some weakness that may enable me to feel that in losing you I have not so much to lose as I thought; something that may make the contrast between the wretch to whom I am devoted and yourself less repulsive."

"Oh, I assure you, my dear Lucy," he replied, with a melancholy smile, "that I have my errors, my weaknesses, my frailties, if that will comfort you; so many, indeed, that my greatest virtue, and that of which I am most proud, is my love for you."

"Ah, Charles, you reason badly," she replied, "for you prove yourself to be capable of that noble affection which never yet existed in a vicious heart. As for me, I know not on what hand to turn. It is said that when a person hanging by some weak branch from the brow of a precipice finds it beginning to give way, and that the plunge below is unavoidable, a certain courage, gained from despair, not only diminishes the terror of the fall, but relieves the heart by a bold and terrible feeling that for the moment banishes fear, and reconciles him to his fate."

"It is a dreadful analogy, my dear Lucy; but you must take comfort. Who knows what a day may bring forth? You are not yet hanging upon the precipice of life."

"I feel that I am, Charles; and what is more, I see the depth to which I must be precipitated; but, alas, I possess none of that fearful courage that is said to reconcile one to the fall."

"Lucy," he replied, "into this gulf of destruction you shall never fall. Believe me, there is an invisible hand that will support you when you least expect it; a power that shapes our purposes, roughhew them as we will. I came to request an interview with your father upon this very subject. Have courage, dearest girl; friends are at work who I trust will ere long be enabled to place documents in his hands that will soon change his purposes. I grant that it is possible these documents may fail, or may not be procured; and in that case I know not how we are to act. I mention the probability of failure lest a future disappointment occasion such a shock as in your present state you may be incapable of sustaining; but still have hope, for the probability is in our favor."

She shook her head incredulously, and replied, "You do not know the inflexible determination of my father on this point; neither can I conceive what documents you could place before him that would change his purpose."

"I do not conceive that I am at liberty even to you, Lucy, to mention circumstances that may cast a stain upon high integrity and spotless innocence, so long as it is possible the proofs I speak of may fail. In the latter case, so far at least as the world is concerned, justice would degenerate into scandal, whilst great evil and little good must be the consequence. I think I am bound in honor not to place old age, venerable and virtuous, on the one hand, and unsuspecting innocence on the other, in a contingency that may cause them irreparable injury. I will now say, that if your happiness were not involved in the success or failure of our proceedings, I should have ceased to be a party in the steps we are taking until the grave had closed upon one individual at least, while unconscious of the shame that was to fall upon his family."

Lucy looked upon him with a feeling of admiration which could not be misunderstood. "Dear Charles," she exclaimed; "ever honorable — ever generous — ever considerate and unselfish; I do not of course understand your allusions; but I am confident that whatever you do will be done in a spirit worthy of yourself."

The look of admiration, and why should we not add love, which Lucy had bestowed upon him was observed and felt deeply. Their eyes met, and seizing her hand again, he whispered, in that low and tender voice which breathes the softest and most contagious emotion of the heart, "Alas, Lucy, you could not even dream how inexpressibly dear you are to me. Without you, life to me will possess no blessing. All that I ever conceived of its purest and most exalted enjoyments were centred in you, and in that sweet communion which I thought we were destined to hold together; but now, now—oh, my God, what a blank will my whole future existence be without you!"

"Charles—Charles," she replied, but at the same time her eyes were swimming in tears, "spare me this; do not overload my heart with such an excess of sorrow; have compassion on me, for I am already too

sensible of my own misery—too sensible of the happiness I have lost. I am here isolated and alone, with no kind voice to whisper one word of consolation to my unhappy heart, my poor maid only excepted; and I am often forced, in order to escape the pain of present reflections, to make a melancholy struggle once more to entrance myself in the innocent dreams of my early life. Yes, and I will confess it, to call back if I can those visions that gave the delicious hues of hope and happiness to the love which bound your heart and mine together. The illusion, however, is too feeble to struggle successfully with the abiding consciousness of my wretchedness, and I awake to a bitterness of anguish that is drinking up the fountains of my life, out of which life I feel, if this state continues, I shall soon pass away."

On concluding, she wiped away the tears that were fast falling; and her lover was so deeply moved that he could scarcely restrain his own.

"There is one word, dearest Lucy," he replied, "but though short it is full of comfort—hope."

"Alas! Charles, I feel that it has been blotted out of the destiny of my life. I look for it; I search for it, but in vain. In this life I cannot find it; I say in this, because it is now, when all about me is darkness, and pain, and suffering, that I feel the consolation which arises from our trust in another. This consolation, however, though true, is sad, and the very joy it gives is melancholy, because it arises from that mysterious change which withdraws us from existence; and when it leads us to happiness we cannot forget that it is through the gate of the grave. But still it is a consolation, and a great one—to a sufferer like me, the only one—we must all die."

Like a strain of soft but solemn music, these mournful words proceeded from her lips, from which they seemed to catch the touching sweetness which characterized them.

"I ought not to shed these tears," she added; "nor ought you, dear Charles, to feel so deeply what I say as I perceive you do; but I know not how it is, I am impressed with a presentiment that this is probably our last meeting; and I confess that I am filled with a mournful satisfaction in speaking to you—in looking upon you—yes, I confess it; and I feel all the springs of tenderness opened, as it were, in my unhappy heart. In a short time,"—she added, and here she almost sobbed, "it will be a crime to think of you—to allow my very imagination to turn to your image; and I shall be called upon to banish that image forever from my heart, which I must strive to do, for to cherish it there will be wrong; but I shall struggle, for"—she added, proudly—"whatever my duty may be, I shall leave nothing undone to preserve my conscience free from its own reproaches."

"Take comfort, Lucy," he replied; "this will not—shall not be our last meeting. It is utterly impossible that such a creature as you are should be doomed to a fate so wretched. Do not allow them to hurry you into this odious marriage. Gain time, and we shall yet triumph."

"Yes, Charles," she replied; "but, then, misery often grows apathetic, and the will, wearied down and weakened, loses the power of resistance. I have more than once felt attacks of this kind, and I know that if *they* should observe it, I am lost. Oh, how little is the love of woman understood! And how little of life is known except through those false appearances that are certain to deceive all who look upon them as realities! Here am I, surrounded by every luxury that this world can present, and how many thousands imagine me happy! What is there within the range of fashion and the compass of wealth that I cannot command? and yet amidst all this dazzle of grandeur I am more wretched than the beggar whom a morsel of food will make contented."

"Resist this marriage, Lucy, for a time, that is all I ask," replied her lover; "be firm, and, above all things, hope. You may ere long understand the force and meaning of my words. At present you cannot, nor is it in my power, with honor, to speak more plainly."

"My father, replied this high-minded and sensitive creature, "said some time ago, 'Is not *my* daughter a woman of honor?' Yes, Charles, I *must* be a woman of honor. But it is time you should go; only before you do, hear me. Henceforth we have each of us one great mutual task imposed upon us—a task the fulfilment of which is dictated alike by honor, virtue, and religion."

"Alas, Lucy, what is that?"

"To forget each other. From the moment I become," she sobbed aloud—"you know," she added, "what I would say, but what I cannot—from that moment memory becomes a crime."

"But an involuntary crime, my ever dear Lucy. As for my part," he replied, vehemently, and with something akin to distraction, "I feel that is impossible, and that even were it possible, I would no more attempt to banish your image from my heart than I would to deliberately still its pulses. Never, never—such an attempt, such an act, if successful, would be a murder of the affec-

tions. No, Lucy, whilst one spark of mortal life is alive in my body, whilst memory can remember the dreams of only the preceding moment, whilst a single faculty of heart or intellect remains by which your image can be preserved, I shall cling to that image as the shipwrecked sailor would to the plank that bears him through the midnight storm—as a despairing soul would to the only good act of a wicked life that he could plead for his salvation."

Whilst he spoke, Lucy kept her eyes fixed upon his noble features, now wrought up into an earnest but melancholy animation, and when he had concluded, she exclaimed, "And this is the man of whose love they would deprive me, whose very acknowledgment of it comes upon my spirit like an anthem of the heart; and I know not what I have done to be so tried; yet, as it is the will of God, I receive it for the best. Dear Charles, you must go; but you spoke of remonstrating with my father. Do not so; an interview would only aggravate him. And as you admit that certain documents are wanted to produce a change in his opinions, you may see clearly that until you produce them an expostulation would be worse than useless. On the contrary, it might precipitate matters and ruin all. Now go."

"Perhaps you are right," he replied, "as you always are; how can I go? How can I tear myself from you? Dearest, dearest Lucy, what a love is mine! But that is not surprising—who could love you with an ordinary passion?"

Apprehensive that her father might return, she rose up, but so completely had she been exhausted by the excitement of this interview that he was obliged to assist her.

"I hear the carriage," said she; "it is at the door: will you ring for my maid? And now, Charles, as it is possible that we must meet no more, say, before you go, that you forgive me."

"There is everything in your conduct to be admired and loved, my dearest Lucy; but nothing to be forgiven."

"Is it possible," she said, as if in communion with herself, "that we shall never meet, never speak, never, probably, look upon each other more?"

Her lover observed that her face became suddenly pale, and she staggered a little, after which she sank and would have fallen had he not supported her in his arms. He had already rung for Alley Mahon, and there was nothing for it but to place Lucy once more upon the sofa, whither he was obliged to carry her, for she had fainted. Having placed her there, it became necessary to support her head upon his bosom, and in doing so—is it in human nature to be severe upon him?—he rapturously kissed her lips, and pressed her to his heart in a long, tender, and melancholy embrace. The appearance of her maid, however, who always accompanied her in the carriage, terminated this pardonable theft, and after a few words of ordinary conversation they separated.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Dandy's Visit to Summerfield Cottage, where he Makes a most Ungallant Mistake—Returns with Tidings of both Mrs. Norton and Fenton—and Generously Patronizes his Master.

On the morning after this interview the stranger was waited on by Birney, who had returned from France late on the preceding night.

"Well, my friend," said he, after they had shaken hands, "I hope you are the bearer of welcome intelligence!"

The gloom and disappointment that were legible in this man's round, rosy, and generally good-humored countenance were observed, however, by the stranger at a second glance.

"But how is this?" he added; "you are silent, and I fear, now that I look at you a second time, that matters have not gone well with you. For God's sake, however, let me know; for I am impatient to hear the result."

"All is lost," replied Birney; "and I fear we have been outgeneralled. The clergyman is dead, and the book in which the record of her death was registered has disappeared, no one knows how. I strongly suspect, however, that your opponent is at the bottom of it."

"You mean Dunroe?"

"I do; that scoundrel Norton, at once his master and his slave, accompanied by a suspicious-looking fellow, whose name I discovered to be Mulholland, were there before us, and I fear, carried their point by securing the register, which I have no doubt has been by this time reduced to ashes."

"In that case, then," replied the stranger, despondingly, "it's all up with us."

"Unless," observed Birney, "you have been more successful at home than I have been abroad. Any trace of Mrs. Norton?"

"None whatsoever. But, my dear Birney, what you tell me is surprisingly mysterious. How could Dunroe become aware of the existence of these documents? or, indeed, of our proceedings at all? And who is this Mulholland you speak of that accompanied him?"

"I know nothing whatever about him," replied Birney, "except that he is a fellow of dissolute appearance, with sandy hair, not ill-looking, setting aside what is called a battered look, and a face of the most consummate effrontery."

"I see it all," replied the other. "That drunken scoundrel M'Bride has betrayed us, as far, at least, as he could. The fellow, while his conduct continued good, was in my confidence, as far as a servant ought to be. In this matter, however, he did not know all, unless, indeed, by inference from the nature of the document itself, and from knowing the name of the family whose position it affected. How it might have affected them, however, I don't think he knew."

"But how do you know that this Mulholland is that man?"

"From your description of him I am confident there can be no mistake about it—not the slightest; he must have changed his name purposely on this occasion; and, I dare say, Dunroe has liberally paid him for his treachery."

"But what is to be done now?" asked Birney; "here we are fairly at fault."

"I have seen Miss Gourlay," replied the other, "and if it were only from motives of humanity, we must try, by every means consistent with honor, to stop or retard her marriage with Dunroe."

"But how are we to do so?"

"I know not at present; but I shall think of it. This is most unfortunate. I declare solemnly that it was only in so far as the facts we were so anxious to establish might have enabled us to prevent this accursed union, that I myself felt an interest in our success. Miss Gourlay's happiness was my sole motive of action."

"I believe you, sir," replied Birney; "but in the meantime we are completely at a stand. Chance, it is true, may throw something in our way; but, in the present position of circumstances, chance, nay, all the chances are against us."

"It is unfortunately too true," replied the stranger; "there is not a single opening left for us; we are, on the contrary, shut out completely in every direction. I shall write, however, to a lady who possesses much influence with Miss Gourlay; but, alas, to what purpose? Miss Gourlay herself has no influence whatever; and, as to her father, he does not live who could divert him from his object. His vile ambition only in the matter of his daughter could influence him, and it will do so to her destruction, for she cannot survive this marriage long."

"You look thin, and a good deal careworn," observed Birney, "which, indeed, I am sorry to see. Constant anxiety, however, and perpetual agitation of spirits will wear any man down. Well, I must bid you good morning; but I had almost forgotten to inquire about poor Fenton. Any trace of him during my absence?"

"Not the slightest. In fact, every point is against us. Lady Gourlay has relapsed into her original hopelessness, or nearly so, and I myself am now more depressed than I have ever been. Perish register, documents, corrupt knaves, and ungrateful traitors—perish all the machinery of justice on the one hand, and of villainy on the other; only let us succeed in securing Miss Gourlay's happiness, and I am contented. That, now and henceforth, is the absorbing object of my life. Let her be happy; let her be but happy—and this can only be done by preventing her union with this heartless young man, whose principal motive to it is her property."

Birney then took his departure, leaving his friend in such a state of distress, and almost of despair, on Lucy's account, as we presume our readers can very sufficiently understand, without any further assistance from us. He could not, however, help congratulating himself on his prudence in withholding from Miss Gourlay the sanguine expectations which he himself had entertained upon the result of Birney's journey to France. Had he not done so, he knew that she would have participated in his hopes, and, as a natural consequence, she must now have had to bear this deadly blow of disappointment, probably the last cherished hope of her heart; and under such circumstances, it is difficult to say what its effect upon her might have been. This was now his only satisfaction, to which we may add the consciousness that he had not, by making premature disclosures, been the means of compromising the innocent.

After much thought and reflection upon the gloomy position in which both he himself and especially Lucy were placed, he resolved to write to Mrs. Mainwaring upon the subject; although at the moment he scarcely knew in what terms to address her, or what steps he could suggest to her, as one feeling a deep interest in Miss Gourlay's happiness. At length, after much anxious rumination, he wrote the following short letter, or rather note, more with a view of alarming Mrs. Mainwaring into activity, than of dictating to her any line of action as peculiarly suited to the circumstances.

"MADAM,—The fact of Miss Gourlay having taken refuge with you as her friend, upon a certain occasion that was, I believe, very painful to that young lady, I think suf-

ficiently justifies me in supposing that you feel a warm interest in her fate. For this reason, therefore, I have taken the liberty of addressing you with reference to her present situation. If ever a human being required the aid and consolation of friendship, Miss Gourlay now does; and I will not suppose that a lady whom she honored with her esteem and affection, could be capable of withholding from her such aid and such consolation, in a crisis so deplorable. You are probably aware, madam, that she is on the point of being sacrificed, by a forced and hated union, to the ambitious views of her father; but you could form a very slight conception indeed of the horror with which she approaches the gulf that is before her. Could there be no means devised by which this unhappy young lady might be enabled with honor to extricate herself from the wretchedness with which she is encompassed? I beg of you, madam, to think of this; there is little time to be lost. A few days may seal her misery forever. Her health and spirits are fast sinking, and she is beginning to entertain apprehensions that that apathy which proceeds from the united influence of exhaustion and misery, may, in some unhappy moment, deprive her of the power of resistance, even for a time. Madam, I entreat that you will either write to her or see her; that you will sustain and console her as far as in you lies, and endeavor, if possible, to throw some obstruction in the way of this accursed marriage; whether through your influence with herself, or her father, matters not. I beg, madam, to apologize for the liberty I have taken in addressing you upon this painful but deeply important subject, and I appeal to yourself whether it is possible to know Miss Gourlay, and not to feel the deepest interest in everything that involves her happiness or misery.

"I have the honor to be, madam,

"Your obedient, faithful servant, and

"HER SINCERE FRIEND.

"P. S.—I send this letter by my servant, as I am anxious that it should reach no hands, and be subjected to no eyes, but your own; and I refer you to Miss Gourlay herself, who will satisfy you as to the honor and purity of my motives in writing it."

Having sealed this communication, the stranger rang for Dulcimer, who made his appearance accordingly, and received his instructions for its safe delivery.

"You must deliver this note, Dandy," said he, "to the lady to whom Miss Gourlay and her maid drove, the morning you took the unwarrantable liberty of following them there."

"And for all that," replied Dandy, "it happens very luckily that I chance, for that very raison, to know now where to find her."

"It does so, certainly," replied his master. "Here is money for you—take a car, or whatever kind of vehicle you prefer. Give this note into her own hand, and make as little delay as you can."

"Do you expect an answer, sir?" replied Dandy; "and am I to wait for one, or ask for one?"

"I am not quite certain of that," said the other; "it is altogether discretionary with her. But there can be no harm in asking the question, at all events. Any other Mrs. Norton in the way, Dandy?"

"Deuce a once, sir. I have sifted the whole city, and, barrin' the three dozen I made out already, I can't find hilt or hare of another. Faith, sir, she ought to be worth something when she's got, for I may fairly say she has cost me trouble enough at any rate, the skulkin' thief, whoever she is; and me to lose my hundre' pounds into the bargain—bad scran to her!"

"Only find me the true Mrs. Norton," said his master, "and the hundred pounds are yours, and for Fenton fifty. Be off, now, lose no time, and bring me her answer if she sends any."

Dandy's motions were all remarkably rapid, and we need not say that he allowed no grass to grow under his feet while getting over his journey. On arriving at Summerfield Cottage, he learned that Mrs. Mainwaring was in the garden; and on stating that he had a letter to deliver into her own hands, that lady desired him to be brought in, as she was then in conversation with her daughter, who had been compelled at length to fly from the brutality of her husband, and return once more to the protection of her mother's roof. On opening the letter and looking at it, she started, and turning to her daughter said,

"You must excuse me, my dear Maria, for a few moments, but don't forget to finish what you were telling me about this unfortunate young man, Fenton, as he, you say, calls himself, from Ballytrain."

"Hello!" thought Dandy, "here's a discovery. By the elevens, I'll hould goold to silver that this is poor Fenton that disappeared so suddenly."

"I beg your pardon, miss," said he, addressing Mrs. Scarman as an unmarried lady, as he perceived that she was the person from whom he could receive the best intelligence on the subject; "I hope it's no offence, miss, to ax a question?"

"None, certainly, my good man," replied her mother, 'provided it be a proper one."

"I think, miss," he continued, "that you were mentioning something to this lady about a young man named Fenton, from Ballytrain?"

"I was," replied Mrs. Scarman, "certainly; but what interest can you have in him?"

"If he's the young man I mane," continued Dandy, "he's not quite steady in the head sometimes."

"If he were, he would not be in his present abode," replied the lady.

"And pray, miss—beg pardon again," said Dandy, with the best bow and scrape he could manage; "pray, miss, might I be so bould as to ask where that is?"

Mrs. Scarman looked at her mother. "Mamma," said she, "but, bless me! what is the matter? you are in tears."

"I will tell you by and by, my dear Maria," replied her mother; "but you were going to ask me something—what was it?"

"This man," replied her daughter, "wishes to know the abode of the person I was speaking about."

"Pray, what is his motive? What is your motive, my good man, for asking such a question?"

"Bekaise, ma'am," replied Dandy, "I happen to know a gentleman who has been for some time on the lookout for him, and wishes very much to find where he is. If it be the young man I spake of, he disappeared some three or four months ago from the town of Ballytrain."

"Well," replied Mrs. Mainwaring, with her usual good-sense and sagacity, "as I know not what your motive for asking such a question is, I do not think this lady ought to answer it; but if the gentleman himself is anxious to know, let him see her; and upon giving satisfactory reasons for the interest he takes in him, he shall be informed of his present abode. You must rest satisfied with this. Go to the kitchen and say to the servant that I desired her to give you refreshment."

"Thank you, ma'am," replied Dandy; "faith, that's a lively message, anyhow, and one that I feel great pleasure in deliverin'. This Wicklow air's a regular cutler; it has sharpened my teeth all to pieces; and if the cook 'ithin shows me good feedin' I'll show her something in the shape of good atin'. I'm a regular man of talent at my victuals, ma'am, an' was often tould I might live to die an alderman yet, plaise God; many thanks agin, ma'am." So saying, Dandy proceeded at a brisk pace to the kitchen.

"That communication, mamma," said Mrs. Scarman, after Dandy had left them, "has distressed you."

"It has, my child. Poor Miss Gourlay is in a most wretched state. This I know is from her lover. In fact, they will be the death—absolutely and beyond a doubt—the death of this admirable and most lovely creature. But what can I do? Her father will not permit me to visit her, neither will he permit her to correspond with me. I have already written to him on the risk to which he submits his daughter in this ominous marriage, but I received neither notice of, nor reply to my letter. Oh, no; the dear girl is unquestionably doomed. I think, however, I shall write a few lines in reply to this," she added, "but, alas the day! they cannot speak of comfort."

Whilst she is thus engaged, we will take a peep at the on-goings of Dandy and Nancy Gallaher, in the kitchen, where, in pursuance of his message our bashful valet was corroborating, by very able practice, the account which he had given of the talents he had eulogized so justly.

"Well, in troth," said he, "but, first and foremost, I haven't the pleasure of knowin' yer name."

"Nancy Gallaher's my name, then," she replied.

"Ah," said Dandy, suspending the fork and an immense piece of ham on the top of it at the Charybdis which he had opened to an unusual extent to receive it; "ah, ma'am, it wasn't always that, I'll go bail. My counthrymen knows the value of such a purty woman not to stamp some of their names upon her. Not that you have a married look, either, any more than myself; you're too fresh for that, now that I look at you again."

A certain cloud, which, as Dandy could perceive, was beginning to darken her countenance, suggested the quick turn of his last observation. The countenance, however, cleared again, and she replied, "It is my name, and what is more, I never changed it. I was hard to plaise—and I am hard to plaise, and ever an' always had a dread of gettin' into bad company, especially when I knew that the same bad company was to last for life."

"An ould maid, by the Rock of Cashel," said Dandy, to himself.

"Blood alive, I wondher has she money; but here goes to thry. Ah, Nancy," he proceeded, "you wor too hard to plaise; and now, that you have got money like myself, nothing but a steady man, and a full purse, will shoot your convanience—isn't that pure gospel, now, you good lookin' thief?"

Nancy's face was now like a cloudless sky. "Well," she replied, "maybe there's truth in that, and maybe there's not; but I hope you are takin' care of yourself? That's what

I always did and ever will, plaise God. How do you like the ham?"

"Divil a so well dressed a bit o' ham ever I ett—it melts into one's mouth like a kiss from a purty woman. Troth, Nancy, I think I'm kissing you ever since I began to ait it."

"Get out," said Nancy, laughing; "troth, you're a quare one; but you know our Wickla' hams is famous."

"And so is your Wicklow girls," replied Dandy; "but for my part, I'd sooner taste their lips than the best hams that ever were ett any day."

"Well, but," said Nancy, "did you ever taste our bacon? bekaise, if you didn't, lave off what you're at, and in three skips I'll get you a rasher and eggs that'll make you look nine ways at once. Here, throw that by, it's could, and I'll get you something hot and comfortable."

"Go on," replied Dandy; "I hate idleness. Get the eggs and rasher you spake of, and while you're doin' it I'll thry and amuse myself wid what's before me. Industhry's the first of virtues, Nancy, and next to that comes perseverance; I defy you in the mane time to do a rasher as well as you did this ham—hoch—och—och. God bless me, a bit was near stickin' in my throat. Is your wather good here? and the raison why I ax you is, that I'm the devil to plaise in wather; and on that account I seldom take it without a sup o' spirits to dilute it, as the docthors say, for, indeed, that's the way it agrees with me best. It's a kind of family failin' with us—devil a one o' my blood ever could look a glass of mere wather in the face without blushin'."

Dandy was now upon what they call the simplicity dodge; that is to say, he affected that character of wisdom for which certain individuals, whose knowledge of life no earthly experience ever can improve, are so extremely anxious to get credit. Every word he uttered was accompanied by an oafish grin, so ludicrously balanced between simplicity and cunning, that Nancy, who had been half her life on the lookout for such a man, and who knew that this indecision of expression was the characteristic of the tribe with which she classed him, now saw before her the great dream of her heart realized.

"Well, in troth," she replied, "you are a quare man; but still it would be too bad to make you blush for no stronger raison than mere wather. So, in the name o' goodness, here's a tumbler of grog," she added, filling him out one on the instant, "and as you're so modest, you must only drink it and keep your countenance; it'll prepare you, besides, for the rasher and eggs; and, by the same token, here's an ould candle-box that's here the Lord knows how long; but, faix, now it must help to do the rasher. Come then; if you are stronger than I am, show your strength, and pull it to pieces, for you see I can't."

It was one of those flat little candle-boxes made of deal, with which every one in the habit of burning moulds is acquainted. Dandy took it up, and whilst about to pull it to pieces, observed written on a paper label, in a large hand, something between writing and print, "Mrs. Norton, Summerfield Cottage, Wicklow."

"What is this?" said he; "what name is this upon it? Let us see, 'Mrs. Norton, Summerfield Cottage, Wicklow!' Who the dickens is Mrs. Norton?"

"Why, my present mistress," replied Nancy; "Mr. Mainwaring is her second husband, and her name was Mrs. Norton before she married him."

"Norton," said Dandy, whose heart was going at full speed, with a hope that he had at length got into the right track, "it's a purty name in troth. Arra, Nancy, do you know was your misthress ever in France?"

"Ay, was she," replied Nancy. "Many a year maid to—let me see—what's this the name is? Ay! Cullamore. Maid to the wife of Lord Cullamore. So I was tould by Alley Mahon, a young woman that was here on a visit to me."

Dandy put the glass of grog to his mouth, and having emptied it, sprung to his feet, commenced an Irish jig through the kitchen, in a spirit so outrageously whimsical—buoyant, mad, hugging the box all the time in his arms, that poor Nancy looked at him with a degree of alarm and then of jealousy which she could not conceal.

"In the name of all that's wonderful," she exclaimed, "what's wrong—what's the matter? What's the value of that blackguard box that you make the mistake about in huggin' it that way? Upon my conscience, one would think you're in a desolate island. Remember, man alive, that you're among flesh and blood like your own, and that you have friends, although the acquaintance isn't very long, I grant, that wishes you betther than to see you makin' a sweetheart of a tallow-box. What the sorra is that worth?"

"A hundred pounds, my darlin'—a hundred pounds — bravo, Dandy — well done, brave Dulcimer—wealthy Nancy. Faith, you may swear upon the frying-pan there that I've the cash, and sure 'tis yourself I was lookin' out for."

"I don't think, then, that ever I resem-

bled a candle-box in my life," she replied, rather annoyed that the article in question came in for such a prodigality of his hugs, kisses, and embraces, of all shapes and characters.

"Well, Nancy," said he, "charming Nancy, you're my fancy, but in the meantime I have the honor and pleasure to bid you a good day."

"Why, where are you goin'?" asked the woman. "Won't you wait for the rasher?"

"Keep it hot, charming Nancy, till I come back; I'm just goin' to take a constitutional walk." So saying, Dandy, with the candle-box under his arm, darted out of the kitchen, and without waiting to know whether there was an answer to be brought back or not, mounted his jarvey, and desiring the man to drive as if the devil and all his imps were at their heels, set off at full speed for the city.

"Bad luck to you for a scamp," exclaimed the indignant cook, shouting after him; "is that the way you trate a decent woman after gettin' your skinful of the best? Wait till you put your nose in this kitchen again, an' it's different fare you'll get."

On reaching his master's hotel, Dandy went upstairs, where he found him preparing to go out. He had just sealed a note, and leaning himself back on the chair, looked at his servant with a good deal of surprise, in consequence of the singularity of his manner. Dandy, on the other hand, took the candle-box from under his arm, and putting it flat on the table, with the label downwards, placed his two hands upon it, and looked the other right in the face; after which he closed one eye, and gave him a very knowing wink.

"What do you mean, you scoundrel, by this impudence?" exclaimed his master, although at the same time he could not avoid laughing; for, in truth, he felt a kind of presentiment, grounded upon Dandy's very assurance, that he was the bearer of some agreeable intelligence. "What do you mean, sirra? You're drunk, I think."

"I'll tell you what, sir," replied Dandy, "from this day out, upon my soul, I'll patronize you like a man as I am; that is to say, provided you continue to deserve it."

"Come, sirra, you're at your buffoonery again, or else you're drunk, as I said. Did the lady send any reply?"

"Have you any cash to spare?" replied Dandy. "I want to invest a thrifle in the funds."

"What can this impudence mean, sirra?" asked the other, sadly puzzled to understand his conduct. "Why do you not reply to me? Did the lady send an answer?"

"Most fortunate of all masthers," replied Dandy, "in havin' such a servant; the lady *did* send an answer."

"And where is it, sirra?"

"There it is!" replied the other, shoving the candle-box triumphantly over to him. The stranger looked steadily at him, and was beginning to lose his temper, for he took it now for granted that his servant was drunk.

"I shall dismiss you instantly, sirra," he said, "if you don't come to your senses."

"I suppose so," replied the other, still maintaining his cool, unabashed effrontery. "I dare say you will, just after I've made a man of you—changed you from nothing to something, or, rather, from nobody—for devil a much more you were up to the present time yet—to somebody. In the meantime, read the lady's answer, if you plaise."

"Where is it, you impudent knave? I see no note—no answer."

"Troth, sir, I am afeared many a time you were ornamented with the dunce's cap in your school-days, and well, I'll be bound, you became it. Don't I say the answer's before you there?"

"There is nothing here, you scoundrel, but a deal box."

"Right, sir; and a *deal* of intelligence can it give you, if you have the sense to find it out. Now, listen, sir. So long as you live, ever and always examine both sides of every subject that comes before you, even if it was an ould deal box."

His master took the hint, and instantly turning the box, read to his astonishment, *Mrs. Norton, Summerfield Cottage, Wicklow*, and then looked at Dandy for an explanation. The latter nodded with his usual easy confidence, and proceeded, "It's all right, sir—she was in France—own maid to Lady Cullamore—came home and got married—first to a Mr. Norton, and next to a person named Mainwarin': and there she is, the true Mrs. Norton, safe and sound for you, in Summerfield Cottage, under the name of Mrs. Mainwarin'."

"Dandy," said his master, starting to his feet, "I forgive you a thousand times. Throw that letter in the post-office. You shall have the money, Dandy, more, perhaps, than I promised, provided this is the lady; but I cannot doubt it. I am now going to Mr. Birney; but, stay, let us be certain. How did you become acquainted with these circumstances?"

Dandy gave him his authority; after which his master put on his hat, and was about proceeding out, when the former exclaimed "Hello, sir, where are you goin'?"

"To see Birney, I have already told you."

"Come, come," replied his man, "take your time—be steady, now—be cool—and listen to what your friend has to say to you."

"Don't trifle with me now, Dandy; I really can't bear it."

"Faith, but you must, though. There's one act I pathronized you in; now, how do you know, as I'm actin' the great man, but I can pathronize you in another?"

"How is that? For heaven's sake, don't trifle with me; every day, every hour, every moment, is precious, and may involve the happiness of——"

"I see, sir," replied this extraordinary valet, with an intelligent nod, "but, still, fair and aisy goes far in a day. There's no danger of her, you know—don't be unaisy. Fenton, sir—ehem—Fenton, I say—Fenton and fifty I say."

"Fenton and a hundred, Dandy, if there's an available trace of him."

"I don't know what you call an available trace," replied Dandy, "but I can send you to a lady who knows where he is, and where you can find him."

The stranger returned from the door, and sitting down again covered his face with his hands, as if to collect himself; at length he said, "This is most extraordinary; tell me all about it."

Dandy related that with which the reader is already acquainted, and did so with such an air of comic gravity and pompous superiority, that his master, now in the best possible spirits, was exceedingly amused.

"Well, Dandy," said he, "if your information respecting Fenton prove correct, reckon upon another hundred, instead of the fifty I mentioned. I suppose I may go now?" he added, smiling.

Dandy, still maintaining his gravity, waved his hand with an air of suitable authority, intimating that the other had permission to depart. On going out, however, he said, "I beg your pardon, sir, but while you're abroad, I'd take it as a favor if you'd find out the state o' the funds. Of course, I'll be investin'; and a man may as well do things with his eyes open—may as well examine both sides o' the candle-box, you know. You may go, sir."

"Well," thought the stranger to himself, as he literally went on his way rejoicing toward Birney's office, "no man in this life should ever yield to despair. Here was I this morning encompassed by doubt and darkness, and I may almost say by despair itself. Yet see how easily and naturally the hand of Providence, for it is nothing less, has changed the whole tenor of my existence Everything is beginning not only to brighten, but to present an appearance of order, by which we shall, I trust, be enabled to guide ourselves through the maze of difficulty that lies, or that did lie, at all events, before us. Alas, if the wretched suicide, who can see nothing but cause of despondency about him and before him, were to reflect upon the possibility of what only one day might evolve from the ongoing circumstances of life, how many would that wholesome reflection prevent from the awful crime of impatience at the wisdom of God, and a want of confidence in his government! I remember the case of an unhappy young man who plunged into a future life, as it were, to-day, who, had he maintained his part until the next, would have found himself master of thousands. No; I shall never despair. I will in this, as in every other virtue, imitate my beloved Lucy, who said, that to whatever depths of wretchedness life might bring her, she would never yield to *that*."

"Good news, Birney!" he exclaimed, on entering that gentleman's office; "charming intelligence! Both are found at last."

"Explain yourself, my dear sir," replied the other; "how is it? What has happened? Both of whom?"

"Mrs. Norton and Fenton."

He then explained the circumstances as they had been explained to himself by Dandy; and Birney seemed gratified certainly, but not so much as the stranger thought he ought to have been.

"How is this?" he asked; "this discovery, this double discovery, does not seem to give you the satisfaction which I had expected it would?"

"Perhaps not," replied the steady man of law, "but I am highly gratified, notwithstanding, provided everything you tell me turns out to be correct. But even then, I apprehend that the testimony of this Mrs. Norton, unsupported as it is by documentary evidence, will not be sufficient for our purpose. It will require corroboration, and how are we to corroborate it?"

"If it will enable us to prevent the marriage," replied the other, "I am satisfied."

"That is very generous and disinterested, I grant," said Birney, "and what few are capable of; but still there are forms of law and principles of common justice to be observed and complied with; and these, at present, stand in our way for want of the documentary evidence I speak of."

"What then ought our next step to be?—but I suppose I can anticipate you—to see Mrs. Norton."

"Of course, to see Mrs. Norton; and I propose that we start immediately. There is no time to be lost about it. I shall get on my boots, and change my dress a little, and, with this man of yours to guide us, we shall be on the way to Summerfield Cottage in half-an-hour."

"Should I not communicate this intelligence to Lady Gourlay?" said the stranger. "It will restore her to life; and surely the removal of only one day's sorrow such as lies at her heart becomes a duty."

"But suppose our information should prove incorrect, into what a dreadful relapse would you plunge her then!"

"Oh, very true—very true, indeed: that is well thought of; let us first see that there is no mistake, and afterwards we can proceed with confidence."

Poor Lucy, unconscious that the events we have related had taken place, was passing an existence of which every day brought round to her nothing but anguish and misery. She now not only refused to see her brother on any occasion, or under any circumstances, but requested an interview with her father, in order to make him acquainted with the abominable principles, by the inculcation of which, as a rule of life and conduct, he had attempted to corrupt her. Her father having heard this portion of her complaint, diminished in its heinousness as it necessarily was by her natural modesty, appeared very angry, and swore roundly at the young scapegrace, as he called him.

"But the truth is, Lucy," he added, "that however wrong and wicked he may have been, and was, yet we cannot be over severe on him. He has had no opportunities of knowing better, and of course he will mend. I intend to lecture him severely for uttering such principles to you; but, on the other hand, I know him to be a shrewd, keen young fellow, who promises well, notwithstanding. In truth, I like him, scamp as he is; and I believe that whatever is bad in him——"

"Whatever is bad in him! Why, papa, there is nothing good in him."

"Tut, Lucy; I believe, I say, that whatever is bad in him he has picked up from the kind of society he mixed with."

"Papa," she replied, "it grieves me to hear you, sir, palliate the conduct of such a person—to become almost the apologist of principles so utterly fiendish. You know that I am not and never have been in the habit of using ungenerous language against the absent. So far as I am concerned, he has violated all the claims of a brother—has foregone all title to a sister's love; but that is not all—I believe him to be so essentially corrupt and vicious in heart and soul, so thoroughly and blackly diabolical in his principles—moral I cannot call them—that I would stake my existence he is some base and plotting impostor, in whose veins there flows not one single drop of my pure-hearted mother's blood. I therefore warn you, sir, that he *is* an impostor, with, perhaps, a dishonorable title to your name, but none at all to your property."

"Nonsense, you foolish girl. Is he not my image?"

"I admit he resembles you, sir, very much, and I do not deny that he may be"—she paused, and alternately became pale and red by turns—"what I mean to say, sir, is what I have already said, that he is not my mother's son, and that although he may be privileged to bear your name, he has no claim on either your property or title. Does it not strike you, sir, that it might be to make way for this person that my legitimate brother was removed long ago? And I have also heard yourself say frequently, while talking of my brother, how extremely like mamma and me he was."

"There is no doubt he was," replied her father, somewhat struck by the force of her observations; "and I was myself a good deal surprised at the change which must have taken place in him since his childhood. However, you know he accounted for this himself very fairly and very naturally."

"Very ingeniously, at least," she replied; "with more of ingenuity, I fear, than truth. Now, sir, hear me further. You are aware that I never liked those Corbets, who have been always so deeply, and, excuse me, sir, so mysteriously in your confidence."

"Yes, Lucy, I know you never did; but that is a prejudice you inherited from your mother."

"I appeal to your own conscience, sir, whether mamma's prejudice against them was not just and well founded. Yet it was not so much prejudice as the antipathy which good bears to evil, honesty to fraud, and truth to darkness, dissimulation, and falsehood. I entreat you, then, to investigate this matter, papa; for as sure as I have life, so certainly was my dear brother removed, in order, at the proper time, to make way for this impostor. You know not, sir, but there may be a base and inhuman murder involved in this matter—nay, a double murder—that of my cousin, too; yes, and the worst of all murders, the murder of the innocent and defenceless. As a man, as a magistrate, but, above all, a thousand times, as a father—as the father and uncle of the very two children that have disappeared, it becomes your duty to examine into this dark business thoroughly."

"I have no reason to suspect the Corbets, Lucy. I have ever found them faithful to me and to my interests."

"I know, sir, you have ever found them obsequious and slavish and ready to abet you in many acts which I regret that you ever committed. There is the case of that unfortunate man, Trailcudgel, and many similar ones; were they not as active and cheerful in bearing out your very harsh orders against him and others of your tenantry, as if they had been advancing the cause of humanity?"

"Say the cause of justice, if you please, Lucy—the rights of a landlord."

"But, papa, if the unfortunate tenantry by whose toil and labor we live in affluence and luxury do not find a friend in their landlord, who is, by his relation to them, their natural protector, to whom else in the wide world can they turn? This, however, is not the subject on which I wish to speak. I do believe that Thomas Corbet is deep, designing, and vindictive. He was always a close, dark man, without either cheerfulness or candor. Beware, therefore, of him and of his family. Nay, he has a capacity for being dangerous; for it strikes me, sir, that his intellect is as far above his position in life as his principles are beneath it."

There was much in what Lucy said that forced itself upon her father's reflection, much that startled him, and a good deal that gave him pain. He paused for a considerable time after she had ceased to speak, and said,

"I will think of these matters, Lucy. I will probably do more; and if I find that they have played me foul by imposing upon me——" He paused abruptly, and seemed embarrassed, the truth being that he knew and felt how completely he was in their power.

"Now, papa," said Lucy, "after having heard my opinion of this young man—after the wanton outrage upon all female delicacy and virtue of which he has been guilty, I trust you will not in future attempt to obtrude him upon me. I will not see him, speak to him, nor acknowledge him; and such, let what may happen, is my final determination."

"So far, Lucy, I will accede to your wishes. I shall take care that he troubles you with no more wicked exhortations."

"Thank you, dear papa; this is kind, and I feel it so."

"Now," said her father, after she had withdrawn, "how am I to act? It is not impossible but there may be much truth in what she says. I remember, however, the death of the only son that could possibly be imposed on me in the sense alluded to by her. He surely does not live; or if he does, the far-sighted sagacity which made the account of his death a fraud upon my credulity, for such selfish and treacherous purposes, is worthy of being concocted in the deepest pit of hell. Yet that some one of them has betrayed me, is evident from the charges brought against me by this stranger to whom Lucy is so devotedly attached, and which charges Thomas Corbet could not clear up. If one of these base but dexterous villains, or if the whole gang were to outwit me, positively I could almost blow my very brains out, for allowing myself, after all, to become their dupe and plaything. I will think of it, however. And again, there is the likeness; there does seem to be a difficulty in that; for, beyond all doubt, my legitimate child, up until his disappearance, did not bear in his countenance a single feature of mine but bore a strong resemblance to his mother; whereas this Tom is my born image! Yet I like him. He has all my points; knows the world, and despises it as much as I do. He did not know Lucy, however, or he would have kept his worldly opinions to himself. It is true he said very little but what we see about us as the regulating principles of life every day; but Lucy, on the other hand, is no every-day girl, and will not receive such doctrines, and I am glad of it. They may do very well in a son; but somehow one shudders at the contemplation of their existence in the heart and principles of a daughter. Unfortunately, however, I am in the power of these Corbets, and I feel that exposure at this period, the crisis of my daughter's marriage, would not only frustrate my ambition for her, but occasion my very death, I fear. I know not how it is, but I think if I were to live my life over again, I would try a different course."

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Anthony Corbet gives Important Documents to the Stranger—An Unpleasant Disclosure to Dunroe—Norton catches a Tartar.

The next morning the stranger was agreeably surprised by seeing the round, rosy, and benevolent features of Father M'Mahon, as he presented himself at his breakfast table. Their meeting was cordial and friendly, with the exception of a slight appearance of embarrassment that was evident in the manner of the priest.

"The last time you were in town," said the former, "I was sorry to observe that you

seemed rather careworn and depressed ; but I think you look better now, and a good deal more cheerful."

"And I think I have a good right," replied the priest ; "and I think no man ought to know the cause of it better than yourself. I charge you, sir, with an act of benevolence to the poor of my parish, through their humble pastor ; for which you stand—I beg your pardon—sit there, a guilty man."

"How is that?" asked the other, smiling.

"By means of an anonymous letter that contained a hundred pound note, sir."

"Well," said the stranger, "there is no use in telling a falsehood about it. The truth is, I was aware of the extent to which you involved yourself, in order to relieve many of the small farmers and other struggling persons of good repute in your parish, and I thought it too bad that you should suffer distress yourself, who had so frequently relieved it in others."

"God bless you, my friend," replied the priest ; "for I will call you so. I wish every man possessed of wealth was guided by your principles. Freney the Robber has a new saddle and bridle, anyhow; and I came up to town to pay old Anthony Corbet a sum I borrowed from him the last time I was here?"

"Oh, have you seen that cautious and disagreeable old man? We could make nothing of him, although I feel quite certain that he knows everything connected with the disappearance of Lady Gourlay's son."

"I have no doubt of it myself," replied the priest ; "and I now find, that what neither religion, nor justice, nor humanity could influence him to do, superstition is likely to effect. He has had a drame, he says, in which his son James that was in Lady Gourlay's service has appeared to him, and threatens that unless he renders her justice, he has but a poor chance in the other world."

"That is not at all unnatural," said the stranger ; "the man, though utterly without religion, was nevertheless both hesitating and timid ; precisely the character to do a just act from a wrong motive."

"Be that as it may," continued the priest, "I have a message from him to you."

"To me!" replied the other. "I am much obliged to him, but it is now too late. We have ascertained where Lady Gourlay's son is, without any assistance from him ; and in the course of this very day we shall furnish ourselves with proper authority for claiming and producing him."

"I am delighted to hear it," said the priest. "God be praised that the heart of that charitable and Christian woman will be relieved at last, and made happy; but still I say, see old Anthony. He is as deep as a draw-well, and as close as an oyster. See him, sir. Take my advice, now that the drame has frightened him, and call upon the old sinner. He may serve you in more ways than you know."

"Well, as you advise me to do so, I shall ; but I do not relish the old fellow at all."

"Nobody does, nor ever did. He and all his family lived as if every one of them carried a little world of their own within them. Maybe they do ; and God forgive me for saying it, but I don't think if its secrets were known, that it would be found a very pleasant world. May the Lord change them, and turn their hearts!"

After some further chat, the priest took his departure, but promised to see his friend from time to time, before he should leave town.

The stranger felt that the priest's advice to see old Corbet again was a good one. The interview could do no harm, and might be productive of some good, provided he could be prevailed on to speak out. He accordingly directed his steps once more to Constitution Hill, where he found the old man at his usual post behind the counter.

"Well, Corbet," said he, "alive still?"

"Alive still, sir," he replied ; "but can't be so always ; the best of us must go."

"Very true, Corbet, if we could think of it as we ought ; but, somehow, it happens that most people live in this world as if they were never to die."

"That's too true, sir—unfortunately too true, God help us!"

"Corbet," proceeded the stranger, "nothing can convince me that you don't know something about——"

"I beg your pardon, sir," said the old man ; "we had betther go into the next room. Here, Polly," he shouted to his wife, who was inside, "will you come and stand the shop awhile?"

"To be sure I will," replied the old woman, making her appearance. "How do you do, sir," she added, addressing the stranger; "I am glad to see you looking so well."

"Thank you, madam," replied the stranger : "I can return the compliment, as they say."

"Keep the shop, Polly," said the old man sharply, "and don't make the same mistake you made awhile ago—give away a stone o' meal for half a stone. No wondher for us to be poor at sich a rate of doin' things as that. Walk in, if you plaise, sir."

They accordingly entered the room, and the stranger, after they had taken seats, resumed,

"I was going to say, Corbet, that nothing can convince me that you don't know more about the disappearance of Lady Gourlay's heir than you are disposed to acknowledge."

The hard, severe, disagreeable expression returned once more to his features, as he replied,

"Troth, sir, it appears you *will* believe so, whether or not. But now, sir, in case I did, what would you say? I'm talkin' for supposition's sake, mind. Wouldn't a man desarve something that could give you information on the subject?"

"This avaricious old man," thought the stranger, pausing as if to consider the proposition, "was holding us out all along, in order to make the most of his information. The information, however, is already in our possession, and he comes too late. So far I am gratified that we are in a position to punish him by disappointing his avarice."

"We would, Corbet, if the information were necessary, but at present it is not; we don't require it."

Corbet started, and his keen old eyes gleamed with an expression between terror and incredulity.

"Why," said he, "you don't require it! Are you sure of that?"

"Perfectly so. Some time ago we would have rewarded you liberally, had you made any available disclosure to us; but now it is too late. The information we had been seeking for so anxiously, accidentally came to us from another quarter. You see now, Corbet, how you have overshot the mark, and punished yourself. Had you been influenced by a principle of common justice, you would have been entitled to expect and receive a most ample compensation; a compensation beyond your hopes, probably beyond your very wishes, and certainly beyond your wants. As matters stand, however, I tell you now that I would not give you sixpence for any information you could communicate."

Anthony gave him a derisive look, and pursed up his thin miserlike lips into a grin of most sinister triumph.

"Wouldn't you, indeed?" said he. "Are you quite sure of what you say?"

"Quite certain of it."

"Well, now, how positive some people is. You have found him out, then?" he asked, with a shrewd look. "You have found him, and you don't require any information from me."

"Whether we have found him or not," replied the other, "is a question which I will not answer; but that we require no information from you, is fact. While it was a marketable commodity, you refused to dispose of it; but, now, we have got the supply elsewhere."

"Well, sir," said Anthony, "all I can say is, that I'm very glad to hear it; and it's no harm, surely, to wish you joy of it."

The same mocking sneer which accompanied this observation was perfectly vexatious; it seemed to say, "So you think, but you may be mistaken, Take care that I haven't you in my power still."

"Why do you look in that disagreeable way, Corbet? I never saw a man whose face can express one thing, and his words another, so effectually as yours, when you wish."

"You mane to say, sir," he returned, with a true sardonic smile, "that my face isn't an obedient face; but sure I can't help that. This is the face that God has given me, and I must be content with it, such as it is."

"I was told this morning by Father M'Mahon," replied the other, anxious to get rid of him as soon as he could, "that you had expressed a wish to see me."

"I believe I did say something to that effect; but then it appears you know everything yourself, and don't want my assistance."

"Any assistance we may at a future time require at your hands we shall be able to extort from you through the laws of the land and of justice; and if it appears that you have been an accomplice or agent in such a deep and diabolical crime, neither power, nor wealth, nor cunning, shall be able to protect you from the utmost rigor of the law. You had neither mercy nor compassion on the widow or her child; and the probability is, that, old as you are, you will be made to taste the deepest disgrace, and the heaviest punishment that can be annexed to the crime you have committed."

A singular change came over the features of the old man. Paleness in age, especially when conscience bears its secret but powerful testimony against the individual thus charged home as Corbet was, sometimes gives an awful, almost an appalling expression to the countenance. The stranger, who knew that the man he addressed, though cunning, evasive, and unscrupulous, was, nevertheless, hesitating and timid, saw by his looks that he had produced an unusual impression; and he resolved to follow it up, rather to gratify the momentary amusement which he felt at his alarm, than from any other motive. In fact, the appearance of Corbet was extraordinary. A deathlike color, which his advanced state of life renders it impossible to describe, took possession of him; his eyes lost the bitter expression so peculiar to them—his firm thin

lips relaxed and spread, and the corners of his mouth dropped so lugubriously, that the stranger, although he felt that the example of cowering guilt then before him was a solemn one, could scarcely refrain from smiling at what he witnessed.

"How far now do you think, sir," asked Corbet, "could punishment in such a case go? Mind, I'm putting myself out of the question; I'm safe, any how, and that's one comfort."

"For a reply to that question," returned the other, "you will have to go to the judge and the hangman. There was a time when you might have asked it, and answered it too, with safety to yourself; but now that time has gone by, and I fear very much that your day of grace is past."

"That's very like what James tould me in my dhrame," said the old man, in a soliloquy, dictated by his alarm. "Well, sir," he replied, "maybe, afther all—but didn't you say awhile ago that you wouldn't give sixpence for any information I could furnish you with?"

"I did, and I do."

A gleam of his former character returned to his eye, as, gathering up his lips again, he said, "I could soon show you to the contrary."

"Yes; but you will not do so. I see clearly that you are infatuated. It appears to me that there is an evil fate hanging over you, like some hungry raven, following and watching the motions of a sick old horse that is reduced to skin and bone. You're doomed, I think."

"Well, now," replied Anthony, the corners of whose mouth dropped again at this startling and not inappropriate comparison, "to show how much you are mistaken, let me ask how your business with Lord Cullamore gets on? I believe there's a screw loose *there?*—eh? I mean on *your* side—eh?"

It wasn't in his nature to restrain the sinister expression which a consciousness of his advantage over the stranger caused him to feel in his turn. The grin, besides, which he gave him, after he had thrown out these hints, had something of reprisal in it; and, to tell the truth, the stranger's face now became as blank and lugubrious as Anthony's had been before.

"If I don't mistake," he continued—for the other was too much astonished to reply, "if I don't mistake, there's a couple o' bits of paper that would stand your friend, if you could lay your claws upon them."

"Whether they could, or could not, is no affair of yours, my good sir," replied the stranger, rising and getting his hat; "and whether I have changed my mind on the subject you hint at is a matter known only to myself. I wish you good-day."

"I beg your pardon," said Anthony, probably satisfied with the fact of his having turned the tables and had his revenge on the stranger; "I beg your pardon, sir. Let us part friends, at all events. Set in case now ——"

"I will listen to none of those half sentences. You cannot possibly speak out, I see; in fact, you are tongue-tied by the cord of your evil fate. Upon no subject can you speak until it is too late."

"God direct me now!" exclaimed Corbet to himself. "I think the time is come; for, unless I relieve my conscience before I'm called—James he tould me the other night—Well, sir," he proceeded, "listen. If I befriend you, will you promise to stand my friend, if I should get into any difficulty?"

"I will enter into no compromise of the kind with you," said the other. "If you are about to do an act of justice, you ought to do it without conditions; and if you posses any document that is of value to another, and of none to yourself, and yet will not restore it to the proper owner, you are grossly dishonest, and capable of all that will soon, I trust, be established against you and your employers. Good-by, Mr. Corbet."

"Aisy, sir, aisy," said the tenacious and vacillating old knave. "Aisy, I say. You will be generous, at any rate; for you know their value. How much will you give me for the papers I spake of—that is, in case I could get them for you?"

"Not sixpence. A friend has just returned from France, who—no," thought he, "I will not state a falsehood—Good-day, Mr. Corbet; I am wasting my time."

"One minute, sir—one minute. It may be worth your while."

"Yes; but you trifle with me by these reluctant and penurious communications."

Anthony had laid down his head upon his hands, whose backs were supported by the table; and in this position, as if he were working himself into an act of virtue sufficient for a last effort, he remained until the stranger began to wonder what he meant. At length he arose, went up stairs as on a former occasion, but with less—and not *much* less—hesitation and delay; he returned and handed him the identical documents of which M'Bride had deprived him. "Now," said he, "listen to me. You know the value of these; but that isn't what I want to spake to you about. Whatever you do about the widow's son, don't do it without lettin' me know, and consultin' me—ay, and bein' guided by me; for although you all think yourselves right, you may find your-

selves in the wrong box still. Think of this now, and it will be better for you. I'm not sure, but I'll open all your eyes yet, and that before long; for I believe the time has come at last. Now that I've given you these papers," (extracted, by the way, from M'Bride's pockets during his drunkenness, by Ginty Cooper, on the night she dogged him,) "you must promise me one thing."

"What is that?"

"I suppose you know where this boy is? Now, when you're goin' to find him, will you bring me with you?"

"Why so?"

"It 'll plaise an ould man, at any rate; but there may be other raisons. Will you do this?"

The stranger, concluding that the wisest thing was to give him his way, promised accordingly, and the old man seemed somewhat satisfied.

"One man, at all events, I'll punish, if I should sacrifice every child I have in doin' so; and it is in order that he may be punished to the heart—to the marrow—to the soul within him—that I got these papers, and gave them to you."

"Corbet," said the stranger, "be the cause of your revenge what it may, its principle in your heart is awful. You are, in fact, a dreadful old man. May I ask how you came by these papers?"

"You may," he replied; "but I won't answer you. At a future time it is likely I will—but not now. It's enough for you to have them."

On his way home the stranger called at Birney's office, where he produced the documents; and it was arranged that the latter gentleman should wait upon Lord Cullamore the next day, in order to lay before him the proofs on which they were about to proceed; for, as they were now complete, they thought it more respectful to that venerable old nobleman to appeal privately to his own good sense, whether it would not be more for the honor of his family to give him an opportunity of yielding quietly, and without public scandal, than to drag the matter before the world in a court of justice. It was so arranged; and a suitable warrant having been procured to enable them to produce the body of the unfortunate Fenton, the proceedings of that day closed very much to their satisfaction.

The next day, between two and three o'clock, a visitor, on particular business, was announced to Lord Cullamore; and on being desired to walk up, our friend Birney made his bow to his lordship. Having been desired to take a seat, he sat down, and his lordship, who appeared to be very feeble, looked inquiringly at him, intimating thereby that he waited to know the object of his visit.

"My lord," said the attorney, "in the whole course of my professional life, a duty so painful as this has never devolved upon me. I come supported with proofs sufficient to satisfy you that your title and property cannot descend to your son, Lord Dunroe."

"I have no other son, sir," said his lordship, reprovingly.

"I do not mean to insinuate that you have, my lord. I only assert that he who is supposed to be the present heir, is not really so at all."

"Upon what proofs, sir, do you ground that assertion?"

"Upon proofs, my lord, the most valid and irrefragable; proofs that cannot be questioned, even for a moment; and, least of all, by your lordship, who are best acquainted with their force and authenticity."

"Have you got them about you?"

"I have got copies of the documentary proofs, my lord, and I shall now place them before you."

"Yes; have the goodness to let me see them."

Birney immediately handed him the documents, and mentioned the facts of which they were the proofs. In fact, only one of them was *absolutely* necessary, and that was simply the record of a death duly and regularly attested.

The old man seemed struck with dismay; for, until this moment he had not been clearly in possession of the facts which were now brought against him, as they were stated, and made plain as to their results, by Mr. Birney.

"I do not know much of law," he said, "but enough, I think, to satisfy me, that unless you have other and stronger proofs than this, you cannot succeed in disinheriting my son. I have seen the originals of those before, but I had forgotten some facts and dates connected with them at the time."

"We have the collateral proof you speak of, my lord, and can produce personal evidence to corroborate those which I have shown you."

"May I ask who that evidence is?"

"A Mrs. Mainwaring, my lord—formerly Norton—who had been maid to your first wife while she resided privately in France—was a witness to her death, and had it duly registered."

"But even granting this, I think you will be called on to prove the intention on my part: that which a man does in ignorance cannot, and ought not to be called a violation of the law."

"But the law in this case will deal only with facts, my lord; and your lordship must now see and feel that we are in a capacity to prove them. And before I proceed further, my lord, I beg to say, that I am instructed to appeal to your lordship's good sense, and to that consideration for the feelings of your family, by which, I trust, you will be influenced, whether, satisfied as you must be of your position, it would not be more judicious on your own part to concede our just rights, seeing, as you clearly may, that they are incontrovertible, than to force us to bring the matter before the public; a circumstance which, so far as you are yourself concerned, must be inexpressibly painful, and as regards other members of your family, perfectly deplorable and distressing. We wish, my lord, to spare the innocent as much as we can."

"I am innocent, sir; your proofs only establish an act done by me in ignorance."

"We grant that, my lord, at once, and without for a moment charging you with any dishonorable motive; but what we insist on —can prove—and your lordship cannot deny —is, that the act you speak of *was done*, and done at *a certain period*. I do beseech you, my lord, to think well and seriously of my proposal, for it is made in a kind and respectful spirit."

"I thank you, sir," replied his lordship, "and those who instructed you to regard my feelings; but this you must admit is a case of too much importance, in which interests of too much consequence are involved, for me to act in it without the advice and opinion of my lawyers."

"You are perfectly right, my lord; I expected no less; and if your lordship will refer me to them, I shall have no hesitation in laying the grounds of our proceedings before them, and the proofs by which they will be sustained."

This was assented to on the part of Lord Cullamore, and it is only necessary to say, that, in a few days subsequently, his lawyers, upon sifting and thoroughly examining everything that came before them, gave it as their opinion—and both were men of the very highest standing—that his lordship had no defence whatsoever, and that his wisest plan was to yield without allowing the matter to go to a public trial, the details of which must so deeply affect the honor of his children.

This communication, signed in the form of a regular opinion by both these eminent gentlemen, was received by his lordship on the fourth day after Birney's visit to him on the subject

About a quarter of an hour after he had perused it, his lordship's bell rang, and Morty O'Flaherty, his man, entered.

"Morty," said his lordship, "desire Lord Dunroe to come to me; I wish to speak with him. Is he within?"

"He has just come in, my lord. Yes, my lord, I'll send him up."

His lordship tapped the arms of his easy chair with the fingers of both hands, and looked unconsciously upon his servant, with a face full of the deepest sorrow and anguish.

The look was not lost upon Morty, who said, as he went down stairs, "There's something beyond the common on my lord's mind this day. He was bad enough before; but now he looks like a man that has got the very heart within him broken."

He met Dunroe in the hall, and delivered his message, but added,

"I think his lordship has had disagreeable tidin's of some kind to-day, my lord. I never saw him look so ill. To tell you the truth, my lord, I think he has death in his face."

"Well, Morty," replied his lordship, adjusting his collar, "you know we must all die. I cannot guess what unpleasant tidings he may have heard to-day; but I know that I have heard little else from him this many a day. Tell Mr. Norton to see about the bills I gave him, and have them cashed as soon as possible. If not, curse me, I'll shy a decanter at his head after dinner."

He then went rather reluctantly up stairs, and presented himself, in no very amiable temper, to his father.

Having taken a seat, he looked at the old man, and found his eyes fixed upon him with an expression of reproof, and at the same time the most profound affliction.

"Dunroe," said the earl, "you did not call to inquire after me for the last two or three days."

"I did not call, my lord, certainly; but, nevertheless, I inquired. The fact is, I feel disinclined to be lectured at such a rate every time I come to see you. As for Norton, I have already told you, with every respect for your opinion and authority, that you have taken an unfounded prejudice against him, and that I neither can nor will get rid of him, as you call it. *You* surely would not expect me to act dishonorably, my lord."

"I did not send for you now to speak about *him*, John. I have a much more serious, and a much more distressing communication to make to you."

The son opened his eyes, and stared at him.

"It may easily be so, my lord; but what is it?"

"Unfortunate young man, it is this—You

are cut off from the inheritance of my property and title."

"Sickness, my lord, and peevishness, have impaired your intellects, I think. What kind of language is this to hold to me, your son and heir?"

"My son, John, but not my heir."

"Don't you know, my lord, that what you say is impossible. If I am your son, I am, of course, your heir."

"No, John, for the simplest reason in the world. At present you must rest contented with the fact which I announce to you—for fact it is. I have not now strength enough to detail it; but I shall when I feel that I am equal to it. Indeed, I knew it not myself, with perfect certainty, until to-day. Some vague suspicion I had of late, but the proofs that were laid before me, and laid before me in a generous and forbearing spirit, have now satisfied me that you have no claim, as I said, to either title or property."

"Why, as I've life, my lord, this is mere dotage. A foul conspiracy has been got up, and you yield to it without a struggle. Do you think, whatever you may do, that I will bear this tamely? I am aware that a conspiracy *has* been getting up, and *I* also have had my suspicions."

"It is out of my power, John, to secure you the inheritance."

"This is stark folly, my lord—confounded nonsense—if you will pardon me. Out of your power! Made silly and weak in mind by illness, your opinion is not now worth much upon any subject. It is not your fault, I admit; but, upon my soul, I really have serious doubts whether you are in a sufficiently sane state of mind to manage your own affairs."

"Undutiful young man," replied his father, with bitterness, "if that were a test of insanity, you yourself ought to have been this many a day in a strait waistcoat. I know it is natural that you should feel this blow deeply; but it is neither natural nor dutiful that you should address your parent in such unpardonable language."

"If what that parent says be true, my lord, he has himself, by his past vices, disinherited his son."

"No, sir," replied the old man, whilst a languid flush of indignation was visible on his face, "he has not done so by his vices; but you, sir, have morally disinherited yourself by your vices, by your general profligacy, by your indefensible extravagance, and by your egregious folly. A man placed in the position which you would have occupied, ought to be a light and an example to society, and not what you have been, a reproach to your family, and a disgrace to your class. The virtues of a man of rank should be in proportion to his station: but you have distinguished yourself only by holding up to the world the debasing example of a dishonorable and licentious life. What virtue can you plead to establish a just claim to a position which demands a mind capable of understanding the weighty responsibilities that are annexed to it, and a heart possessed of such enlightened principles as may enable him to discharge them in a spirit that will constitute him, what he ought to be, a high example and a generous benefactor to his kind? Not one: but if selfishness, contempt for all the moral obligations of life, a licentious spirit that mocks at religion and looks upon human virtue as an unreality and a jest—if these were to give you a claim to the possession of rank and property, I know of no one more admirably qualified to enjoy them. Dunroe, I am not now far from the grave; but listen, and pay attention to my voice, for it is a warning voice."

"It was always so," replied his son, with sulky indignation; "it was never anything else; a mere passing bell that uttered nothing but advices, lectures, coffins, and crossbones."

"It uttered only truth *then*, Dunroe, as you feel *now* to your cost. Change your immoral habits. I will not bid you repent; because you would only sneer at the word; but do endeavor to feel regret for the kind of life you have led, and give up your evil propensities; cease to be a heartless spendthrift; remember that you are a man: remember that you have important duties to perform; believe that there are such things as religion, and virtue, and honor in the world; believe that there is a God, a wise Providence, who governs that world upon principles of eternal truth and justice, and to whom you must account, in another life, for your conduct in this."

"Well, really, my lord," replied Dunroe, "as it appears that the lecture is all you have to bestow upon me, I am quite willing that you should disinherit me of that also. I waive every claim to it. But so do I not to my just rights. We shall see what a court of law can do."

"You may try it, and entail disgrace upon yourself and your sister. As for my child, it will break her heart. My God! my child! my child!"

"Not, certainly, my lord, if we should succeed."

"All hopes of success are out of the question," replied his father.

"No such thing, my lord. Your mind, as I said, is enfeebled by illness, and you yield too easily. Such conduct on your part is

really ridiculous. We shall have a tug for it, I am determined."

"Here," said his father, "cast your eye over these papers, and they will enable you to understand, not merely the grounds upon which our opponents proceed, but the utter hopelessness of contesting the matter with them."

Dunroe took the papers, but before looking at them replied, with a great deal of confidence, "you are quite mistaken there, my lord, with every respect. They are *not* in a position to prove their allegations."

"How so?" said his father.

"For the best reason in the world, my lord. We have had their proofs in our possession and destroyed them."

"I don't understand you."

"The fellow, M'Bride, of whom I think your lordship knows something, had their documents in his possession."

"I am aware of that."

"Well, my lord, while in a drunken fit, he either lost them, or some one took them out of his pocket. I certainly would have purchased them from him."

"Did you know how he came by them?" asked his father, with a look of reproof and anger.

"That, my lord, was no consideration of mine. As it was, however, he certainly lost them; but we learned from him that Birney, the attorney, was about to proceed to France, in order to get fresh attested copies; upon which, as he knew the party there in whose hands the registry was kept, Norton and he started a day or two in advance of him, and on arriving there, they found, much to our advantage, that the register was dead. M'Bride, however, who is an adroit fellow, and was well acquainted with his house and premises, contrived to secure the book in which the original record was made—which book he has burned—so that, in point of fact, they have no legal proofs on which to proceed."

"Dishonorable man!" said his father, rising up in a state of the deepest emotion. "You have made me weary of life; you have broken my heart: and so you would stoop to defend yourself, or your rights, by a crime—by a crime so low, fraudulent, and base—that here, in the privacy of my own chamber, and standing face to face with you, I am absolutely ashamed to call you my son. Know, sir, that if it were a dukedom, I should scorn to contest it, or to retain it, at the expense of my honor."

"That's all very fine talk, my lord; but, upon my soul, wherever I can get an advantage, I'll take it. I see little of the honor or virtue you speak of going, and, I do assure you, I won't be considered at all remarkable for acting up to my own principles. On the contrary, it is by following yours that I should be so."

"I think," said the old man, "that I see the hand of God in this. Unfortunate, obstinate, and irreclaimable young man, it remains for me to tell you that the very documents, which you say have been lost by the villain M'Bride, with whom, in his villainy, you, the son of an earl, did not hesitate to associate yourself, are now in the possession of our opponents. Take those papers to your room," he added, bursting into tears: "take them away, I am unable to prolong this interview, for it has been to me a source of deeper affliction than the loss of the highest title or honor that the hand of royalty could bestow."

When Dunroe was about to leave the room, the old man, who had again sat down, said:

"Stop a moment. Of course it is unnecessary to say, I should hope, that this union between you and Miss Gourlay cannot proceed."

Dunroe, who felt at once that if he allowed his father to suppose that he persisted in it, the latter would immediately disclose his position to the baronet, now replied:

"No, my lord, I have no great ambition for any kind of alliance with Sir Thomas Gourlay. I never liked him personally, and I am sufficiently a man of spirit, I trust, not to urge a marriage with a girl who—who—cannot appreciate——" He paused, not knowing exactly how to fill up the sentence.

"Who has no relish for it," added his father, "and can't appreciate your virtues, you mean to say."

"What I mean to say, my lord, is, that where there is no great share of affection on either side, there can be but little prospect of happiness."

"Then you give up the match?"

"I give up the match, my lord, without a moment's hesitation. You may rest assured of that."

"Because," added his father, "if I found that you persisted in it, and attempted to enter the family, and impose yourself on this admirable girl, as that which you are not, I would consider it my duty to acquaint Sir Thomas Gourlay with the unfortunate discovery which has been made. Before you go I will thank you to read that letter for me. It comes, I think, from the Lord Chancellor. My sight is very feeble to-day, and perhaps it may require a speedy answer."

Dunroe opened the letter, which informed Lord Cullamore, that it had afforded him, the Lord Chancellor, much satisfaction to

promote Periwinkle Crackenfudge, Esq., to the magistracy of the county of ——, understanding, as he did, from the communication of Sir Thomas Gourlay, enclosed in his lordship's letter, that he (Crackenfudge) was, by his many virtues, good sense, discretion, humanity, and general esteem among all classes, as well as by his popularity in the country, a person in every way fitted to discharge the important duties of such an appointment.

"I feel my mind at ease," said the amiable old nobleman, "in aiding such an admirable country gentleman as this Crackenfudge must be, to a seat on the bench; for, after all, Dunroe, it is only by the contemplation of a good action that we can be happy. You may go."

Some few days passed, when Dunroe, having read the papers, the contents of which he did not wish Norton to see, returned them to his father in sullen silence, and then rang his bell, and sent for his worthy associate, that he might avail himself of his better judgment.

"Norton," said he, "it is all up with us."

"How is that, my lord?"

"Those papers, that M'Bride says he lost, are in the hands of our enemies."

"Don't believe it, my lord. I saw the fellow yesterday, and he told me that he destroyed them in a drunken fit, for which he says he is ready to cut his throat."

"But I have read the opinion of my father's counsel," replied his lordship, "and they say we have no defence. Now you know what a lawyer is: if there were but a hair-breadth chance, they would never make an admission that might keep a good fat case from getting into their hands. No; it is all up with us. The confounded old fool above had everything laid before them, and such is the upshot. What is to be done?"

"Marriage, without loss of time—marriage, before your disaster reaches the ears of the Black Baronet."

"Yes, but there is a difficulty. If the venerable old nobleman should hear of it, he'd let the cat out of the bag, and leave me in the lurch, in addition to the penalty of a three hours' lecture upon honor. Everything, however, is admirably arranged *quoad* the marriage. We have got a special license for the purpose of meeting our peculiar case, so that the marriage can be private; that is to say, can take place in the lady's own house. Do you think though, that M'Bride has actually destroyed the papers?"

"The drunken ruffian! certainly. He gave me great insolence a couple of days ago."

"Why so?"

"Because I didn't hand him over a hundred pounds for his journey and the theft of the registry."

"And how much did you give him, pray?"

"A fifty pound note, after having paid his expenses, which was quite enough for him. However, as I did not wish to make the scoundrel our enemy, I have promised him something more, so that I've come on good terms with him again. He is a slippery customer."

"Did you get the bills cashed yet?"

"No, my lord; I am going about it now; but I tell you beforehand, that I will have some difficulty in doing it. I hope to manage it, however; and for that reason I must bid you good-by."

"The first thing to do, then, is to settle that ugly business about the mare. By no means must we let it come to trial."

"Very well, my lord, be it so."

Norton, after leaving his dupe to meditate upon the circumstances in which he found himself, began to reflect as he went along, that he himself was necessarily involved in the ruin of his friend and patron.

"I have the cards, however, in my own hands," thought he, "and M'Bride's advice was a good one. He having destroyed the other documents, it follows that this registry, which I have safe and snug, will be just what his lordship's enemies will leap at. Of course they are humbugging the old peer about the other papers, and, as I know, it is devilish easy to humbug the young one. My agency is gone to the winds; but I think the registry will stand me instead. It ought, in a case like this, to be well worth five thousand; at least, I shall ask this sum—not saying but I will take less. Here goes then for an interview with Birney, who has the character of being a shrewd fellow—honorable, they say—but then, is he not an attorney? Yes, Birney, have at you, my boy;" and having come to this virtuous conclusion, he directed his steps to that gentleman's office, whom he found engaged at his desk.

"Mr. Birney, I presume," with a very fashionable bow.

"Yes, sir," said Birney, "that is my name."

"Haw! If I don't mistake, Mr. Birney," with a very English accent, which no one could adopt, when he pleased, with more success than our Kerry boy—"if I don't mistake, we both made a journey to France very recently?"

"That may be, sir," replied Birney, "but I am not aware of it."

"But I *h*am, though," tipping Birney the London cockney.

"Well, sir," said Birney, very coolly, "and what follows from that?"

"Why haw—haw—I don't exactly know at present; but I think a good dee-al may follow from it."

"As how, sir?"

"I believe you were *h*over there on matters connected with Lord Cullamore's family—haw?"

"Sir," replied Birney, "you are a perfect stranger to me—I haven't the honor of knowing you. If you are coming to me on anything connected with my professional services, I will thank you to state it."

"Haw!—My name is Norton, a friend of Lord Dunroe's."

"Well, Mr. Norton, if you will have the goodness to mention the business which causes me the honor of your visit, I will thank you; but I beg to assure you, that I am not a man to be pumped either by Lord Dunroe or any of his friends. You compel me to speak very plainly, sir."

"Haw! Very good—very good indee-ed! but the truth *h*is, I've given Dunroe *h*up."

"Well, sir, and how is that my affair? What interest can I feel in your quarrels? Personally I know very little of Lord Dunroe, and of you, sir, nothing."

"Haw! but everything 'as a beginning, Mr. Birney."

"At this rate of going, I fear we shall be a long time ending, Mr. Norton."

"Well," replied Norton, "I believe you are right; the sooner we *h*understand each other, the better."

"Certainly, sir," replied Birney; "I think so, if you have any business of importance with me."

"Well, I rayther think you will find it *h*important—that is, to your own *h*interests. You are a *h*attorney, Mr. Birney, and I think you will *h*admit that every man in this world, as it goes, *h*ought to look to 'is own *h*interests."

Birney looked at him, and said, very gravely, "Pray, sir, what *is* your business with me? My time, sir, is valuable. My time is money—a portion of my landed property, sir."

"Haw! Very good; but you *H*irish are so fiery and impatient! However, I will come to the point. You are about to *h*oust that youug scamp, by the way, *h*out of the title and property. I say so, because I *h*am up to the thing. Yet you want dockiments to establish your case—haw?"

"Well, sir, and suppose we do; you, I presume, as the friend of Lord Dunroe, are not coming to furnish us with them?"

"That is, Mr. Birney, as we shall *h*understand one another. You failed in your mission to France?'

"I shall hear any proposal, sir, you have to make, but will answer no questions on the subject until I understand your motive for putting them."

"Good—very cool and cautious—but suppose, now, that I, who know you 'ave failed in procuring the dockiments in question, could supply you with them—haw!—do you *h*understand me now?"

"Less than ever, sir, I assure you. Observe that you introduced yourself to me as the friend of Lord Dunroe."

"Merely to connect myself with the proceedings between you. I 'ave or *h*am about to discard him, but I shaunt go about the bush no longer. I'm a native of Lon'on, w'at is tarmed a cockney—haw, haw!—and he 'as treated me *h*ill—very *h*ill—and I am detarmined to retaliate."

"How, sir, are you determined to retaliate?"

"The truth *h*is, sir, I've got the dockiments you stand in need of *h*in my possession, and can furnish you with them for a consideration."

"Why, now you are intelligible. What do you want, Murray? I'm engaged."

"To speak one word with you in the next room, sir. The gentleman wants you to say yes or no, in a single line, upon Mr. Fairfield's business, sir—besides, I've a private message."

"Excuse me for a moment, sir," said Birney; "there's this morning's paper, if you haven't seen it."

"Well, Bob," said he, "what is it?"

"Beware of that fellow," said he: "I know him well; his name is Bryan; he was a horse jockey on the Curragh, and was obliged to fly the country for dishonesty. Be on your guard, that is all I had to say to you."

"Why, he says he is a Londoner, and he certainly has the accent," replied the other.

"Kerry, sir, to the backbone, and a disgrace to the country, for divil a many rogues it produces, whatever else it may do."

"Thank you, Murray," said Birney; "I will be doubly guarded now."

This occurred between Birney and one of his clerks, as a small interlude in their conversation.

"Yes, sir," resumed Birney, once more taking his place at the desk, "you can now be understood."

"Haw!—yes, I rayther fancy I can make myself so!" replied Norton. "What, now, do you suppose the papers in question may be worth to your friends?"

"You cannot expect *me* to reply to that question," said Birney; "I am acting professionally under the advice and instructions of others; but I will tell you what I think you had better do—I can enter into no negotiation on the subject without consulting those who have employed me, and getting their consent—write down, then, on a sheet of paper, what you propose to do for us, and the compensation which you expect to receive for any documents you may supply us with that we may consider of value, and I shall submit it for consideration."

"May I not compromise myself by putting it on paper, though?"

"If you think so, then, don't do it; but, for my part, I shall have no further concern in the matter. Verbal communications are of little consequence in an affair of this kind. Reduce it to writing, and it can be understood; it will, besides, prevent misconceptions in futnre."

"I trust you are a man of honor?" said Norton.

"I make no pretensions to anything so high," replied Birney; "but I trust I am an honest man, and know how to act *when I have an honest man to deal with.* If you wish to serve our cause, or, to be plain with you, wish to turn the documents you speak of to the best advantage, make your proposal in writing, as you ought to do, otherwise I must decline any further negotiation on the subject."

Norton saw and felt that there was nothing else for it. He accordingly took pen and ink and wrote down his proposal—offering to place the documents alluded to, which were mentioned by name, in the hands of Mr. Birney, for the sum of five thousand pounds."

"Now, sir," said Birney, after looking over this treacherous proposition, "you see yourself the advantage of putting matters down in black and white. The production of this will save me both time and trouble, and, besides, it can be understood at a glance. Thank you, sir. Have the goodness to favor me with a call in a day or two, and we shall see what can be done."

"This," said Norton, as he was about to go, "is a point of honor between us."

"Why, I think, at all events, it ought," replied Birney; "at least, so far as I am concerned, it is not my intention to act dishonorably *by any honest man.*"

"Haw—haw! Very well said, indeed; I 'ave a good *h*opinion of your discretion. Well, sir, I wish you good morneen; I shall call in a day or two, and expect to 'ave a satisfactory *h*answer."

"What a scoundrel!" exclaimed Birney. "Here's a fellow, now, who has been fleecing that unfortunate sheep of a nobleman for the last four years, and now that he finds him at the length of his tether, he is ready to betray and sacrifice him, like a double-distilled rascal as he is. The villain thought I did not know him, but he was mistaken—quite out in his calculations. He will find, too, that he has brought his treachery to the wrong market."

CHAPTER XXXIX.

Fenton Recovered—The Mad-House.

Sir Thomas Gourlay, on his return with the special license, was informed by the same servant who had admitted the stranger, that a gentleman awaited him in the drawing-room.

"Who is he, M'Gregor?"

"I don't know, sir; he paid you a visit once at Red Hall, I think."

"How could I know him by that, you blockhead?"

"He's the gentleman, sir, you had hot words with."

"That I kicked out one day? Crackenfudge, eh?"

"No, faith, sir; not Crackenfudge. I know him well enough; and devil a kick your honor gave him but I wished was nine. This is a very different man, sir; and I believe you had warm words with him too, sir."

"Oh!" exclaimed his master; "I remember. Is *he* above?"

"I believe so, sir."

A strange and disagreeable feeling came over the baronet on hearing these words—a kind of presentiment, as it were, of something unpleasant and adverse to his plans. On entering the drawing-room, however, he was a good deal surprised to find that there was nobody there; and after a moment's reflection, a fearful suspicion took possession of him; he rang the bell furiously.

Gibson, who had been out, now entered.

"Where is Miss Gourlay, sir?" asked his master, with eyes kindled by rage and alarm.

"I was out, sir," replied Gibson, "and cannot tell."

"You can never tell anything, you scoundrel. For a thousand, she's off with him again, and all's ruined. Here, Matthews—M'Gregor—call the servants, sir. Where's her maid?—call her maid. What a confounded fool—ass—I was, not to have made that impudent baggage tramp about her business. It's true, Lucy's off—I feel it—I felt it. Hang her hypocrisy! It's the case,

however, with all women. They have neither truth, nor honesty of purpose. A compound of treachery, deceit, and dissimulation; and yet I thought, if there was a single individual of her sex exempted from their vices, that she was that individual. Come here, M'Gregor—come here you scoundrel—do you know where Miss Gourlay is? or her maid?"

"Here's Matthews, sir; he says she's gone out."

"Gone out!—Yes, she's gone out with a vengeance. Do you know where she's gone, sirra? And did any one go with her?" he added, addressing himself to Matthews.

"I think, sir, she's gone to take her usual airing in the carriage."

"Who was with her?"

"No one but her maid, sir."

"Oh, no; they would not go off *together*—that would be too open and barefaced. Do you know what direction she took?"

"No, sir; I didn't observe."

"You stupid old lout," replied the baronet, flying at him, and mauling the unfortunate man without mercy; "take that—and that—and that—and that—for your stupidity. Why did you not observe the way she went, you villain? You have suffered her to elope, you hound! You have all suffered her to elope with a smoothfaced impostor—a fellow whom no one knows—a blackleg—a swindler—a thief—a—a—go and saddle half a dozen horses, and seek her in all directions. Go instantly, and—hold—easy—stop—hang you all, stop!—here she is—and her maid with her—" he exclaimed, looking out of the window. "Ha! I am relieved. God bless me! God bless me!" He then looked at the servants with something of deprecation in his face, and waving his hand, said, "Go—go quietly; and, observe me—not a word of this—not a syllable—for your lives!"

His anger, however, was only checked in mid volley. The idea of her having received a clandestine visit from her lover during his absence rankled at his heart; and although satisfied that she was still safe, and in his power, he could barely restrain his temper within moderate limits. Nay, he felt angry at her for the alarm she had occasioned him, and the passion he had felt at her absence.

"Well, Lucy," said he, addressing her, as she entered, in a voice chafed with passion, "have you taken your drive?"

"Yes, papa," she replied; "but it threatened rain, and we returned earlier that usual."

"You look pale."

"I dare say I do, sir. I want rest—repose;" and she reclined on a lounger as she spoke. "It is surprising, papa, how weak I am!"

"Not too weak, Lucy, to receive a stolen visit, eh?"

Lucy immediately sat up, and replied with surprise, "A stolen visit, sir? I don't understand you, papa."

"Had you not a visitor here, in my absence?"

"I had, sir, but the visit was intended for you. Our interview was perfectly accidental."

"Ah! faith, Lucy, it was too well timed to be accidental. I'm not such a fool as that comes to. Accidental, indeed! Lucy, you should not say so."

"I am not in the habit of stating an untruth, papa. The visit, sir—I should rather say, the interview—was purely accidental; but I am glad it took place."

"The deuce you are! That is a singular acknowledgment, Lucy, I think."

"It is truth, sir, notwithstanding. I was anxious to see him, that I might acquaint him with the change that has taken place in my unhappy destiny. If I had not seen him, I should have asked your permission to write to him."

"Which I would not have given."

"I would have submitted my letter to you, sir."

"Even so; I would not have consented."

"Well, then, sir, as truth and honor demanded that act from me, I would have sent it without your consent. Excuse me for saying this, papa; but you need not be told that there are some peculiar cases where duty to a parent must yield to truth and honor."

"Some peculiar cases! On the contrary, the cases you speak of are the general rule, my girl—the general rule—and rational obedience to a parent the exception. Where is there a case—and there are millions—where a parent's wish and will are set at naught and scorned, in which the same argument is not used? I do not relish these discussions, however. What I wish to impress upon you is this—you must see this *fellow* no more."

Lucy's temples were immediately in a blaze. "Are you aware, papa, that you insult and degrade your daughter, by applying such a term to *him?* If you will not spare him, sir, spare me; for I assure you that I feel anything said against him with ten times more emotion than if it were uttered against myself."

"Well, well; he's a *fine* fellow, a gentleman, a lord; but, be he what he may, you must see him no more."

"It is not my intention, papa, to see him again."

"You must not write to him."

"It will not be necessary."

"But you must not."

"Well, then, I shall not."

"Nor receive his letters."

"Nor receive his letters, knowing them to be his."

"You promise all this?"

"I do, sir, faithfully. I hope you are now satisfied, papa?"

"I am, Lucy—I am. You are not so bad a girl as I sus——no, you are a very good girl; and when I see you the Countess of Cullamore, I shall not have a single wish ungratified."

Lucy, indeed, poor girl, was well and vigilantly guarded. No communication, whether written or otherwise, was permitted to reach her; nor, if she had been lodged in the deepest dungeon in Europe, and secured by the strongest bolts that ever enclosed a prisoner, could she have been more rigidly excluded from all intercourse, her father's and her maid's only excepted.

Her lover, on receiving the documents so often alluded to from old Corbet, immediately transmitted to her a letter of hope and encouragement, in which he stated that the object he had alluded to was achieved, and that he would take care to place such documents before her father, as must cause even him to forbid the bans. This letter, however, never reached her. Neither did a similar communication from Mrs. Mainwaring, who after three successive attempts to see either her or her father, was forced at last to give up all hope of preventing the marriage. She seemed, indeed, to have been fated.

In the meantime, the stranger, having, as he imagined, relieved Lucy's mind from her dreaded union with Dunroe, and left the further and more complete disclosure of that young nobleman's position to Mrs. Mainwaring, provided himself with competent legal authority to claim the person of unfortunate Fenton. It is unnecessary to describe his journey to the asylum in which the wretched young man was placed; it is enough to say that he arrived there at nine o'clock in the morning, accompanied by old Corbet and three officers of justice, who remained in the carriage; and on asking to see the proprietor, was shown into a parlor, where he found that worthy gentleman reading a newspaper.

This fellow was one of those men who are remarkable for thick, massive, and saturnine features. At a first glance he was not at all ill-looking; but, on examining his beetle brows, which met in a mass of black thick hair across his face, and on watching the dull, selfish, cruel eyes that they hung over—dead as they were to every generous emotion, and incapable of kindling even at cruelty itself—it was impossible for any man in the habit of observing nature closely not to feel that a brutal ruffian, obstinate, indurated, and unscrupulous, was before him. His forehead was low but broad, and the whole shape of his head such as would induce an intelligent phrenologist to pronounce him at once a thief and a murderer.

The stranger, after a survey or two, felt his blood boil at the contemplation of his very visage, which was at once plausible and diabolical in expression. After some preliminary chat the latter said:

"Your establishment, sir, is admirably situated here. It is remote and isolated; and these, I suppose, are advantages?"

"Why, yes, sir," replied the doctor, "the further we remove our patients from human society, the better. The exhibition of reason has, in general, a bad effect upon the insane."

"Upon what principle do you account for that?" asked the stranger. "To me it would appear that the reverse of the proposition ought to hold true."

"That may be," replied the other; "but no man can form a correct opinion of insane persons who has not mingled with them, or had them under his care. The contiguity of reason—I mean in the persons of those who approach them—always exercises a dangerous influence upon lunatics; and on this account, I sometimes place those who are less insane as keepers upon such as are decidedly so."

"Does not that, sir, seem very like setting the blind to lead the blind?"

"No," replied the other, with a heavy, heartless laugh, "your analogy fails; it is rather like setting a man with one eye to guide another who has none."

"But why should not a man who has two guide him better?"

"Because the consciousness that there is but the one eye between both of them, will make him proceed more cautiously."

"But that in the blind is an act of reason," replied the stranger, "which cannot be applied to the insane, in whom reason is deficient."

"But where reason does not exist," said the doctor, "we must regulate them by their passions."

"By the exercise of which passion do you gain the greatest ascendency over them?" asked the stranger.

"By fear, of course. We can do nothing, at least very little, without inspiring terror."

"Ah," thought the stranger, "I have now

got the key to his conduct!—But, sir," he added, "we never fear and love the same object at the same time."

"True enough, sir," replied the ruffian; "but who could or ought to calculate upon the attachment of a madman? Boys are corrected more frequently than men, because their reason is not developed: and those in whom it does not exist, or in whom it has been impaired, must be subjected to the same discipline. Terror, besides, is the principle upon which reason itself, and all society, are governed."

"But suppose I had a brother, now, or a relative, might I not hesitate to place him in an establishment conducted on principles which I condemn?"

"As to that, sir," replied the fellow, who, expecting a patient, feared that he had gone too far, "our system is an adaptable one; at least, our application of it varies according to circumstances. As our first object is cure, we must necessarily allow ourselves considerable latitude of experiment until we hit upon the right key. This being found, the process of recovery, when it is possible, may be conducted with as much mildness as the absence of reason will admit. We are mild, when we can, and severe only where we must."

"Shuffling scoundrel!" thought the stranger. "I perceive in this language the double dealing of an unprincipled villain.—Would you have any objection, sir," he said, "that I should look through your establishment?"

"I can conduct you through the convalescent wards," replied the doctor; "but, as I said, we find that the appearance of strangers—which is what I meant by the contiguity of reason—is attended with very bad, and sometimes deplorable consequences. Under all circumstances it retards a cure, under others occasions a relapse, and in some accelerates the malady so rapidly that it becomes hopeless. You may see the convalescent ward, however—that is, if you wish."

"You will oblige me," said the stranger.

"Well, then," said he, "if you will remain here a moment, I will send a gentleman who will accompany you, and explain the characters of some of the patients, should you desire it, and also the cause of their respective maladies."

He then disappeared, and in a few minutes a mild, intelligent, gentlemanly man, of modest and unassuming manners, presented himself, and said he would feel much pleasure in showing him the convalescent side of the house. The stranger, however, went out and brought old Corbet in from the carriage, where he and the officers had been sitting; and this he did at Corbet's own request.

It is not our intention to place before our readers any lengthened description of this gloomy temple of departed reason. Every one who enters a lunatic asylum for the first time, must feel a wild and indescribable emotion, such as he has never before experienced, and which amounts to an extraordinary sense of solemnity and fear. Nor do the sensations of the stranger rest here. He feels as if he were surrounded by something sacred as well as melancholy, something that creates at once pity, reverence, and awe. Indeed, so strongly antithetical to each other are his first impressions, that a kind of confusion arises in his mind, and he begins to fear that his senses have been affected by the atmosphere of the place. That a shock takes place which slightly disarranges the faculty of thought, and generates strong but erroneous impressions, is still more clearly established by the fact that the visitor, for a considerable time after leaving an asylum, can scarcely rid himself of the belief that every person he meets is insane.

The stranger, on entering the long room in which the convalescents were assembled, felt, in the silence of the patients, and in their vague and fantastic movements, that he was in a position where novelty, in general the source of pleasure, was here associated only with pain. Their startling looks, the absence of interest in some instances, and its intensity in others, at the appearance of strangers, without any intelligent motive in either case, produced a feeling that seemed to bear the character of a disagreeable dream.

"All the patients here," said his conductor, "are not absolutely in a state of convalescence. A great number of them are; but we also allow such confirmed lunatics as are harmless to mingle with them. There is scarcely a profession, or a passion, or a vanity in life, which has not here its representative. Law, religion, physic, the arts, the sciences, all contribute their share to this melancholy picture gallery. Avarice, love, ambition, pride, jealousy, having overgrown the force of reason, are here, as its ideal skeletons, wild and gigantic—fretting gambolling, moping, grinning, raving, and vapouring—each wrapped in its own Vision, and indifferent to all the influence of the collateral faculties. There, now, is a man, moping about, the very picture of stolidity; observe how his heavy head hangs down until his chin rests upon his breastbone, his mouth open and almost dribbling. That man, sir, so unpoetical and idiotic in appear-

ance, imagines himself the author of Beattie's 'Minstrel.' He is a Scotchman, and I shall call him over."

"Come here, Sandy, speak to this gentleman."

Sandy, without raising his lack-lustre eye, came over and replied, "Aw—ay—'Am the author o' Betty's Menstrel;" and having uttered this piece of intelligence, he shuffled across the room, dragging one foot after the other, at about a quarter of a minute per step. Never was poor Beattie so libellously represented.

"Do you see that round-faced, good-humored looking man, with a decent frieze coat on?" said their conductor. "He's a wealthy and respectable farmer from the county of Kilkenny, who imagines that he is Christ. His name is Rody Rafferty."

"Come here, Rody."

Rody came over, and looking at the stranger, said, "Arra, now, do you know who I am? Troth, I go bail you don't."

"No," replied the stranger, "I do not; but I hope you will tell me."

"I'm Christ," replied Rody; "and, upon my word, if you don't get out o' this, I'll work a miracle on you."

"Why," asked the stranger, "what will you do?"

"Troth, I'll turn you into a blackin' brush, and polish my shoes wid you. *You* were at Barney's death, too."

The poor man had gone deranged, it seemed, by the violent death of his only child—a son.

"There's another man," said the conductor; "that little fellow with the angry face. He is a shoemaker, who went mad on the score of humanity. He took a strong feeling of resentment against all who had flat feet, and refused to make shoes for them."

"How was that?" inquired the stranger.

"Why, sir," said the other, smiling, "he said that they murdered the clocks (beetles), and he looked upon every man with flat feet as an inhuman villain, who deserves, he says, to have his feet chopped off, and to be compelled to dance a hornpipe three times a day on his stumps."

"Who is that broad-shouldered man," asked the stranger, "dressed in rusty black, with the red head?"

"He went mad," replied the conductor, "on a principle of religious charity. He is a priest from the county of Wexford, who had been called in to baptize the child of a Protestant mother, which, having done, he seized a tub, and placing it on the child's neck, killed it; exclaiming, 'I am now sure of having sent one soul to heaven.'"

"You are not without poets here, of course?" said the stranger.

"We have, unfortunately," replied the other, "more individuals of that class than we can well manage. They ought to have an asylum for themselves. There's a fellow, now, he in the tattered jacket and nightcap, who has written a heroic poem, of eighty-six thousand verses, which he entitles 'Balaam's Ass, or the Great Unsaddled.' Shall I call him over?"

"Oh, for heaven's sake, no," replied the stranger; "keep me from the poets."

"There is one of the other species," replied the gentleman, "the thin, red-eyed fellow, who grinds his teeth. He fancies himself a wit and a satirist, and is the author of an unpublished poem, called 'The Smoking Dunghill, or Parnassus in a Fume.' He published several things, which were justly attacked on account of their dulness, and he is now in an awful fury against all the poets of the day, to every one of whom he has given an appropriate position on the sublime pedestal, which he has, as it were, with his own hands, erected for them. He certainly ought to be the best constructor of a dunghill in the world, for he deals in nothing but dirt. He refuses to wash his hands, because, he says, it would disqualify him from giving the last touch to his poem and his characters."

"Have you philosophers as well as poets here?" asked the stranger.

"Oh dear, yes, sir. We have poetical philosophers, and philosophical poets; but, I protest to heaven, the wisdom of Solomon, or of an archangel, could not decide the difference between their folly. There's a man now, with the old stocking in his hand—it is one of his own, for you may observe that he has one leg bare—who is pacing up and down in a deep thinking mood. That man, sir, was set mad by a definition of his own making."

"Well, let us hear it," said the stranger.

"Why, sir, he imagines that he has discovered a definition for 'NOTHING.' The definition, however, will make you smile."

"And what, pray, is it?"

"Nothing, he says, is—A FOOTLESS STOCKING WITHOUT A LEG; and maintains that he ought to hold the first rank as a philosopher for having invented the definition, and deserves a pension from the crown."

"Who are these two men dressed in black, walking arm in arm?" asked the stranger. "They appear to be clergymen."

"Yes, sir," replied his conductor, "so they are; two celebrated polemical controversialists, who, when they were at large, created

by their attacks, each upon the religion of the other, more ill-will, rancor and religious animosity, than either of their religions, with all their virtues, could remove. It is impossible to describe the evil they did. Ever since they came here, however, they are like brothers. They were placed in the same room, each in a strong strait-waistcoat, for the space of three months; but on being allowed to walk about, they became sworn friends, and now amuse themselves more than any other two in the establishment. They indulge in immoderate fits of laughter, look each other knowingly in the face, wink, and run the forefinger up the nose, after which their mirth bursts out afresh, and they laugh until the tears come down their cheeks."

The stranger, who during all this time was on the lookout for poor Fenton, as was old Corbet, could observe nobody who resembled him in the least.

"Have you females in your establishment?" he asked.

"No, sir," replied the gentleman; "but we are about to open an asylum for them in a detached building, which is in the course of being erected. Would you wish to hear any further details of these unhappy beings," he asked.

"No, sir," replied the stranger. "You are very kind and obliging, but I have heard enough for the present. Have you a person named Fenton in your establishment?"

"Not, sir, that I know of; he may be here, though; but you had better inquire from the proprietor himself, who (mark me, sir—I say—harkee—you have humanity in your face)—will probably refuse to tell you whether he is here or not, or deny him altogether. Harkee, again, sir—the fellow is a villain—that is, *entre nous*, but mum's the word between us."

"I am sorry," replied the stranger, "to hear such a character of him from you, who should know him."

"Well, sir," replied the other, "let that pass—*verbum sap.* And now tell me, when have you been at the theater?"

"Not for some months," returned the other.

"Have you ever heard Catalani shake?"

"Yes," replied the stranger. "I have had that pleasure."

"Well, sir, I'm delighted that you have heard her, for there is but one man living who can rival her in the shake; and, sir, you have the honor of addressing that man."

This was said so mildly, calmly, rationally, and with that gentlemanlike air of undoubted respectability, which gives to an assertion such an impress of truth, that the stranger, confused as he was by what he had seen, felt it rather difficult to draw the line at the moment, especially in such society, between a sane man and an insane one.

"Would you wish, sir," said the guide, "to hear a specimen of my powers?"

"If you please," replied the stranger, "provided you will confine yourself to the shake."

The other then commenced a squall, so tuneless, wild, jarring, and unmusical, that the stranger could not avoid smiling at the monomaniac, for such he at once perceived him to be.

"You seem to like that," observed the other, apparently much gratified; "but I thought as much, sir—you are a man of taste."

"I am decidedly of opinion," said the stranger, "that Catalani, in her best days, could not give such a specimen of the shake as that."

"Thank you sir," replied the singer, taking off his hat and bowing. "We shall have another shake in honor of your excellent judgment, but it will be a shake of the hand. Sir, you are a polished and most accomplished gentleman."

As they sauntered up and down the room, other symptoms reached them besides those that were then subjected to their sight. As a door opened, a peal of wild laughter might be heard—sometimes groaning—and occasionally the most awful blasphemies. Ambition contributed a large number to its dreary cells. In fact, one would imagine that the house had been converted into a temple of justice, and contained within its walls most of the crowned heads and generals of Europe, both living and dead, together with a fair sample of the saints. The Emperor of Russia was strapped down to a chair that had been screwed into the floor, with the additional security of a strait-waistcoat to keep his majesty quiet. The Pope challenged Henry the Eighth to box, and St. Peter, as the cell door opened, asked Anthony Corbet for a glass of whiskey. Napoleon Bonaparte, in the person of a heroic tailor, was singing "Bob and Joan;" and the Archbishop of Dublin said he would pledge his mitre for a good cigar and a pot of porter. Sometimes a frightful yell would reach their ears; then a furious set of howlings, followed again by peals of maniac laughter, as before. Altogether, the stranger was glad to withdraw, which he did, in order to prosecute his searches for Fenton.

"Well, sir," said the doctor, whom he found again in the parlor, "you have seen that melancholy sight?"

"I have, sir, and a melancholy one indeed

it is; but as I came on a matter of business, doctor, I think we had better come to the point at once. You have a young man named Fenton in your establishment?"

"No, sir, we have no person of that name here."

"A wrong name may have been purposely given you, sir; but the person I speak of *is* here. And you had better understand me at once," he continued. "I am furnished with such authority as will force you to produce him."

"If he is not here, sir, no authority on earth can force me to produce him."

"We shall see that presently. Corbet, bring in the officers. Here, sir, is a warrant, by which I am empowered to search for his body; and, when found, to secure him, in order that he may be restored to his just rights, from which he has been debarred by a course of villany worthy of being concocted in hell itself."

"Family reasons, sir, frequently render it necessary that patients should enter this establishment under fictitious names. But these are matters with which I have nothing to do. My object is to comply with the wishes of their relatives."

"Your object, sir, should be to cure, rather than to keep them; to conduct your establishment as a house of recovery, not as a prison—of course, I mean where the patient is curable. I demand, sir, that you will find this young man, and produce him to me."

"But provided I cannot do so," replied the doctor, doggedly, "what then?"

"Why, in that case, we are in possession of a warrant for your own arrest, under the proclamation which was originally published in the 'Hue and Cry,' for his detention. Sir, you are now aware of the alternative. You produce the person we require, or you accompany us yourself. It has been sworn that he is in your keeping."

"I cannot do what is impossible. I will, however, conduct you through all the private rooms of the establishment, and if you can find or identify the person you want, I am satisfied. It is quite possible he may be with me; but I don't know, nor have I ever known him by the name of Fenton. It's a name I've never heard in my establishment. Come, sir, I am ready to show you every room in my house."

By this time the officers, accompanied by Corbet, entered, and all followed the doctor in a body to aid in the search. The search, however, was fruitless. Every room, cell, and cranny that was visible in the establishment underwent a strict examination, as did their unhappy occupants. All, however, in vain; and the doctor now was about to assume a tone of insolence and triumph, when Corbet said:

"Doctor, all seems plain here. *You have done your duty.*"

"Yes," he replied, "I always do so. No man in the kingdom has given greater satisfaction, nor stands higher in that painful department of our profession to which I have devoted myself."

"Yes, doctor," repeated Corbet, with one of his bitterest grins; "*you have done your duty;* and for that reason I ask you to folly me."

"Where to, my good fellow?" asked the other, somewhat crestfallen. "What do you mean?"

"I think I spake plainly enough. I say, folly me. I thiuk, too, I know something about the outs and ins, the ups and downs of this house still. Come, sir, we'll show you how you've done your duty; but listen to me, before we go one foot further– if he's dead before *my* time has come, I'll have your life, if I was to swing on a thousand gallowses."

One of the officers here tapped the doctor authoritatively on the shoulder, and said, "Proceed, sir, we are losing time."

The doctor saw at once that further resistance was useless.

"By the by," said he, "there is one patient in the house that I completely forgot. He is so desperate and outrageous, however, that we were compelled, within the last week or so, to try the severest discipline with him. He, however, cannot be the person you want, for his name is Moore; at least, that is the name under which he was sent here."

Down in a narrow, dark dungeon, where the damp and stench were intolerable, and nothing could be seen until a light was procured, they found something lying on filthy straw that had human shape. The hair and beard were long and overgrown; the features, begrimed with filth, were such as the sharpest eye could not recognize; and the whole body was so worn and emaciated, so ragged and tattered in appearance, that it was evident at a glance that foul practices must have been resorted to in order to tamper with life."

"Now, sir," said the doctor, addressing the stranger, "I will leave you and your friends to examine the patient, as perhaps you might feel my presence a restraint upon you."

The stranger, after a glance or two at Fenton, turned around, and said, sternly, "Peace-officer, arrest that man, and remove him to the parlor as your prisoner. But hold," he added, "let us first ascertain whether this is Mr. Fenton or not."

"I will soon tell you, sir," said Corbet, approaching the object before them, and feeling the left side of his neck.

"It is him, sir," he said; "here he is, sure enough, at last."

"Well, then," repeated the stranger, "arrest that man, as I said, and let two of you accompany him to the parlor, and detain him there until we join you."

On raising the wretched young man, they found that life was barely in him; he had been asleep, and being roused up, he screamed aloud.

"Oh," said he, "I am not able to bear it —don't *scourge* me, I *am* dying; I am doing all I can to die. Why did you disturb me? I dreamt that I was on my mother's knee, and that she was kissing me. What is this? What brings so many of you now? I wish I had told the strange gentleman in the inn everything; but I feared he was my enemy, and perhaps he was. I am very hungry."

"Merciful God!" exclaimed the stranger; "are such things done in a free and Christian country? Bring him up to the parlor," he added, "and let him be shaved and cleansed; but be careful of him, for his lamp of life is nearly exhausted. I thank you, Corbet, for the suggestion of the linen and clothes. What could we have done without them? It would have been impossible to fetch him in this trim."

We must pass over these disagreeable details. It is enough to say that poor Fenton was put into clean linen and decent clothes, and that in a couple of hours they were once more on their way with him, to the metropolis, the doctor accompanying them, as their prisoner.

The conduct of Corbet was on this occasion very singular. He complained that the stench of the dungeon in which they found Fenton had sickened him; but, notwithstanding this, something like ease of mind might be read in his countenance whenever he looked upon Fenton; something that, to the stranger at least, who observed him closely, seemed to say, "I am at last satisfied: the widow's heart will be set at rest, and the plans of this black villain broken to pieces." His eye occasionally gleamed wildly, and again his countenance grew pale and haggard, and he complained of headache and pains about his loins, and in the small of his back.

On arriving in Dublin, the stranger brought Fenton to his hotel, where he was desirous to keep him for a day or two, until he should regain a little strength, that he might, without risk, be able to sustain the interview that was before him. Aware of the capricious nature of the young man's feelings, and his feeble state of health, he himself kept aloof from him, lest his presence might occasion such a shock as would induce anything like a fit of insanity—a circumstance which must mar the pleasure and gratification of his unexpected reappearance. That medical advice ought instantly to be procured was evident from his extreme weakness, and the state of apathy into which he had sunk immediately after his removal from the cell. This was at once provided; but unfortunately it seemed that all human skill was likely to prove unavailable, as the physician, on seeing and examining him, expressed himself with strong doubts as to the possibility of his recovery. In fact, he feared that his unhappy patient had not many days to live. He ordered him wine, tonics, and light but nutritious food to be taken sparingly, and desired that he should be brought into the open air as often as the debility of his constitution could bear it. His complaint, he said, was altogether a nervous one, and resulted from the effects of cruelty, terror, want of sufficient nourishment, bad air, and close confinement.

In the meantime, the doctor was committed to prison, and had the pleasure of being sent, under a safe escort, to the jail of the county that had been so largely benefited by his humane establishment.

As we are upon this painful subject, we may as well state here that he was prosecuted, convicted, and sentenced to two years' imprisonment, with hard labor.

CHAPTER XL.

Lady Gourlay sees her Son.

Having done all that was possible for poor Fenton, the stranger lost no time in waiting upon Lady Gourlay, that he might, with as much prudence as the uncertain state of the young man's health would permit, make known the long wished for communication, that they had at length got him in their possession. His task was one of great difficulty, for he apprehended that an excess of joy on the part of that affectionate woman might be dangerous, when suddenly checked by the melancholy probability that he had been restored to her only to be almost immediately removed by death. He resolved, then, to temper his intelligence in such a way as to cause her own admirable sense and high Christian feeling to exercise their usual influence over her heart. As he had promised Corbet, however, to take no future step in connection with these matters without con-

sulting him, he resolved, before seeing Lady Gourlay, to pay him a visit. He was induced the more to do this in consequence of the old man's singular conduct on the discovery of Fenton. From the very first interview that he ever had with Corbet until that event, he could not avoid observing that there was a mystery in everything he did and said—something enigmatical—unfathomable, and that his looks, and the disagreeable expression which they occasionally assumed, were frequently so much at variance with his words, that it was an utter impossibility to draw anything like a certain inference from them. On the discovery of Fenton, the old man's face went through a variety of contradictory expressions. Sometimes he seemed elated—triumphant, sometimes depressed and anxious, and occasionally angry, or excited by a feeling that was altogether unintelligible. He often turned his eye upon Fenton, as if he had discovered some precious treasure, then his countenance became overcast, and he writhed in an agony which no mortal penetration could determine as anything but the result of remorse. Taking all this into consideration, the stranger made up his mind to see him before he should wait upon Lady Gourlay.

Although a day had elapsed, he found the old man still complaining of illness, which, he said, would have been more serious had he not taken medicine.

"My mind, however," said he, "is what's troublin' me. There's a battle goin' on within me. At one time I'm delighted, but the delight doesn't give me pleasure long, for then, again, I feel a weight over me that's worse than death. However, I can't nor won't give it up. I hope I'll have time to repent yet; who knows but it is God that has put it into my heart and kept it there for so many years?"

"Kept what there?" asked the stranger.

The old man's face literally blackened as he replied, almost with a scream, "Vengeance!"

"This language," replied the other, "is absolutely shocking. Consider your advanced state of life—consider your present illness, which may probably be your last, and reflect that if you yourself expect pardon form God, you must forgive your enemies."

"So I will," he replied; "but not till I've punished them; then I'll tell them how I made my puppets of them, and when I give their heart one last crush—one grind"—and the old wretch ground his teeth in the contemplation of this diabolical vision—"ay," he repeated—"one last grind, then I'll tell them I've done with them, and forgive them; then—then—ay, but not *till* then!"

"God forgive you, Corbet, and change your heart!" replied the stranger. "I called to say that I am about to inform Lady Gourlay that we have her son safe at last, and I wish to know if you are in possession of any facts that she ought to be acquainted with in connection with his removal—in fact, to hear anything you may wish to disclose to me on the subject."

"I could, then, disclose to you something on the subject that would make you wonder; but although the time's at hand, it's not come yet. Here I am, an ould man—helpless—or, at all events, helpless-lookin'—and you would hardly believe that I'm makin' this black villain do everything accordin' as I wish it."

"That dark spirit of vengeance," replied the stranger, "is turning your brain, I think, or you would not say so. Whatever Sir Thomas Gourlay may be, he is not the man to act as the puppet of any person."

"So you think; but I tell you he's acting as mine, for all that."

"Well, well, Corbet, that is your own affair. Have you anything of importance to communicate to me, before I see Lady Gourlay? I ask you for the last time."

"I have. The black villain and she have spoken at last. He yielded to his daughter so far as to call upon her, and asked her to be present at the weddin'."

"The wedding!" exclaimed the stranger, looking aghast. "God of heaven, old man, do you mean to say that they are about to be married so soon?—about to be married at all? But I will leave you," he added; "there is no possibility of wringing anything out of you."

"Wait a little," continued Corbet. "What I'm goin' to tell you won't do you any harm, at any rate."

"Be quick, then. Gracious heaven!—married!—Curses seize you, old man, be quick."

"On the mornin' afther to-morrow the marriage is to take place in Sir Thomas's own house. Lord Dunroe's sisther is to be bridesmaid, and a young fellow named Roberts——"

"I know—I have met him."

"Well, and did you ever see any one that he resembled, or that resembled him? I hope in the Almighty," he added, uttering the ejaculation evidently in connection with some private thought or purpose of his own, "I hope in the Almighty that this sickness will keep off o' me for a couple o' days at any rate. Did you ever see any one that resembled him?"

"Yes," replied the stranger, starting, for the thought had flashed upon him; "he

is the living image of Miss Gourlay! Why do you ask?"

"Bekaise, merely for a raison I have; but if you have patience, you'll find that the longer you live, the more you'll know; only at this time you'll know no more from me, barrin' that this same young officer is to be his lordship's groom's-man. Dr. Sombre, the clergyman of the parish, is to marry them in the baronet's house. A Mrs. Mainwaring, too, is to be there; Miss Gourlay begged that she would be allowed to come, and he says she may. You see now how well I know everything that happens there, don't you?" he asked, with a grin of triumph. "But I tell you there will be more at the same weddin' than he thinks. So now—ah, this pain!—there's another string of it—I feel it go through me like an arrow—so now you may go and see Lady Gourlay, and break the glad tidin's to her."

With feelings akin to awe and of repugnance, but not at all of contempt—for old Corbet was a man whom no one could despise—the stranger took his departure, and proceeded to Lady Gourlay's, with a vague impression that the remarkable likeness between Lucy and young Roberts was not merely accidental.

He found her at home, placid as usual, but with evidences of a resignation that was at once melancholy and distressing to witness. The struggle of this admirable woman's heart, though sustained by high Christian feeling, was, nevertheless, wearing her away by slow and painful degrees. The stranger saw this, and scarcely knew in what terms to shape the communication he had to make, full as it was of ecstasy to the mother's loving spirit, yet dashed with such doubt and sorrow.

"Can you bear good tidings, Lady Gourlay," said he, "though mingled with some cause of apprehension?"

"I am in the hands of God," she replied, "and feel that I ought to receive every communication with obedience. Speak on."

"Your son is found!"

"What, my child restored to me?"

She had been sitting in an arm-chair, but on hearing these words she started up, and said again, as she placed her hands upon the table at which he sat, that she might sustain herself, "What, Charles, my darling restored to me! Is he safe? Can I see him? Restored! restored at last!"

"Moderate your joy, my dear madam; he is safe—he is in my hotel."

"But why not here? Safe! oh, at last—at last! But God is a God of mercy, especially to the patient and long-suffering. But come—oh, come! Think of me,—pity me, and do not defraud me one moment of his sight. Bring me to him!"

"Hear me a moment, Lady Gourlay."

"No, no," she replied, in a passion of joyful tears, "I can hear you again. I must see my son—my son—my darling child—where is my son? Here—but no, I will ring myself. Why not have brought him here at once, sir? Am not I his mother?"

"My dear madam," said the stranger, calmly, but with a seriousness of manner that checked the exuberance of her delight, and placing his hand upon her shoulder, "hear me a moment. Your son is found; but he is ill, and I fear in some danger."

"But to see him, then," she replied, looking with entreaty in his face, "only to see him. After this long and dreary absence, to let my eyes rest on my son. He is ill, you say; and what hand should be near him and about him but his mother's? Who can with such love and tenderness cherish, and soothe, and comfort him, as the mother who would die for him? Oh, I have a thousand thoughts rushing to my heart—a thousand affectionate anxieties to gratify; but first to look upon him—to press him to that heart—to pour a mother's raptures over her long-lost child! Come with me—oh, come. If he is ill, ought I not, as I said, to see him the sooner on that account? Come, dear Charles, let the carriage be ordered; but that will take some time. A hackney-coach will do—a car—anything that will bring us there with least delay."

"But, an interview, my lady, may be at this moment as much as his life is worth; he is not out of danger."

"Well, then, I will not ask an interview. Only let me see him—let his mother's eyes rest upon him. Let me steal a look—a look; let me steal but one look, and I am sure, dear Charles, you will not gainsay this little theft of the mother's heart. But, ah," she suddenly exclaimed, "what am I doing? Ungrateful and selfish that I am, to forget my first duty! Pardon me a few moments; I will return soon."

She passed into the back drawing-room, where, although the doors were folded, he could hear this truly pious woman pouring forth with tears her gratitude to God. In a few minutes she reappeared; and such were the arguments she used, that he felt it impossible to prevent her from gratifying this natural and absorbing impulse of the heart.

On reaching the hotel, they found, after inquiring, that he was asleep, a circumstance which greatly pleased the stranger, as he doubted very much whether Fenton would have been strong enough, either in mind or

body, to bear such an interview as must have taken place between them.

The unhappy young man was, as we have said, sound asleep. His face was pale and wan, but a febrile hue had tinged his countenance with a color which, although it concealed his danger, was not sufficient to remove from it the mournful expression of all he had suffered. Yet the stranger thought that he never had seen him look so well. His face was indeed a fair but melancholy page of human life. The brows were slightly knit, as if indicative of suffering; and there passed over his features, as he lay, such varying expressions as we may presume corresponded with some painful dream, by which, as far as one could judge, he seemed to be influenced. Sometimes he looked like one that endured pain, sometimes as if he felt terror; and occasionally a gleam of pleasure or joy would faintly light up his handsome but wasted countenance.

Lady Gourlay, whilst she looked upon him, was obliged to be supported by the stranger, who had much difficulty in restraining her grief within due bounds. As for the tears, they fell from her eyes in showers.

"I must really remove you, my lady," he said, in a whisper; "his recovery, his very life, may depend upon the soundness of this sleep. You see yourself, now, the state he is in; and who living has such an interest in his restoration to health as you have?"

"I know it," she whispered in reply. "I will be quiet."

As they spoke, a faint smile seemed to light up his face, which, however, was soon changed to an expression of terror.

"Don't scourge me," said he, "don't and I will tell you. It was my mother. I thought she kissed me, as she used to do long ago, when I was a boy, and never thought I'd be here." He then uttered a few faint sobs, but relapsed into a calm expression almost immediately.

The violent beatings of Lady Gourlay's heart were distinctly felt by the stranger, as he supported her; and in order to prevent the sobs which he knew, by the heavings of her breast, were about to burst forth, from awakening the sleeper, he felt it best to lead her out of the room; which he had no sooner done, than she gave way to a long fit of uncontrollable weeping.

"Oh, my child!—my child!" she exclaimed, "I fear they have murdered him! Alas! is he only to be restored to me for a moment, and am I then to be childless indeed? But I will strive to become calm. Why should I not? For even this is a blessing—to have seen him, and to have the melancholy consolation of knowing that if he is to die, he will die in my own arms."

"Well, but I trust, madam, he won't die. The workings of Providence are never ineffectual, or without a purpose. Have courage, have patience, and all will, I trust, end happily."

"Well, but I have a request to make. Allow me to kiss him; I shall not disturb him; and if he should recover, as I trust in the Almighty's mercy he will—oh, how I should like to tell him that the dream about his mother was not altogether a dream—that I *did* kiss him. Trust me, I will not awaken him—the fall of the thistledown will will not be lighter than the kiss I shall give my child."

"Well, be it so, my lady; and get yourself calm, for you know not his danger, if he should awaken and become agitated."

They then reëntered the apartment, and Lady Gourlay, after contemplating him for a moment or two, stooped down and gently kissed his lips—once—twice—and a third time—and a single tear fell upon his cheek. At this moment, and the coincidence was beautiful and affecting, his face became once more irradiated by a smile that was singularly serene and sweet, as if his very spirit within him had recognized and felt the affection and tenderness of this timid but loving embrace.

The stranger then led her out again, and a burden seemed to have been taken off her heart. She dried her tears, and in grateful and fervid terms expressed the deep obligations she owed him for his generous and persevering exertions in seeking out and restoring her son.

This sleep was a long one, and proved very beneficial, by somewhat recruiting the little strength that had been left him. The stranger had every measure taken that could contribute to his comfort and recovery. Two nurse tenders were procured, to whose care he was committed, under the general superintendence of Dandy Dulcimer, whom he at once recognized, and by whose performance upon that instrument the poor young man seemed not only much pleased, but improved in confidence and the general powers of his intellect. The physician saw him twice a day, so that at the period of Lady Gourlay's visit, she found that every care and attention, which consideration and kindness, and anxiety for his recovery could bestow upon him, had been paid; a fact that eased and satisfied her mind very much.

One rather gratifying symptom appeared in him after he awoke on that occasion. He looked about the room, and inquired for Dulcimer, who soon made his appearance.

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"AS THEY SPOKE, A FAINT SMILE SEEMED TO LIGHT UP HIS FACE, WHICH, HOWEVER, WAS SOON CHANGED TO AN EXPRESSION OF TERROR."

Black Baronet—Chapter XL.
p. 584.

"Dandy," said he, for he had known him very well in Ballytrain, "will you be angry with me if I ask you a question? Dandy, I am a gentleman, and you will not treat me ill."

"I would be glad to see the villain that 'ud dare to do it, Mr. Fenton," replied Dandy, a good deal moved, "much less to do it myself."

"Ah," he replied in a tone of voice that was enough to draw tears from any eye, "but, then, I can depend on no one; and if they should bring me back there——" His eyes became wild and full of horror, as he spoke, and he was about to betray symptoms of strong agitation, when Dandy judiciously brought him back to the point.

"They won't, Mr. Fenton; don't be afeared of that; you are among friends *now;* but what was the question you were goin' to ask me?"

"A question!—was I?" said he, pausing, as if striving to recover the train of thought he had lost. "Oh, yes," he proceeded, "yes; there was a pound note taken from me. I got it from the strange gentleman in the inn, and I wish I had it."

"Well, sir," replied Dandy, "if it can be got at all, you must have it. I'll inquire for it."

"Do," he said; "I wish to have it."

Dandy, in reply to the stranger's frequent and anxious inquiries about him, mentioned this little dialogue, and the latter at once recollected that he had the note in his possession.

"It may be good to gratify him," he replied; "and as the note can be of little use now, we had better let him have it."

He accordingly sent it to him by Dandy, who could observe that the possession of it seemed to give him peculiar satisfaction.

Had not the stranger been a man capable of maintaining great restraint over the exercise of very strong feelings, he could never have conducted himself with so much calmness and self-control in his interview with Lady Gourlay and poor Fenton. His own heart during all the time was in a tumult of perfect distraction, but this was occasioned by causes that bore no analogy to those that passed before him. From the moment he heard that Lucy's marriage had been fixed for the next day but one, he felt as if his hold upon hope and life, and all that they promised him, was lost, and his happiness annihilated forever; he felt as if reason were about to abandon him, as if all existence had become dark, and the sun himself had been struck out of the system of the universe. He could not rest, and only with difficulty think at all as a sane man ought. At length he resolved to see the baronet, at the risk of life or death—in spite of every obstacle—in despite of all opposition;—perish social forms and usages—perish the insolence of wealth, and the jealous restrictions of parental tyranny. Yes, perish one and all, sooner than he, a man, with an unshrinking heart, and a strong arm, should tamely suffer that noble girl to be sacrificed, ay, murdered, at the shrine of a black and guilty ambition. Agitated, urged, maddened, by these considerations, he went to the baronet's house with a hope of seeing him, but that hope was frustrated. Sir Thomas was out.

"Was Miss Gourlay at home?"

"No; she too had gone out with her father," replied Gibson, who happened to open the door.

"Would you be kind enough, sir, to deliver a note to Miss Gourlay?"

"I could not, sir; I dare not."

"I will give you five pounds, if you do."

"It is impossible, sir; I should lose my situation instantly if I attempted to deliver it. Miss Gourlay, sir, will receive no letters unless through her father's hands, and besides, sir, we have repeatedly had the most positive orders not to receive any from you, above all men living."

"I will give you ten pounds."

Gibson shook his head, but at the same time the expression of his countenance began manifestly to relax, and he licked his lips as he replied, "I—really—could—not—sir."

"Twenty."

The fellow paused and looked stealthily in every direction, when, just at the moment he was about to entertain the subject, Thomas Corbet, the house-steward, came forward from the front parlor where he evidently had been listening, and asked Gibson what was the matter.

"This gentleman," said Gibson, "ahem—is anxious to have a—ahem—he was inquiring for Sir Thomas."

"Gibson, go down stairs," said Corbet. "You had better do so. I have ears. Gibson. Go down at once, and leave the gentleman to me."

Gibson again licked his lips, shrugged his shoulders, and with a visage rather blank and disappointed, slunk away as he had been desired. When he had gone,

"You wish, sir," said Corbet, "to have a note delivered to Miss Gourlay?"

"I do, and will give you twenty pounds if you deliver it."

"Hand me the money quietly," replied Corbet, "and the note also. I shall then give you a friend's advice."

The stranger immediately placed both

the money and the note in his hands; when Corbet, having put them in his pocket, said, "I will deliver the note, sir; but go to my father, and ask *him* to prevent this marriage; and, above all things, to direct you how to act. If any man can serve you in the business, he can."

"Could you not let me see Miss Gourlay herself?" said the stranger.

"No, sir; she has promised her father neither to see you, nor to write to you, nor to receive any letters from you."

"But I *must* see Sir Thomas himself," said the stranger determinedly.

"You seem a good deal excited, sir," replied Corbet; "pray, be calm, and listen to me. I shall be obliged to put this letter under a blank cover, which I will address in a feigned hand, in order that she may even receive it. As for her father, he would not see you, nor enter into any explanation whatsoever with you. In fact, he is almost out of his mind with delight and terror; with delight, that the marriage is at length about to take place, and with terror, lest something might occur to prevent it. One word, sir. I see Gibson peeping up. Go and see my father; you have seen him more than once before."

On the part of Corbet, the stranger remarked that there was something sneaking, slightly derisive, and intimating, moreover, a want of sincerity in this short dialogue, an impression that was strengthened on hearing the relation which he bore to the obstinate old sphinx on Constitution Hill.

"But pardon me, my friend," said he, as Corbet was about to go away; "if Miss Gourlay will not receive or open my letter, why did you accept such a sum of money for it?" He paused, not knowing exactly how to proceed, yet with a tolerably strong suspicion that Corbet was cheating him.

"Observe, sir," replied the other, "that I said I would *deliver* the letter only—I didn't undertake to make her read it. But I dare say you are right—I don't think she will even *open* it at all, much less read it. Here, sir, I return both money and letter; and I wish you to know, besides, that I am not a man in the habit of being suspected of improper motives. My advice that you should see my father is a proof that I am your friend."

The other, who was completely outmanœuvred by Corbet, at once declined to receive back either the letter or notes, and after again pressing the worthy steward to befriend him in the matter of the note as far as he could, he once more paid a visit to old Anthony. This occurred on the day before that appointed for the marriage.

"Corbet," said he, addressing him as he lay upon an old crazy sofa, the tarnished cover of which shone with dirt, "I am distracted, and have come to ask your advice and assistance."

"Is it a helpless ould creature like me you'd come to?" replied Corbet, hitching himself upon the sofa, as if to get ease. "But what is wrong now?"

"If this marriage between Miss Gourlay and Lord Dunroe takes place, I shall lose my senses."

"Well, in troth," replied Anthony, in his own peculiar manner, "if you don't get more than you appear to be gifted with at present, you won't have much to lose, and that will be one comfort. But how can you expect me to assist you?"

"Did you not tell me that the baronet is your puppet?"

"I did; but that was for my ends, not for yours."

"Well, but could you not prevent this accursed, sacrilegious, blasphemous union?"

"For God's sake, spake aisy, and keep yourself quiet," said Anthony; "I am ill, and not able to bear noise and capering like this. I'm a weak, feeble ould man."

"Listen to me, Corbet," continued the other, with vehemence, "command my purse, my means to any extent, if you do what I wish."

"I did like money," replied Corbet, "but of late my whole heart is filled with but one thought; and rather than not carry that out, I would sacrifice every child I have. I love Miss Gourlay, for I know she is a livin' angel, but——"

"What? You do not mean to say that you would sacrifice her?"

"If I would sacrifice my own, do you think I'd be apt to spare her?" he asked with a groan, for in fact his illness had rather increased.

"Are you not better?" inquired the stranger, moved by a feeling of humanity which nothing could eradicate out of his noble and generous nature. "Allow me to send a doctor to you? I shall do so at my own expense."

Anthony looked upon him with more complacency, but replied.

"The blackguard knaves, no; they only rob you first and kill you afterwards. A highway-robber's before them; for he kills you first, and afther that you can't feel the pain of being robbed. Well, I can't talk much to you now. My head's beginnin' to get troublesome; but I'll tell you what you'll do. I'll call for that young man, Fenton, and you must let him come with me to the wedding to-morrow mornin'. Indeed, I in-

tended to take a car, and drive over to ask it as a favor from you."

"To what purpose should he go, even if he were able? but he is too ill."

"Hasn't he been out in a chaise?"

"He has; but as he is incapable of bearing any agitation or excitement, his presence there might cause his death."

"No, sir, it will not; I knew him to be worse, and he recovered; he will be better, I tell you: besides, if you wish me to sarve you in one way, you must sarve me in this."

"But can you prevent the marriage?"

"What I can do, or what I cannot do, a team of horses won't drag out o' me, until the time—the *hour*—comes—THEN! Will you allow the young man to come, sir?"

"But his mother, you say, will be there, and a scene between them would be not only distressing to all parties, and out of place, but might be dangerous to him."

"It's because his mother's to be there, maybe, that I want him to be there. Don't I tell you that I want to—but no, I'll keep my own mind to myself—only sink or swim without me, unless you allow him to come."

"Well, then, if he be sufficiently strong to go, I shall not prevent him, upon the condition that you will exercise the mysterious influence which you seem in possession of for the purpose of breaking up the marriage."

"I won't promise to do any such thing," replied Anthony. "You must only make the best of a bad bargain, by lavin' everything to myself. Go away now, sir, if you plaise; my head's not right, and I want to keep it clear for to-morrow."

The stranger saw that he was as inscrutable as ever, and consequently left him, half in indignation, and half impressed by a lurking hope that, notwithstanding the curtness of his manner, he was determined to befriend him.

This, however, was far from the heart of old Corbet, whose pertinacity of purpose nothing short of death itself could either moderate or change.

"Prevent the marriage, indeed! Oh, ay! Catch me at it. No, no; that must take place, or I'm balked of half my revenge. It's when he finds that he has, by his own bad and blind passions, married her to the profligate *without the title* that he'll shiver. And that scamp, too, the bastard—but, no matther—I must try and keep my head clear, as I said, for to-morrow will be a great day, either for good or evil, to some of them. Yes, and when all is over, then my mind will be at aise; this black thing that's inside o' me for years—drivin' me on, on, on—will go about his business; and then, plaise goodness, I can repent comfortably and like a Christian. Oh, dear me!—my head!"

CHAPTER XLI

Dénouement.

At length the important morning, fraught with a series of such varied and many-colored events, arrived. Sir Thomas Gourlay, always an early riser, was up betimes, and paced his room to and fro in a train of profound reflection. It was evident, however, from his elated yet turbid eye, that although delight and exultation were prevalent in his breast, he was by no means free from visitations of a dark and painful character. These he endeavored to fling off, and in order to do so more effectually, he gave a loose rein to the contemplation of his own successful ambition. Yet he occasionally appeared anxious and uneasy, and felt disturbed and gloomy fits that irritated him even for entertaining them. He was more than usually nervous; his hand shook, and his stern, strong voice had in its tones, when he spoke, the audible evidences of agitation. These, we say, threw their deep shadows over his mind occasionally, whereas a sense of triumph and gratified pride constituted its general tone and temper.

"Well," said he, "so far so well: Lucy will soon become reconciled to this step, and all my projects for her advancement will be—nay, already are, realized. After all, my theory of life is the correct one, no matter what canting priests and ignorant philosophers may say to the contrary. Every man is his own providence, and ought to be his own priest, as I have been. As for a moral plan in the incidents and vicissitudes of life, I could never see nor recognize such a thing. Or if there be a Providence that foresees and directs, then we only fulfil his purposes by whatever we do, whether the act be a crime or a virtue. So that on either side I am safe. There, to be sure, is my brother's son, against whom I have committed a crime; ay, but what, after all, *is* a crime?—An injury to a fellow-creature. What is a virtue?—A benefit to the same. Well, he has sustained an injury at my hands—be it so—that is a crime; but I and my son have derived a benefit from the act, and this turns it into a virtue; for as to who gains or who loses, that is not a matter for the world, who have no distinct rule whereby to determine its complexion or its character, unless by the usages and necessi-

ties of life, which are varied by climate and education to such an extent, that what is looked upon as a crime in one country or one creed is frequently considered a virtue in another. As for futurity, that is a sealed book which no man hitherto has been able to open. We all know—and a dark and gloomy fact it is—that we must die. Beyond that, the searches of human intellect cannot go, although the imagination may project itself into a futurity of its own creation. Such airy visions are not subjects sufficiently solid for belief. As for me, if I believe nothing, the fault is not mine, for I can find nothing to believe—nothing that can satisfy my reason. The contingencies of life, as they cross and jostle each other, constitute by their accidental results the only providential wisdom which I can discern, the proper name of which is Chance. Who have I, for instance, to thank but myself—my own energy of character, my own perseverance of purpose, my own determined will—for accomplishing my own projects? I can perceive no other agent, either visible or invisible. It is, however, a hard creed—a painful creed, and one which requires great strength of mind to entertain. Yet, on the other hand, when I reflect that it may be only the result of a reaction in principle, proceeding from a latent conviction that all is not right within, and that we reject the tribunal because we are conscious that it must condemn us—abjure the authority of the court because we have violated its jurisdiction; yes, when I reflect upon this, it is then that these visitations of gloom and wretchedness sometimes agonize my mind until it becomes dark and heated, like hell, and I curse both myself and my creed. Now, however, when this marriage shall have taken place, the great object of my life will be gained—the great struggle will be over, and I can relax and fall back into a life of comfort, enjoyment, and freedom from anxiety and care. But, then, is there no risk of sacrificing my daughter's happiness forever? I certainly would not do that. I know, however, what influence the possession of rank, position, title, will have on her, when she comes to know their value by seeing—ay, and by feeling, how they are appreciated. There is not a husband-hunting dowager in the world of fashion, nor a female projector or manœuvrer in aristocratic life, who will not enable her to understand and enjoy her good fortune. Every sagacious cast for a title will be to her a homily on content. But, above all, she will be able to see and despise their jealousy, to laugh at their envy, and to exercise at their expense that superiority of intellect and elevation of rank which she will possess; for this I will teach her to do. Yes, I am satisfied. All will then go on smoothly, and I shall trouble myself no more about creeds or covenants, whether secular or spiritual."

He then went to dress and shave after this complacent resolution, but was still a good deal surprised to find that his hand shook so disagreeably, and that his powerful system was in a state of such general and unaccountable agitation.

After he had dressed, and was about to go down stairs, Thomas Corbet came to ask a favor, as he said.

"Well, Corbet," replied his master, "what is it?"

"My father, sir," proceeded the other, "wishes to know if you would have any objection to his being present at Miss Gourlay's marriage, and if you would also allow him to bring a few friends, who, he says, are anxious to see the bride."

"No objection, Corbet—none in the world; and least of all to your father. I have found your family faithful and attached to my interests for many a long year, and it would be too bad to refuse him such a paltry request as that. Tell him to bring his friends too, and they may be present at the ceremony, if they wish. It was never my intention that my daughter's marriage should be a private one, nor would it now, were it not for her state of health. Let your father's friends and yours come, then, Corbet, and see that you entertain them properly."

Corbet then thanked him, and was about to go, when the other said, "Corbet!" after which he paused for some time.

"Sir!" said Corbet.

"I wish to ask your opinion," he proceeded, "as to allowing my son to be present. He himself wishes it, and asked my consent; but as his sister entertains such an unaccountable prejudice against him, I had doubts as to whether he ought to appear at all. There are, also, as you know, other reasons."

"I don't see any reason, sir, that ought to exclude him the moment, the marriage words are pronounced. I think, sir, with humility, that it is not only his right, but his duty, to be present, and that it is a very proper occasion for you to acknowledge him openly."

"It would be a devilish good hit at Dunroe, for, between you and me, Corbet, I fear that his heart is fixed more upon the Gourlay estates and her large fortune than upon the girl herself."

If I might advise, sir, I think he ought to be present."

"And the moment the ceremony is over,

be introduced to his brother-in-law. A good hit. I shall do it. Send word to him, then, Corbet. As it must be done some time, it may as well be done now. Dunroe will of course be too much elated, as he ought to be, to feel the blow—or to appear to feel it, at all events—for decency's sake, you know, he must keep up appearances; and if it were only on that account, we will avail ourselves of the occasion which presents itself. This is another point gained. I think I may so 'Bravo!' Corbet: I have managed everything admirably, and accomplished all my purposes single-handed."

Thomas Corbet himself, deep and cunning as he was, yet knew not how much he had been kept in the dark as to the events of this fateful day. He had seen his father the day before, as had his sister, and they both felt surprised at the equivocal singularity of his manner, well and thoroughly as they imagined they had known him. It was, in fact, at his suggestion that the baronet's son had been induced to ask permission to be present at the wedding, and also to be then and there acknowledged; a fact which the baronet either forgot or omitted to mention to Corbet. Anthony also insisted that his daughter should make one of the spectators, under pain of disclosing to Sir Thomas the imposition that had been practised on him in the person of her son. Singular as it may appear, this extraordinary old man, in the instance before us, moved, by his peculiar knowledge and sagacity, as if he had them on wires, almost every person with whom he came in contact, or whose presence he considered necessary on the occasion.

"What can he mean?" said Thomas to his sister. "Surely he would not be mad enough to make Sir Thomas's house the place in which to produce Lady Gourlay's son, the very individual who is to strip him of his title, and your son of all his prospects?"

"Oh no," replied Ginty, "certainly not; otherwise, why have lent himself to the carrying out of our speculation with respect to that boy. Such a step would ruin *him*—ruin us all—but then it would ruin the man he hates, and that would gratify him, I know. He is full of mystery, certainly; but as he will disclose nothing as to his movements, we must just let him have his own way, as that is the only chance of managing him."

Poor Lucy could not be said to have awoke to a morning of despair and anguish, because she had not slept at all the night before. Having got up and dressed herself, by the aid of Alice, she leaned on her as far as the *boudoir* to which allusion has already been made. On arriving there she sat down, and when her maid looked upon her countenance she became so much alarmed and distressed that she burst into tears.

"What, my darling mistress, is come over you?" she exclaimed. "You have always spoken to me until this unhappy mornin' Oh, you are fairly in despair now; and indeed is it any wonder? I always thought, and hoped, and prayed that something might turn up to prevent this cursed marriage. I see, I read, despair in your face."

Lucy raised her large, languid eyes, and looked upon her, but did not speak. She gave a ghastly smile, but that was all.

"Speak to me, dear Miss Gourlay," exclaimed the poor girl, with a flood of tears. "Oh, only speak to me, and let me hear your voice!"

Lucy beckoned her to sit beside her, and said, with difficulty, that she wished to wet her lips. The girl knew by the few words she uttered that her voice was gone; and on looking more closely she saw that her lips were dry and parched. In a few moments she got her a glass of water, a portion of which Lucy drank.

"Now," said Alice, "that will relieve and refresh you; but oh, for God's sake, spake to me, and tell me how you feel! Miss Gourlay, darlin', you are in despair!"

Lucy took her maid's hand in hers, and after looking upon her with a smile resembling the first, replied, "No, Alice, I will *not* despair, but I feel that I will *die*. No, I will not despair, Alice. Short as the time is, God may interpose between me and misery—between me and despair. But if I *am* married to this man, Alice, my faith in virtue, in a good conscience, in truth, purity, and honor, my faith in Providence itself will be shaken; and *then* I will despair and die."

"Oh, what do you mean, my darlin' Miss Gourlay?" exclaimed her weeping maid. "Surely you couldn't think of having a hand in your own death? Oh, merciful Father, see what they have brought you to!"

"Alice," said she, "I have spoken wrongly: the moment in which I uttered the last expression was a weak one. No, I will never doubt or distrust Providence; and I may die, Alice, but I will never despair."

"But why talk about death, miss, so much?"

"Because I feel it lurking in my heart. My physical strength will break down under this woful calamity. I am as weak as an infant, and all before me is dark—in this world I mean—but not, thank God, in the next. Now I cannot speak much more, Alice. Leave me to my silence and to my sorrow."

The affectionate girl, utterly overcome, laid her head upon her bosom and wept, until Lucy was forced to soothe and comfort her as well as she could. They then sat silent for a time, the maid, however, sobbing and sighing bitterly, whilst Lucy only uttered one word in an undertone, and as if altogether to herself, "Misery! misery!"

At this moment her father tapped at the door, and on being admitted, ordered Alice to leave the room; he wished to have some private conversation, he said, with her mistress.

"Don't make it long, if you please, sir," said she, "for my mistress won't be aquil to it. It's more at the point of death than the point of marriage she is."

One stern look from the baronet, however, silenced her in a moment, and after a glance of most affectionate interest at her mistress she left the room.

"Lucy," said her father, after contemplating that aspect of misery which could not be concealed, "I am not at all pleased with this girlish and whining appearance. I have done all that man could do to meet your wishes and to make you happy. I have become reconciled to your aunt for your sake. I have allowed her and Mrs. Norton—Mainwaring I mean—to be present at your wedding, that they might support and give you confidence. You are about to be married to a handsome young fellow, only a little wild, but who will soon make you a countess. Now, in God's name, what more do you want?"

"I think," she replied, "that I ought not to marry this man. I believe that I stand justified in the sight of God and man in refusing to seal my own misery. The promise I made you, sir, was given under peculiar circumstances—under terror of your death. These circumstances are now removed, and it is cruel to call on me to make a sacrifice that is a thousand times worse than death. No, papa, I will not marry this depraved man—this common seducer. I shall never unite myself to him, let the consequences be what they may. There is a line beyond which parental authority ought not to go—you have crossed it."

"Be it so, madam; I shall see you again in a few minutes," he replied, and immediately left the room, his face almost black with rage and disappointment. Lucy grew alarmed at the terrible abruptness and significance of his manner, and began to tremble, although she knew not why.

"Can I violate my promise," said she to herself, "after having made it so solemnly? And ought I to marry this man in obedience to my father? Alas! I know not; but may heaven direct me for the best! If I thought it would make papa happy—but his is a restless and ambitious spirit, and how can I be certain of that? May heaven direct me and guide me!"

In a few minutes afterwards her father returned, and taking out of his pockets a pair of pistols, laid them on the table.

"Now, Lucy," said he solemnly, and with a vehemence of manner almost frantic, "we will see if you cannot yet save your father's life, or whether you will prefer to have his blood on your soul."

"For heaven's sake, papa," said his daughter, running to him, and throwing or attempting to throw her arms about him, partly, in the moment of excitement, to embrace, and partly to restrain him.

"Hold off, madam," he replied; "hold off; you have made me desperate—you have driven me mad. Now, mark me. I will not ask you to marry this man; but I swear by all that is sacred, that if you disgrace me—if you insult Lord Dunroe by refusing to be united to him this day—I shall put the contents of one or both of these pistols through my brains; and you may comfort yourself over the corpse of a suicide father, and turn to your brother for protection."

Either alternative was sufficiently dreadful for the poor worn and wearied out girl.

"Oh, papa," she exclaimed, again attempting to throw her arms around him; "put these fearful weapons aside. I will obey you—I will marry him."

"This day?"

"This day, papa, as soon as my aunt and Mrs. Mainwaring come, and I can get myself dressed."

"Do so, then; or, if not I shall not survive your refusal five minutes."

"I will, papa," she replied, laying her head upon his breast and sobbing; "I will marry him; but put those vile and dangerous weapons away, and never talk so again."

At this moment the door opened, and Alice, who had been listening, entered the room in a high and towering passion. Her eyes sparkled: her complexion was scarlet with rage; her little hands were most heroically clenched; and, altogether, the very excitement in which she presented herself, joined to a good face and fine figure, made her look exceedingly interesting and handsome.

"How, madam," exclaimed the baronet, "what brings *you* here? Withdraw instantly."

"How, yourself, sir," she replied, walking up and looking him fearlessly in the face; "none of your 'how, madams,' to me any more; as there's neither man nor woman to interfere here, I must only do it myself."

"Leave the room, you brazen jade!" shouted the baronet; "leave the room, or it'll be worse for you."

"Deuce a one toe I'll lave it. It wasn't for that I came here, but to tell you that you are a tyrant and a murdherer, a mane old schemer, that would marry your daughter to a common swindler and reprobate, because he's a lord. But here I stand, the woman that will prevent this marriage, if there wasn't another faymale from here to Ballyshanny."

"Alice!" exclaimed Lucy, "for heaven's sake, what do you mean?—what awful language is this? You forget yourself."

"That may be, miss, but, by the life in my body, I won't forget you. A ring won't go on you to that titled scamp so long as I have a drop of manly blood in my veins—deuce a ring!"

Amazement almost superseded indignation on the part of the baronet, who unconsciously exclaimed, "A ring!"

"No—pursuin' to the ring!" she replied, accompanying the words with what was intended to be a fearful blow of her little clenched hand upon the table.

"Let me go, Lucy," said her father, "till I put the termagant out of the room."

"Yes, let him go, miss," replied Alley; "let us see what he'll do. Here I stand now," she proceeded, approaching him; "and if you offer to lift a hand to me, I'll lave ten of as good marks in your face as ever a woman left since the creation. Come, now—am I afeard of you?" and as she spoke she approached him still more nearly, with both her hands close to his face, her fingers spread out and half-clenched, reminding one of a hawk's talons.

"Alice," said Lucy, "this is shocking; if you love me, leave the room."

"Love you! miss," replied the indignant but faithful girl, bursting into bitter tears; "love you!—merciful heaven, wouldn't I give my life for you?—who that knows you doesn't love you? and it's for that reason that I don't wish to see you murdhered—nor won't. Come, sir, you must let her out of this marriage. It'll be no go, I tell you. I won't suffer it, so long as I've strength and life. I'll dash myself between them. I'll make the ole clergyman skip if he attempts it; ay, and what's more, I'll see Dandy Dulcimer, and we'll collect a faction."

"Do not hold me, Lucy," said her father; "I must certainly put her out of the room."

"Don't, papa," replied Lucy, restraining him from laying hands upon her, "don't, for the sake of honor and manhood. Alice, for heaven's sake! if you love me, as I said, and I now add, if you respect me, leave the room. You will provoke papa past endurance."

"Not a single toe, miss, till he promises to let you cut o' this match. Oh, my good man," she said, addressing the struggling baronet, "if you're for fighting, here I am for you; or wait," she added, whipping up one of the pistols, "Come, now, if you're a man; take your ground there. Now I can meet you on equal terms; get to the corner there, the distance is short enough; but no matther, you're a good mark. Come, now, don't think I'm the bit of goods to be afeard o' you—it's not the first jewel I've seen in my time, and remember that my name is Mahon"—and she posted herself in the corner, as if to take her ground. "Come, now," she repeated, "you called me a 'brazen jade' awhile ago, and I demand satisfaction."

"Alice," said Lucy, "you will injure yourself or others, if you do not lay that dangerous weapon down. For God's sake, Alice, lay it aside—it is loaded."

"Deuce a bit o' danger, miss," replied the indignant heroine. "I know more about fire-arms than you think; my brothers used to have them to protect the house. I'll soon see, at any rate, whether it's loaded or not."

While speaking she whipped out the ramrod, and, making the experiment found, that it was empty.

"Ah," she exclaimed, "you desateful old tyrant: and so you came down blusterin' and bullyin', and frightenin' your child into compliance, with a pair of empty pistols! By the life in my body, if I had you in Ballytrain, I'd *post* you."

"Papa," said Lucy, "you must excuse this—it is the excess of her affection for me. Dear Alice," she said, addressing her, and for a moment forgetting her weakness, "come with me; I cannot, and will not bear this; come with me out of the room."

"Very well; I'll go to plaise you, miss, but I've made up my mind that this marriage mustn't take place. Just think of it," she added, turning to her master; "if you force her to marry this scamp of a lord, the girl has sense, and spirit, and common decency, and of course she'll run away from him; after that, it won't be hard to guess who she'll run *to*—then there'll be a *con. crim.* about it, and it'll go to the lawyers, and from the lawyers it'll go to the deuce, and that will be the end of it; and all because you're a coarse-minded tyrant, unworthy of having such a daughter. Oh, you needn't shake your hand at me. You refused to give me satisfaction, and I'd now scorn to notice you. Remember I cowed you, and for that reason never pretend to be a gentleman afther this."

Lucy then led her out of the room, which she left, after turning upon her master a look of the proudest and fiercest defiance, and at the same time the most sovereign contempt.

"Lucy," said her father, "is not this a fine specimen of a maid to have in personal attendance upon you?"

"I do not defend her conduct now, sir," she replied; "but I cannot overlook her affection, her truth, her attachment to me, nor the many other virtues which I know she possesses. She is somewhat singular, I grant, and a bit of a character, and I could wish that her manners were somewhat less plain; but, on the other hand, she does not pretend to be a fine lady with her mistress, although she is not without some harmless vanity; neither is she frivolous, giddy, nor deceitful; and whatever faults there may be, papa, in her head, there are none in her heart. It is affectionate, faithful, and disinterested. Indeed, whilst I live I shall look upon her as my friend."

"I am determined, however, she shall not be long under my roof, nor in your service; her conduct just now has settled that point; but, putting her out of the question, I trust we understand each other, and that you are prepared to make your father's heart happy. No more objections."

"No, sir; I have said so."

"You will go through the ceremony with a good grace?'

"I cannot promise that, sir; but I shall go through the ceremony."

"Yes, but you must do it without offence to Dunroe, and with as little appearance of reluctance as possible."

"I have no desire to draw a painful attention to myself, papa; but you will please to recollect that I have all my horror, all my detestation of this match to contend with; and, I may add, my physical weakness, and the natural timidity of woman. I shall, however, go through the ceremony, provided nature and reason do not fail me."

"Well, Lucy, of course you will do the best you can. I must go now, for I've many things to think of. Your dresses are admirable, and your *trousseau*, considering the short time Dunroe had, is really superb. Shake hands, my dear Lucy; you know I will soon lose you."

Lucy, whose heart was affection itself, threw herself into his arms, and exclaimed, in a burst of grief:

"Yes, papa, I feel that you will; and, perhaps, when I am gone, you will say, with sorrow, that it would have been better to have allowed Lucy to be happy her own way."

"Come, now, you foolish, naughty girl," he exclaimed affectionately, "be good—be good." And as he spoke, he kissed her, pressed her hand tenderly, and then left the room.

"Alas!" exclaimed Lucy, still in tears, "how happy might we have been, had this ambition for my exaltation not existed in my father's heart!"

If Lucy rose with a depressed spirit on that morning of sorrow, so did not Lord Dunroe. This young nobleman, false and insincere in everything, had succeeded in inducing his sister to act as brides-maid, Sir Thomas having asked her consent as a personal compliment to himself and his daughter. She was told by her brother that young Roberts would act in an analogous capacity to him; and this he held out as an inducement to her, having observed something like an attachment between her and the young ensign. Not that he at all approved of this growing predilection, for though strongly imbued with all the senseless and absurd prejudices against humble birth which disgrace aristocratic life and feeling, he was base enough to overrule his own opinions on the subject, and endeavor, by this unworthy play upon his sister's feelings, to prevail upon her to do an act that would throw her into his society, and which, under any other circumstances, he would have opposed. He desired her, at the same time, not to mention the fact to their father, who, he said, entertained a strong prejudice against upstarts, and was besides, indisposed to the marriage, in consequence of Sir Thomas Gourlay's doubtful reputation, as regarding the disappearance of his brother's heir. In consequence of these representations, Lady Emily not only consented to act as bride's-maid; but also to keep her knowledge of the forthcoming marriage a secret from her father.

At breakfast that morning Dunroe was uncommonly cheerful. Norton, on the other hand, was rather depressed, and could not be prevailed upon to partake of the gay and exuberant spirit of mirth and buoyancy which animated Dunroe.

"What the deuce is the matter with you, Norton?" said his lordship. "You seem rather annoyed that I am going to marry a very lovely girl with an immense fortune? With both, you know very well that I can manage without either the Cullamore title or property. The Gourlay property is as good if not better. Come, then, cheer up; if the agency of the Cullamore property is gone, we shall have that on the Gourlay side to look to."

"Dunroe, my dear fellow," replied Norton, "I am thinking of nothing so selfish. That which distresses me is, that I will lose

my friend. This Miss Gourlay is, they say, so confoundedly virtuous that I dare say she will allow no honest fellow, who doesn't carry a Bible and a Prayer-book in his pocket, and quote Scripture in conversation, to associate with you."

"Nonsense, man," replied Dunroe, "I have satisfied you on that point before. But I say, Norton, is not this a great bite on the baronet, especially as he considers himself a knowing one?"

"Yes, I grant you, a great bite, no doubt; but, at the same time, I rather guess you may thank me for the possession of Miss Gourlay, and the property which will go along with her."

"As how, Norton?"

"Why, don't you remember the anonymous note which I wrote to the baronet, when I was over in Dublin to get the horse changed? He was then at Red Hall. I am certain that were it not for that hint, there would have been an elopement. You know it was the fellow who shot you, that was then in her neighborhood, and he is at present in town. I opened the baronet's eyes at all events."

"Faith, to tell you the truth, Norton, although I know you *do* me in money matters now and then, still I believe you to be a faithful fellow. In fact, you owe me more than you are aware of. You know not how I have resisted the respectable old nobleman's wishes to send you adrift as an impostor and cheat. I held firm, however, and told him I could never with honor abandon my friend."

"Many thanks, Dunroe; but I really must say that I am neither an impostor nor a cheat; and that if ever a man was true friend and faithful to man, I am that friend to your lordship; not, God knows, because you *are* a lord, but because you are a far better thing—a regular trump. A cheat! curse it," clapping his hands over his eyes, to conceal his emotion, "isn't my name Norton? and am I not your friend?"

At this moment a servant came in, and handed Lord Dunroe a note, which he was about to throw to Norton, who generally acted as a kind of secretary to him; but observing the depth and sincerity and also the modesty of his feelings, he thought it indelicate to trouble him with it just then. Breakfast was now over, and Dunroe, throwing himself back in an arm-chair, opened the letter—read it—then another that was contained in it; after which he rose up, and traversed the room with a good deal of excitement. He then approached Norton, and said, in a voice that might be said to have been made up of heat and cold, "What disturbs you?"

Norton winked both eyes, did the pathetic a bit, then pulled out his pocket handkerchief, and blew his nose up to a point little short of distress itself. In the meantime, Dunroe suddenly left the room without Norton's knowledge, who replied, however, to the last question, under the impression that his lordship was present,

"Ah, my dear Dunroe, the loss of a true friend is a serious thing in a world like this, where so many cheats and impostors are going."

To this, however, he received no reply; and on looking round and finding that his dupe had gone out, he said:

"Curse the fellow—he has cut me short. I was acting friendship to the life, and now he has disappeared. However, I will resume it when I hear his foot on the return. His hat is there, and I know he will come back for it."

Nearly ten minutes had elapsed, during which he was making the ham and chicken disappear, when, on hearing a foot which he took for granted must be that of his lordship, he once more threw himself into his former attitude, and putting the handkerchief again to his eyes, exclaimed:

"No, my lord. A cheat! Curse it, isn't my name Norton? and am I not your friend?"

"Why, upon my soul, Barney, you used of ould to bring out only one lie at a time but now you give them in pairs. 'Isn't my name Norton?' says you. I kept the saicret bekaise you never meddled with Lord Cullamore or Lady Emily, or attempted your tricks on them, and for that raison you ought to thank me. Here's a note from Lord Dunroe, who looks as black as midnight."

"What! a note from Dunroe!" exclaimed Norton. "Why he only left me this minute! What the deuce can this mean?"

He opened the note, and read, to his dismay and astonishment as follows:

"Infamous and treacherous scoundrel,—I have this moment received your letter to Mr. Birney, enclosed by that gentleman to me, in which you offer, for a certain sum, to betray me, by placing in the hands of my enemies the very documents you pretended to have destroyed. I now know the viper I have cherished—begone. You are a cheat, an impostor, and a villain, whose name is *not* Norton, but Bryan, once a horse-jockey on the Curragh, and obliged to fly the country for swindling and dishonesty. Remove your things instantly; but that shall not prevent me from tracing you and handing you over to justice for your knavery and fraud.

"DUNROE."

"All right! Morty—all right!" exclaimed Norton; "upon my soul, Dunroe is too generous. You know he is going to be married to-day. Was that Roberts who went up stairs?"

"It was the young officer, if that's his name," replied Morty.

"All right! Morty; he's to be groom's-man—that will do; this requires no answer. The generous fellow has made me a present on his wedding-day. That will do, Morty; you may go."

"All's discovered," he exclaimed, when Morty was gone; "however, it's not too late: I shall give him a Roland for his Oliver before we part. It will be no harm to give the respectable old nobleman a hint of what's going on, at any rate. This discovery, however, won't signify, for I know Dunroe. The poor fool has no self-reliance; but if left to himself would die. He possesses no manly spirit of independent will, no firmness, no fixed principle—he is, in fact, a noun adjective, and cannot stand alone. Depraved in his appetites and habits of life, he cannot live without some hanger-on to enjoy his freaks of silly and senseless profligacy, who can praise and laugh at him, and who will act at once as his butt, his bully, his pander, and his friend; four capacities in which I have served him—at his own expense, be it said. No; my ascendancy over him has been too long established, and I know that, like a prime minister who has been hastily dismissed, I shall be ultimately recalled. And yet he is not without gleams of sense, is occasionally sprightly, and has perceptions of principle that might have made him a man—an individual being: but now, having neither firmness, resolution to carry out a good purpose, nor self-respect, he is a miserable and wretched cipher, whose whole value depends on the figure that is next him. Yes, I know—I feel—he will recall me to his councils."

At length the hour of half-past eleven arrived, and in Sir Thomas Gourlay's drawing-room were assembled all those who had been asked to be present, or to take the usual part in the marriage ceremony. Dr. Sombre, the clergyman of the parish, had just arrived, and, having entered the drawing-room, made a bow that would not have disgraced a bishop. He was pretty well advanced in years, excessively stupid, and possessed so vile a memory for faces, that he was seldom able to recognize his own guests, if he happened to meet them in the streets on the following day. He was an expectant for preferment in the church, and if the gift of a good appetite were a successful recommendation for a mitre, as that of a strong head has been before now, no man was better entitled to wear it. Be this as it may the good man, who expected to partake of an excellent *déjeûner*, felt that it was a portion of his duty to give a word or two of advice to the young couple upon the solemn and important duties into the discharge of which they were about to enter. Accordingly, looking round the room, he saw Mr. Roberts and Lady Emily engaged, at a window, in what appeared to him to be such a conversation as might naturally take place between parties about to be united. Lucy had not yet made her appearance, but Dunroe was present, and on seeing the Rev. Doctor join them, was not at all sorry at the interruption. This word of advice, by the way, was a stereotyped commodity with the Doctor, who had not married a couple for the last thirty years, without palming it on them as an extempore piece of admonition arising from that particular occasion. The worthy man was, indeed, the better qualified to give it, having never been married himself, and might, therefore, be considered as perfectly free from prejudices affecting either party upon the subject.

"You, my dear children, are the parties about to be united?" said he, addressing Roberts and Lady Emily, with a bow that had in it a strong professional innuendo, but of what nature was yet to be learned.

"Yes, sir," replied Roberts, who at once perceived the good man's mistake, and was determined to carry out whatever jest might arise from it.

"Oh no, sir," replied Lady Emily, blushing deeply; "we are not the parties."

"Because," proceeded the Doctor, "I think I could not do better than give you, while together, a few words—just a little homily, as it were—upon the nature of the duties into which you are about to enter."

"Oh, but I have told you," replied Lady Emily, again, "that we are not the parties, Dr. Sombre."

"Never mind her, Doctor," said Roberts, assuming, with becoming gravity, the character of the intended husband: "the Doctor, my dear, knows human nature too well not to make allowances for the timidity peculiar to your situation. Come, my, love be firm, and let us hear what he has to say."

"Yes," replied the Doctor. "I can understand that; I knew I was right: and all you want now is the ceremony to make you man and wife."

"Indisputable, Doctor; nothing can be more true. These words might almost appear as an appendix to the Gospel."

"Well, my children," proceeded the Doctor, "listen—marriage may be divided——"

"I thought it was rather a union, Doctor."

"So it is, child," replied the Doctor, in the most matter-of-fact spirit; "but you know that even Unions can be divided. When I was induced to the Union of Ballycomeasy and Ballycomsharp I——"

"But, Doctor," said Roberts, "I beg your pardon, I have interrupted you. Will you have the kindness to proceed? my fair partner, here, is very anxious to hear your little homily—are you not, my love?"

Lady Emily was certainly pressed rather severely to maintain her gravity—in fact, so much so, that she was unable to reply, Robert's composure being admirable.

"Well," resumed the Doctor, "as I was saying—Marriage may be divided into three heads——"

"For heaven's sake, make it only two, if possible, my dear Doctor," said Roberts: "the appearance of a third head is rather uncomfortable, I think."

—"Into three heads—first, its duties; next, its rights; and lastly, its tribulations."

The Doctor, we may observe, was in general very unlucky, in the reception which fell to the share of his little homily—the fact being with it as with its subject in actual life, that his audience, however they might feel upon its rights and duties, were very anxious to avoid its tribulations in any sense, and the consequence was, that in nineteen cases out of twenty the reverend bachelor himself was left in the midst of them. Such was his fate here; for at this moment Sir Thomas Gourlay entered the drawing-room, and approaching Lady Emily, said, "I have to apologize to you, Lady Emily, inasmuch as it is I who am to blame for Miss Gourlay's not having seen you sooner. On a subject of such importance, it is natural that a father should have some private conversation with her, and indeed this was the case; allow me now to conduct you to her."

"There is no apology whatsoever necessary, Sir Thomas," replied her ladyship, taking his arm, and casting a rapid but precious glance at Roberts. As they went up stairs, the baronet said, in a voice of great anxiety,

"You will oblige me, Lady Emily, by keeping her from the looking-glass as much as possible. I have got her maid—who, although rather plain in her manners, has excellent taste in all matters connected with the toilette—I have got her to say, while dressing her, that it is not considered lucky for a bride to see herself in a looking-glass on the day of her marriage."

"But why should she not, Sir Thomas?" asked the innocent and lovely girl: "if ever a lady should consult her glass, it is surely upon such an occasion as this."

"I grant it," he replied; "but then her paleness—is—is—her looks altogether are so—in fact, you may understand me, Lady Emily—she is, in consequence of her very delicate health—in consequence of *that*, say, she is more like a corpse than a living being—in complexion I mean. And now, my dear Lady Emily, will you hurry her? I am anxious—that is to say, *we all* are—to have the ceremony over as soon as it possibly can. She will then feel better, of course."

Dr. Sombre, seeing that one of the necessary audience to his little homily had disappeared, seemed rather disappointed, but addressed himself to Roberts upon a very different subject.

"I dare say," said he, "we shall have a very capital *déjeâner* to-day."

Roberts was startled at the rapid and carnal nature of the transition in such a reverend-looking old gentleman; but as the poor Doctor had sustained a disappointment on the subject of the homily, he was determined to afford him some comfort on this.

"I understand," said he, "from the best authority, that nothing like it has been seen for years in the city. Several of the nobility and gentry have privately solicited Sir Thomas for copies of the bill of fare."

"That is all right," replied the Doctor, "that is all excellent, my good young friend. Who is that large gentleman who has just come in?"

"Why, sir," replied Roberts, astonished, "that is Sir Thomas Gourlay himself."

"Bless me, and so it is," replied the Doctor; "he is getting very fat—eh? Ay, all right, and will make excellent eating if the cooking be good."

Roberts saw at once what the worthy Doctor was thinking of, and resolved to suggest some other topic, if it were only to punish him for bestowing such attention upon a subject so much at variance with thoughts that ought to occupy the mind of a minister of God.

"I have heard, Doctor, that you are a bachelor," said he. "How did it happen, pray, that you kept aloof from marriage?"

The Doctor, who had been contemplating his own exploits at the *déjâner*, now that Roberts had mentioned marriage, took it for granted that he wanted him to proceed with his homily, and tried to remember where he had left off.

"Oh, yes," said he, "about marriage; I stopped at its tribulations. I think I had got over its rights and duties, but I stopped at its tribulations—yes, its tribulations. Very well, my dear friend," he proceeded,

taking him by the hand, and leading him over to a corner, "accompany me, and you shall enter them now. Where is the young lady?"

"She will be here by and by," replied Roberts; "I think you had better wait till she comes."

The Doctor paused for some time, and following up the idea of the *déjâner*, said, "I am fond of wild fowl now."

"Oh, fie, Doctor," replied the Ensign; "I did not imagine that so grave a personage as you are could be fond of anything wild."

"Oh, yes," replied the Doctor, "ever while you live prefer the wild to the tame; every one, sir," he added, taking the other by the button, "that knows what's what, in that respect, does it. Well, but about the tribulations."

As usual the Doctor was doomed to be left in them, for just as he spoke the doors were thrown more widely open, and Lucy, leaning upon, or rather supported by, her aunt and Lady Emily, accompanied by Mrs. Mainwaring, entered the room. Her father had been in close conversation with Dunroe; but not all his efforts at self-possession and calmness could prevent his agitation and anxiety from being visible. His eye was unsettled and blood-shot; his manner uneasy, and his whole bearing indicative of hope, ecstasy, apprehension, and doubt, all flitting across each other like clouds in a sky troubled by adverse currents, but each and all telling a tale of the tumult which was going on within him.

Yes, Lucy was there, but, alas the day! what a woful sight did she present to the spectators. The moment she had come down, the servants, and all those who had obtained permission to be present at the ceremony, now entered the large drawing-room to witness it. Tom Gourlay entered a little after his sister, followed in a few minutes by old Anthony, accompanied by Fenton, who leant upon him, and was provided with an arm-chair in a remote corner of the room. After them came Thomas Corbet and his sister, Ginty Cooper, together with old Sam Roberts, and the man named Skipton, with whom the reader has already been made acquainted.

But how shall we describe the bride—the wretched, heart-broken victim of an ambition that was as senseless as it was inhuman? It was impossible for one moment to glance at her without perceiving that the stamp of death, misery, and despair, was upon her; and yet, despite of all this, she carried with her and around her a strange charm, an atmosphere of grace, elegance, and beauty, of majestic virtue, of innate greatness of mind, of wonderful truth, and such transparent purity of heart and thought, that when she entered the room all the noise and chat and laughter were instantly hushed, and a sense of solemn awe, as if there were more than a marriage here, came over all present. Nay, more. We shall not pretend to trace the cause and origin of this extraordinary sensation. Originate as it may, it told a powerful and startling tale to her father's heart; but in truth she had not been half a minute in the room when, such was the dignified but silent majesty of her sorrow, that there were few eyes there that were not moist with tears. The melancholy impressiveness of her character, her gentleness, her mournful resignation, the patience with which she suffered, could not for one moment be misunderstood, and the contagion of sympathy, and of common humanity, in the fate of a creature apparently more divine than human, whose sorrow was read as if by intuition, spread through them with a feeling of strong compassion that melted almost every heart, and sent the tears to every eye.

Her father approached her, and whispered to her, and caressed her, and seemed playful and even light-hearted, as if the day were a day of joy; but out strongly against his mirth stood the solemn spirit of her sorrow; and when he went to bring over Dunroe, and when he took her passive hand, in order to place it in his—the agony, the horror, with which she submitted to the act, were expressed in a manner that made her appear, as that which she actually was, the lovely but pitiable victim of ambition. Alley Mahon's grief was loud; Lady Gourlay, Mrs. Mainwaring, Lady Emily, all were in tears.

"I am proud to see this," said Sir Thomas, bowing, as if he were bound to thank them, and attempting, with his usual tact, to turn their very sympathy into a hollow and untruthful compliment; "I am proud to see this manifestation of strong attachment to my daughter; it is a proof of how she is loved."

Lucy had not once opened her lips. She had not strength to do so; her very voice had abandoned her.

Two or three persons besides the baronet and the bridegroom felt a deep interest in what was going forward, or about to go forward. Thomas Gourlay now absolutely hated her; so did his mother; so did his uncle, Thomas Corbet. Each and all of them felt anxious to have her married, in order that she might be out of Tom's way, and that he might enjoy a wider sphere of action. Old Anthony Corbet stood looking on, with his thin lips compressed closely to-

gether, his keen eyes riveted on the baronet, and an expression legible on every trace of his countenance, such as might well have constituted him some fearful incarnation of hatred and vengeance. Lady Gourlay was so completely engrossed by Lucy that she did not notice Fenton, and the latter, from his position, could see nothing of either the bride or the baronet, but their backs.

Lord Dunroe felt that his best course was to follow the advice of Sir Thomas, which was, not to avail himself of his position with Lucy, but to observe a respectful manner, and to avoid entering into any conversation whatsoever with her, at least until after the ceremony should be performed. He consequently kept his distance, with the exception of receiving her passive hand, as we have shown, and maintained a low and subdued conversation with Mr. Roberts. The only person likely to interrupt the solemn feeling which prevailed was old Sam, who had his handkerchief several times alternately to his nose and eyes, and who looked about him with an indignant expression, that seemed to say, "There's something wrong here—some one ought to speak; I wish my boy would step forward. This, surely, is *not* the heart of man."

At length the baronet approached Lucy, and seemed, by his action, as well as his words, to ask her consent to something. Lucy looked at him, but neither by her word nor gesture appeared to accede to or refuse his request; and her father, after complacently bowing, as if to thank her for her acquiescence, said,

"I think, Dr. Sombre, we require your services; the parties are assembled and willing, and the ceremony had better take place."

Thomas Corbet had been standing at a front window, and Ailey Mahon, on hearing the baronet's words, instantly changed her position to the front of Lucy, as if she intended to make a spring between her and Dunroe, as soon as the matter should come to a crisis.

In the meantime Dr. Sombre advanced with his book, and Lord Dunroe was led over by Roberts to take his position opposite the bride, when a noise of carriage-wheels was heard coming rapidly along, and stopping as rapidly at the hall door. In an instant a knock that almost shook the house, and certainly startled some of the females, among whom was the unhappy bride herself, was heard at the hall door, and the next moment Thomas Corbet hurried out of the room, as if to see who had arrived, instantly followed by Gibson.

Dr. Sombre, who now stood with his finger between the leaves of his book, where its frequent pressure had nearly obliterated the word "obedience" in the marriage ceremony, said,

"My dear children, it is a custom of mine—and it is so because I conceive it a duty—to give you a few preliminary words of advice, a little homily, as it were, upon the nature of the duties into which you are about to enter."

This intimation was received with solemn silence, if we except the word "Attention!" which proceeded in a respectful and earnest, but subdued tone from old Sam. The Doctor looked about him a little startled, but again proceeded,

"Marriage, my children, may be divided into three heads: first, its duties; next, its rights; and lastly, its tribulations. I place tribulations last, my children, because, if it were not for its tribulations——"

"My good friend," said Sir Thomas, with impatience, "we will spare you the little homily you speak of, until after the ceremony. I dare say it is designed for married life and married people; but as those for whose especial advantage you are now about to give it are not man and wife yet, I think you had better reserve it until you make them so. Proceed, Doctor, if you please, with the ceremony."

"I have not the pleasure of knowing you, sir," replied the Doctor; "I shall be guided here only by Sir Thomas Gourlay himself, as father of the bride."

"Why, Doctor, what the deuce is the matter with you? Am not I Sir Thomas Gourlay?"

The Doctor put up his spectacles on his forehead, and looking at him more closely, exclaimed,

"Upon my word, and so you are. I beg your pardon, Sir Thomas, but with respect to this *déjeâner*—homily, I would say—its enunciation here is exceedingly appropriate, and it is but short, and will not occupy more than about half-an-hour, or three-quarters, which is only a brief space when the happiness of a whole life is concerned. Well, my children, I was speaking about this *déjeâner*," he proceeded; "the time, as I said, will not occupy more than half-an-hour, or probably three-quarters; and, indeed, if our whole life were as agreeably spent—I refer now especially to married life—its tribulations would not——"

Here he was left once more in his tribulations, for as he uttered the last word, Gibson returned, pronouncing in a distinct but respectful voice, "The Earl of Cullamore;" and that nobleman, leaning upon the arm of his confidential servant, Morty O'Flaherty, immediately entered the room.

His venerable look, his feeble state of health, but, above all his amiable character, well known as it was for everything that was honorable and benevolent, produced the effect which might be expected. All who were not standing, immediately rose up to do him reverence and honor. He inclined his head in token of acknowledgment, but even before the baronet had time to address him, he said,

"Sir Thomas Gourlay, has this marriage yet taken place?"

"No, my lord," replied Sir Thomas, "and I am glad it has not. Your lordship's presence is a sanction and an honor which, considering your state of ill-health, is such as we must all duly appreciate. I am delighted to see you here, my lord; allow me to help your lordship to a seat."

"I thank you, Sir Thomas," replied his lordship; "but before I take a seat, or before you proceed further in this business, I beg to have some private conversation with you."

"With infinite pleasure, my lord," replied the baronet. "Dr. Sombre, whilst his lordship and I are speaking, you may as well go on with the ceremony. When it is necessary, call me, and I shall give the bride away."

"Dr. Sombre," said his lordship, "do *not* proceed with the ceremony, until I shall have spoken to Miss Gourlay's father. If it be necessary that I should speak more plainly, I say, I forbid the banns. You will not have to wait long, Doctor; but by no means proceed with the ceremony until you shall have permission from Sir Thomas Gourlay."

In general, any circumstance that tends to prevent a marriage, where all the parties are assembled to witness it, and to enjoy the festivities that attend it, is looked upon with a strong feeling of dissatisfaction. Here, however, the case was different. Scarcely an individual among them, with the exception of those who were interested in the event, that did not feel a sense of relief at what had occurred in consequence of the appearance of Lord Cullamore. Dunroe's face from that moment was literally a sentence of guilt against himself. It became blank, haggard, and of a ghastly white; while his hope of securing the rich and lovely heiress died away within him. He resolved, however, to make a last effort.

"Roberts," said he, "go to Sombre, and whisper to him to proceed with the ceremony. Get him to perform it, and you are sure of a certain sister of mine, who I rather suspect is not indifferent to you."

"I must decline to do so, my lord," replied Roberts. "After what has just occurred, I feel that it would not be honorable in me, neither would it be respectful to your father. However I may esteem your sister, my lord, and appreciate her virtues, yet I am but a poor ensign, as you know, and not in a capacity to entertain any pretensions——"

"Well, then," replied Dunroe, interrupting him, "bring that old dog Sombre here, will you? I trust you will so far oblige me."

Roberts complied with this; but the Doctor was equally firm.

"Doctor," said his lordship, after urging several arguments, "you will oblige Sir Thomas Gourlay very much, by having us married when they come in. It's only a paltry matter of property, that Sir Thomas acceded to this morning. Pray, proceed with the ceremony, Doctor, and make two lovers happy."

"The word of your honorable father," replied the Doctor, "shall ever be a law to me. He was always a most hospitable man; and, unless my bishop, or the chief secretary, or, what is better still, the viceroy himself, I do not know a nobleman more worthy of respect. No, my lord, there is not in the peerage a nobleman who—gave better dinners."

What with this effort on the part of Dunroe, and a variety of chat that took place upon the subject of the interruption, at least five-and-twenty minutes had elapsed, and the company began to feel somewhat anxious and impatient, when Sir Thomas Gourlay entered; and, gracious heaven, what a frightful change had taken place in him! Dismay, despair, wretchedness, misery, distraction, frenzy, were all struggling for expression in his countenance. He was followed by Lord Cullamore, who, when about to proceed home, had changed his mind, and returned for Lady Emily. He advanced, still supported by Morty, and approaching Lucy, took her hand, and said,

"Miss Gourlay, you are saved; and I thank God that I was made the instrument of rescuing you from wretchedness and despair, for I read both in your face. And now," he proceeded, addressing the spectators, "I beg it to be understood, that in the breaking off of this marriage, there is no earthly blame, not a shadow of imputation to be attributed to Miss Gourlay, who is all honor, and delicacy, and truth. Her father, if left to himself, would not *now* permit her to become the wife of my son; who, I am sorry to say, is utterly unworthy of her." "Attention!" once more was heard from the quarter in which old Sam stood, as if bearing testimony to the truth of his lordship's as-

sertion. "John," said the latter, "you may thank your friend, Mr. Norton, for enabling me, within the last hour, to save this admirable girl from the ruin which her union with you would have entailed upon her. You will now know how to appreciate so faithful and honorable a friend."

All that Dunro must have felt, may be easily conceived by the reader. The baronet, however, becomes the foremost figure in the group. The strong, the cunning, the vehement, the overbearing, the plausible, the unbelieving, the philosophical, and the cruel—these were the divided streams, as it were, of his character, which all, however, united to make up the dark and terrible current of his great ambition; great, however, only as a passion and a moral impulse of action, but puny, vile, and base in its true character and elements. Here, then, stood the victim of his own creed, the baffled antagonist of God's providence, who despised religion, and trampled upon its obligations; the man who strove to make himself his own deity, his own priest, and who administered to his guilty passions on the altar of a hardened and corrupted heart—here he stood, now, struck, stunned, prostrated; whilst the veil which had hitherto concealed the hideousness of his principles, was raised up, as if by an awful hand, that he might know what it is for man to dash himself against the bosses of the Almighty's buckler. His heart beat, and his brain throbbed; all presence of mind, almost all consciousness, abandoned him, and he only felt that the great object of his life was lost—the great plan, to the completion of which he had devoted all his energies, was annihilated. He imagined that the apartment was filled with gloom and fire, and that the faces he saw about him were mocking at him, and disclosing to each other in whispers the dreadful extent, the unutterable depth of his despair and misery. He also felt a sickness of heart, that was in itself difficult to contend with, and a weakness about the knees that rendered it nearly impossible for him to stand. His head, too, became light and giddy, and his brain reeled so much that he tottered, and was obliged to sit, in order to prevent himself from falling. All, however, was not to end here. This was but the first blow.

Lord Cullamore was now about to depart; for he, too, had become exceedingly weak and exhausted, by the unusual exercise and agitation to which he had exposed himself.

Old Anthony Corbet then stepped forward, and said,

"Don't go, my lord. There's strange things to come to light this day and this hour, for this is the day and this is the hour of *my* vengeance."

"I do not understand you," replied his lordship; "I was scarcely equal to the effort of coming here, and I feel myself very feeble."

"Get his lordship some wine," said the old man, addressing his son. "You will be good enough to stop, my lord," he proceeded, "for a short time. You are a magistrate, and your presence here may be necessary."

"Ha!" exclaimed his lordship, surprised at such language: "this may be serious. Proceed, my friend: what disclosures have you to make?"

Old Corbet did not answer him, but turning round to the baronet, who was not then in a capacity to hear or observe anything apart from the terrible convulsions of agony he was suffering, he looked upon him, his keen old eyes in a blaze, his lips open and their expression sharpened by the derisive and satanic triumph that was legible in the demon sneer which kept them apart.

"Thomas Gourlay!" he exclaimed in a sharp, piercing voice of authority and conscious power, "Thomas Gourlay, rise up and stand forward, your day of doom is come."

"Who is it that has the insolence to call my father Thomas Gourlay under this roof?" asked his son Thomas, alias Mr. Ambrose Gray. "Begone, old man, you are mad."

"Bastard and impostor!" replied Anthony, you appear before your time. Thomas Gourlay, did you hear me?"

By an effort—almost a superhuman effort—the baronet succeeded in turning his attention to what was going forward.

"What is this?" he exclaimed; "is this a tumult? Who dares to stir up a tumult in such a scene as this? Begone!" said he, addressing several strangers, who appeared to take a deep interest in what was likely to ensue. The house was his own, and, as a matter of course, every one left the room with the exception of those immediately connected with both families, and with the incidents of our story.

"Let no one go," said Anthony, "that I appointed to come here."

"What!" said Dunroe, after the strangers had gone, and with a look that indicated his sense of the baronet's duplicity, "is this gentleman your son?"

"My acknowledged son, sir," replied the other.

"And, pray, were you aware of that this morning?"

"As clearly and distinctly as you were that you had no earthly claim to the title which you bear, nor to the property of your

father," replied the baronet, with a look that matched that of the other. There they stood, face to face, each detected in his dishonor and iniquity, and on that account disqualified to recriminate upon each other, for their mutual perfidy.

"Corbet," said the baronet, now recovering himself, "what is this? Respect my house and family—respect my guests. Go home; I pardon you this folly, because I see that you have been too liberal in your potations this morning."

"You mistake me, sir," replied the adroit old man; "I am going to do you a service. Call forward Thomas Gourlay."

This considerably relieved the baronet, who took it for granted that it was his son whom he had called in the first instance.

"What!" exclaimed Lord Cullamore, "is it possible, Sir Thomas, that you have recovered your lost son?"

"It is, my lord," replied the other. "Thomas, come over till I present you to my dear friend Lord Cullamore."

Young Gourlay advanced, and the earl was in the act of extending his hand to him, when old Anthony interposed, by drawing it back.

"Stop, my lord," said he; "that hand is the hand of a man of honor, but you must not soil it by touchin' that of a bastard and impostor."

"That is my son, my lord," replied Sir Thomas, "and I acknowledge him as such."

"So you may, sir," replied Corbet, "and so you ought; but I say that if he is your son, he is also my grandson."

"Corbet," said his lordship, "you had better explain yourself. This, Sir Thomas, is a matter very disagreeable to me, and which I should not wish even to hear; but as it is possible that the interests of my dear friend here, Lady Gourlay, may be involved in it, I think it my duty not to go."

"Her ladyship's interests *are* involved in it, my lord," replied Corbet; "and you are right to stay, if it was only for her sake. Now, my lady," he added, addressing her, "I see how you are sufferin', but I ask it as a favor that you will keep yourself quiet, and let me go on."

"Proceed, then," said Lord Cullamore; "and do you, Lady Gourlay, restrain your emotion, if you can."

"Thomas Gourlay—I spake now to the father, my lord," said Corbet.

"Sir Thomas Gourlay, sir!" said the baronet, haughtily and indignantly, "Sir Thomas Gourlay!"

"Thomas Gourlay," persisted Corbet, "it is now nineteen years, or thereabouts, since you engaged me, myself—I am the man—to take away the son of your brother, and you know the ordhers you gave me. I did so: I got a mask, and took him away with me on the pretence of bringin' him to see a puppet-show. Well, he disappeared, and your mind, I suppose, was aisy. I tould you all was right, and every year from that to this you have paid me a pension of fifty pounds."

"The man is mad, my lord," said Sir Thomas; "and, under all circumstances, he makes himself out a villain."

"I can perceive no evidence of madness, so far," replied his lordship; "proceed."

"None but a villain would have served your purposes; but if I was a villain, it wasn't to bear out your wishes, but to satisfy my own revenge."

"But what cause for revenge could you have had against him?" asked his lordship.

"What cause?" exclaimed the old man, whilst his countenance grew dark as night, "what cause against the villain that seduced my daughter—that brought disgrace and shame upon my family—that broke through the ties of nature, which are always held sacred in our country, for she was his own foster-sister, my lord, suckled at the same breasts, nursed in the same arms, and fed and clothed and nourished by the same hand;—yes, my lord, that brought shame and disgrace and madness, my lord—ay, madness upon my child, that he deceived and corrupted, under a solemn oath of marriage. Do you begin to undherstand me now, my lord?"

His lordship made no reply, but kept his eyes intently fixed upon him.

"Well, my lord, soon after the disappearance of Lady Gourlay's child, his own went in the same way; and no search, no hunt, no attempt to get him ever succeeded. He, any more than the other, could not be got. My lord, it was I removed him. I saw far before me, and it was I removed him; yes, Thomas Gourlay, it was I left you childless—at least of a son."

"You must yourself see, my lord," said the baronet, "that—that—when is this marriage to take place?—what is this?—I am quite confused; let me see, let me see—yes, he is such a villain, my lord, that you must perceive he is entitled to no credit—to none whatsoever."

"Well, my lord," proceeded Corbet.

"I think, my lord," said Thomas Corbet, stepping forward, "that I ought to acquaint your lordship with my father's infirmity. Of late, my lord, he has been occasionally unsettled in his senses. I can prove this on oath."

"And if what he states be true," replied

his lordship, "I am not surprised at it. It is only right we should hear him, however. As I have already said, I can perceive no traces of insanity about him."

"Ah, my lord," replied the old man, "it would be well for him if he could prove me mad, for then his nephew, the bastard, might have a chance of succeeding to the Gourlay title, and the estates. But I must go on. Well, my lord, after ten years or so, I came one day to Mr. Gourlay—he was then called Sir Thomas—and I tould him that I had relented, and couldn't do with his brother's son as I had promised, and as he wished me. 'He is living,' said I, 'and I wish you would take him undher your own care.' I won't wait to tell you the abuse I got from him for not fulfillin' his wishes; but he felt he was in my power, and was forced to continue my pension and keep himself quiet. Well, my lord, I brought him the boy one night, undher the clouds of darkness, and we conveyed him to a lunatic asylum."

Here he was interrupted by something between a groan and a scream from Lady Gourlay, who, however, endeavored immediately to restrain her feelings.

"From that day to this, my lord, the cruelty he received, sometimes in one madhouse and sometimes in another, sometimes in England and sometimes in Ireland, it would be terrible to know. Everything that could wear away life was attempted, and the instruments in that black villain's hands were well paid for their cruelty. At length, my lord, he escaped, and wandhered about till he settled down in the town of Ballytrain. Thomas Gourlay—then Sir Thomas—had been away with his family for two or three years in foreign parts, but when he went to his seat, Red Hall, near that town, he wasn't long there till he found out that the young man named Fenton—something unsettled, they said, in his mind—was his brother's son, for the baronet had been informed of his escape. Well, he got him once more into his clutches, and in the dead hour of night, himself—you there, Thomas Gourlay—one of your villain servants, by name Gillespie, and my own son—you that stand there, Thomas Corbet—afther making the poor boy dead drunk, brought him off to one of the mad-houses that he had been in before. He, Mr. Gourlay, then—or Sir Thomas, if you like—went with them a part of the way. Providence, my lord, is never asleep, however. The keeper of the last mad-house was more of a devil than a man. The letter of the baronet was written to the man that had been there before him, but he was dead, and this villain took the boy and the money that had been sent with him, and there he suffered what I am afraid he will never get the bettlher of."

"But what became of Sir Thomas Gourlay's son?" asked his lordship; "and where now is Lady Gourlay's?"

"They are both in this room, my lord. Now, Thomas Gourlay, I will restore your son to you. Advance, Black Baronet," said the old man, walking over to Fenton, with a condensed tone of vengeance and triumph in his voice and features, that filled all present with awe. "Come, now, and look upon your own work—think, if it will comfort you, upon what you made your own flesh and blood suffer. There he is, Black Baronet; there is your son—dead!"

A sudden murmur and agitation took place as he pointed to Fenton; but there was now something of command, nay, absolutely of grandeur, in his revenge, as well as in his whole manner.

"Keep quiet, all of you," he exclaimed, raising his arm with a spirit of authority and power; "keep quiet, I say, and don't disturb the dead. I am not done."

"I must interrupt you a moment," said Lord Dunroe. "I thought the person—the unfortunate young man here—was the son of Sir Thomas's brother?"

"And so did he," replied Corbet; "but I will make the whole thing simple at wanst. When he was big enough to be grown out of his father's recollection, I brought back his own son to him as the son of his brother. And while the black villain was huggin' himself with delight that all the sufferings, and tortures, and hellish scourgings, and chains, and cells, and darkness, and damp, and cruelty of all shapes, were breakin' down the son of his brother to death—the heir that stood between himself and his unlawful title, and his unlawful property—instead of that, they were all inflicted upon his own lawfully begotten son, who now lies there—dead!"

"What is the matter with Sir Thomas Gourlay?" said his lordship; "what is wrong?"

Sir Thomas's conduct, whilst old Corbet was proceeding to detail these frightful and harrowing developments, gave once or twice strong symptoms of incoherency, more, indeed, by his action than his language. He seized, for instance, the person next him, unfortunate Dr. Sombre, and after squeezing his arm until it became too painful to bear, he ground his teeth, looked into his face, and asked, "Do you think—would you swear—that—that—ay—that there *is* a God?" Then, looking at Corbet, and trying to recollect himself, he exclaimed, "Villain, demon, devil;" and he then struck or rather

throttled the Doctor, as he sat beside him. They succeeded, however, in composing him, but his eyes were expressive of such wildness and horror and blood-shot frenzy, that one or two of them sat close to him, for the purpose of restraining his tendency to violence.

Lady Gourlay, on hearing that Fenton was not her son, wept bitterly, exclaiming, "Alas! I am twice made childless." But Lucy, who had awakened out of the death-like stupor of misery which had oppressed her all the morning, now became conscious of the terrible disclosures which old Corbet was making; and on hearing that Fenton was, or rather had been, her brother, she flew to him, and on looking at his pale, handsome, but lifeless features, she threw her arms around him, kissed his lips in an agony of sorrow, and exclaimed, "And is it thus we meet, my brother! No word to recognize your sister? No glance of that eye, that is closed forever, to welcome me to your heart? Oh! miserable fate, my brother! We meet in death. You are now with our mother; and Lucy, your sister, whom you never saw, will soon join you. You are gone! Your wearied and broken spirit fled from disgrace and sorrow. Yes; I shall soon meet you, where your lips will not be passive to the embraces of a sister, and where your eyes will not be closed against those looks of affection and tenderness which she was prepared to give you, but which you could not receive. Ah, here there is no repugnance of the heart, as there was in the other instance. Here are my blessed mother's features; and nature tells me that you are—oh, distressing sight!—that you were my brother."

"Keep silence," exclaimed Corbet, "you must hear me out. Thomas Gourlay, there lies your son; I don't know what you may feel now that you know he's your own—and well you know it;—but I know his sufferings gave you very little trouble so long as you thought that he was the child of the widow of your brother that was dead. Well now, my lord," he proceeded, "you might think I've had very good revenge upon Thomas Gourlay; but there's more to come."

"Attention!" from old Sam, in a voice that startled almost every one present.

"Yes, my lord, I must fulfil my work. Stand forward, Sir Edward Gourlay. Stand forward, and go to your affectionate mother's arms."

"I fear the old man is unsettled, certainly," said his lordship. "Sir Edward Gourlay!—there is no Sir Edward Gourlay here."

"Attention, Ned!" exclaimed old Sam, again taking the head of his cane out of his mouth, where it had got a merciless mumbling for some time past. "Attention, Ned! you're called, my boy."

Old Corbet went over to Ensign Roberts, and taking him by the hand, led him to Lady Gourlay, exclaiming, "There, my lady, is your son, and proud you may be out of him. There is the real heir of the Gourlay name and the Gourlay property. Look at him and his cousin, your niece, and see how they resemble one another. Look at his father's features in his face; but I have plenty of proof, full satisfaction to give you besides."

Lady Gourlay became pale as death. "Mysterious and just Providence," she exclaimed, "can this be true? But it is—it must—there are the features of his departed father—his figure—his every look. He is mine!—he is mine! My heart recognizes him. Oh, my son!—my child!—are you at length restored to me?"

Young Roberts was all amazement. Whilst Lady Gourlay spoke, he looked over at old Sam, whose son he actually believed himself to be (for the fine old fellow had benevolently imposed on him), and seemed anxious to know what this new parentage, now ascribed to him, could mean.

"All right, Ned! Corbet is good authority: but although I knew you were not mine, I could never squeeze the truth out of him as to who your father was. It's true, in spite of all he said, I had suspicions; but what could I do?—*I* could prove nothing."

We will not describe this restoration of the widow's son. Our readers can easily conceive it, and, accordingly, to their imagination we will leave it.

It was attended, however, by an incident which we cannot pass over without some notice. Lady Emily, on witnessing the extraordinary turn which had so providentially taken place in the fate and fortune of her lover, was observed by Mrs. Mainwaring to grow very pale. A consciousness of injury, which our readers will presently understand, prevented her from offering assistance, but running over to Lucy, she said, "I fear, Miss Gourlay, that Lady Emily is ill."

Lucy, who was all tenderness, left her brother, over whom she had been weeping, and flew to her assistance just in time to prevent her from falling off her chair. She had swooned. Water, however, and essences, and other appliances, soon restored her; and on recovering she cast her eyes about the room as if to search for some one. Lady Gourlay had her arm round her, and was chafing her temples at the time. Those lovely fawn-like eyes of hers had not far to search. Roberts, now young Sir Edward

Gourlay, had been standing near, contemplating her beautiful features, and deeply alarmed by her illness, when their eyes met; and, to the surprise of Lucy Gourlay, a blush so modest, so beautiful, so exquisite, but yet so legible in its expression, took place of the paleness which had been there before. She looked up, saw the direction of her son's eyes, then looked significantly at Lucy, and smiled. The tell-tale blush, in fact, discovered the state of their hearts, and never was a history of pure and innocent love more appropriately or beautifully told.

This significant little episode did not last long; and when Lady Emily found herself recovered, Thomas Corbet advanced, and said: "I don't know what you mean, father, by saying that the young man who has just died was Sir Thomas Gourlay's son. You know in your heart that this"—pointing to his nephew—"is his true and legitimate heir. You know, too, that his illegitimate son has been dead for years, and that I myself saw him buried."

"My lord, pay attention to what I'll speak," said his father. "If the bastard died, and if my son was at his burial, and saw him laid in the grave, he can tell us where that grave is to be found, at least. His father, however, will remember *the tattooing*."

The unexpected nature of the question, and its direct bearing upon the circumstance before them, baffled Thomas Corbet, who left the room, affecting to be too indignant to reply.

"Now," proceeded his father, "he knows he has stated a falsehood. I have proof for every word I said, and for every circumstance. There's a paper," he added, "a pound note, that will prove one link in the chain, for the very person's name that is written on it by the poor young man himself, I have here. He can prove the mark on his neck, when in outher despair, the poor creature made an attempt on his own life with a piece of glass. And what is more, I have the very clothes they both wore when I took them away. In short, I have everything full and clear; but I did not let either my son or daughter know of my exchangin' the childre', and palmin' Thomas Gourlay's own son on him as the son of his brother. That saicret I kept to myself, knowin' that I couldn't trust them. And now, Thomas Gourlay," he said, "my revenge is complete. There you stand, a guilty and a disgraced man; and with all your wisdom, and wealth, and power, what were you but a mere tool and puppet in my hands up to this hour? There you stand, without a house that you can call your own—stripped of your false title—of your false property—but not altogether of your false character, for the world knew pretty well what that was"

Corbet's daughter then came forward, and laying her hand on the baronet's shoulder, said, "Do you know me, Thomas Gourlay?"

"No," replied the other, looking at her with fury; "you are a spectre; I have seen you before; you appeared to me once, and your words were false. Begone, you are a spectre—a spirit of evil."

"I am the spirit of death to you," she replied; "but my prophetic announcement was true. I called you Thomas Gourlay then, and I call you Thomas Gourlay now—for such is your name; and your false title is gone. That young man there, named after you, is my son, and you are his father—for I am Jacinta Corbet: so far my father's words are true; and if it were not for *his* revenge, my son would have inherited your name, title, and property. Here now I stand the victim of your treachery and falsehood, which for years have driven me mad. But now the spirit of the future is upon me; and I tell you, that I read frenzy, madness, and death in your face. You have been guilty of great crimes, but you will be guiltier of a greater and a darker still. I read that in your coward spirit, for I know you well. I also am revenged, but I have been punished; and my own sufferings have taught me to feel that I am still a woman. I loved you once – I hated you long; but now I pity you. Yes, Thomas Gourlay, she whom you drove to madness, and imposture, and misery, for long years, can now look down upon you with pity!"

Having thus spoken, she left the room.

We may add here, in a few brief words, that the proof of the identity of each of the two individuals in question was clearly, legally, and most satisfactorily established; in addition to which, if farther certainty had been wanting, Lady Gourlay at once knew her son by a very peculiar mole on his neck, of a three-cornered shape, resembling a triangle.

The important events of the day, so deeply affecting Sir Thomas Gourlay and his family, had been now brought to a close; all the strangers withdrew, and Fenton's body was brought up stairs and laid out. Lady Emily and her father went home together; so did Roberts, now Sir Edward Gourlay, and his delighted and thankful mother. Her confidence in the providence of God was at length amply rewarded, and the widow's heart at last was indeed made to sing for joy.

"Well, Ned, my boy," said old Sam, turning to Sir Edward, after having been introduced to his mother, "I hope I haven't lost a son to-day, although your mother gained one?"

"I would be unworthy of my good fortune, if you did," replied Sir Edward. "Whilst I have life and sense and memory I shall ever look upon you as my father, and my best friend."

"Right," replied the old soldier; "but I knew it was before you. He was no every-day plant, my lady, and so I told my Beck. Your ladyship must see my Beck," he added; "she's the queen of wives, and I knew it from the first day I married her; my heart told me so, and it was all right—all the heart of man."

The unfortunate old Doctor was to be pitied. He walked about with his finger in his book, scarcely knowing whether what he had seen and heard was a dream, or a reality. Seeing Lord Dunroe about to take his departure, he approached him, and said, "Pray, sir, are we to have no *déjeûner* after all? Are not you the young gentleman who was this day found out—discovered?

Dunroe was either so completely absorbed in the contemplation of his ill fortune, that he did not hear him, or he would not deign him an answer.

"This is really too bad," continued the Doctor; "neither a marriage fee nor a *déjeûner!* Too bad, indeed! Here are the tribulations, but not the marriage; under which melancholy circumstances I may as well go on my way, although I cannot do it as I expected to have done—rejoicing. Good morning, Mr. Stoker."

Our readers ought to be sufficiently acquainted, we presume, with the state of Lucy's feelings after the events of the day and the disclosures that had been made. Sir Thomas Gourlay—we may as well call him so for the short time he will be on the stage—stunned—crushed—wrecked—ruined, was instantly obliged to go to bed. The shock sustained by his system, both physically and mentally, was terrific in its character, and fearful in its results. His incoherency almost amounted to frenzy. He raved—he stormed—he cursed—he blasphemed; but amidst this dark tumult of thought and passion, there might ever be observed the prevalence of the monster evil—the failure of his ambition for his daughter's elevation to the rank of a countess. Never, indeed, was there such a tempest of human passion at work in a brain as raged in his.

"It's a falsehood, I didn't murder my son," he raved; "or if I did, what care I about that? I am a man of steel. My daughter—my daughter was my thought. Well, Dunroe, all is right at last—eh? ha—ha—ha! I managed it; but I knew my system was the right one. Lady Dunroe!—very good, very good to begin with; but not what I wish to see, to hear, to feel before I die. Curse me, now, if I died without seeing her Countess of Cullamore, but I'd break my heart. 'Make way, there—way for the Countess of Cullamore!'—ha! does not that sound well? But then, the old Earl! Curse him, what keeps him on the stage so long? Away with the old carrion!—away with him! But what was that that happened to-day, or yesterday? Misery, torture, perdition!—disgraced, undone, ruined! Is it true, though? Is this joy? I expected—I feared something like this. Will no one tell me what has happened? Here, Lucy—Countess of Cullamore!—where are you? Now, Lucy, now—put your heel on them—grind them, my girl—remember the cold and distrustful looks your father got from the world—especially from those of your own sex—remember it all, now, Lucy—Countess of Cullamore, I mean—remember it, I say, my lady, for your father's sake. Now, my girl, for pride; now for the haughty sneer; now for the aristocratic air of disdain; now for the day of triumph over the mob of the great vulgar. And that fellow—that reverend old shark who would eat any one of his Christian brethren, if they were only sent up to him disguised as a turbot—the divine old lobster, for his thin red nose is a perfect claw—the divine old lobster couldn't tell me whether there was a God or not. Curse him, not he; but hold, I must not be too severe upon him: his god is his belly, and mine was my ambition. Oh, oh! what is this—what does it all mean? What has happened to me? Oh, I am ill, I fear: perhaps I am mad. Is the Countess there—the Countess of Cullamore, I mean?"

Many of his subsequent incoherencies were still more violent and appalling, and sometimes he would have got up and committed acts of outrage, if he had not been closely watched and restrained by force. Whether his complaint was insanity or brain fever, or the one as symptomatic of the other, even his medical attendants could scarcely determine. At all events, whatever medical skill and domestic attention could do for him was done, but with very little hopes of success.

The effect of the scene which the worn and invalid Earl had witnessed at Sir Thomas Gourlay's were so exhausting to his weak frame that they left very little strength behind them. Yet he complained of no particular illness; all he felt was, an easy but general and certain decay of his physical powers, leaving the mind and intellect strong and clear. On the day following the scene in the baronet's house, we must present him to the reader seated, as usual—for he could not be prevailed upon to keep his bed—in

his arm-chair, with the papers of the day before him. Near him, on another seat, was Sir Edward Gourlay.

"Well, Sir Edward, the proofs, you say, have been all satisfactory."

"Perfectly so, my lord," replied the young baronet; "we did not allow yesterday to close without making everything clear. We have this morning had counsel's opinion upon it, and the proof is considered decisive."

"But is Lady Emily herself aware of your attachment?"

"Why, my lord," replied Sir Edward, blushing a little, "I may say I think that—ahem!—she has, in some sort, given—a—ahem!—a kind of consent that I should speak to your lordship on the subject."

"My dear young friend," said his lordship, whose voice became tremulous, and whose face grew like the whitest ashes.

"Have you got ill, my lord?" asked Sir Edward, a good deal alarmed: "shall I ring for assistance?"

"No," replied his lordship; "no; I only wish to say that you know not the extent of your own generosity in making this proposal."

"Generosity, my lord! Your lordship will pardon me. In this case I have all the honor to receive, and nothing to confer in exchange."

"Hear me for a few minutes," replied his lordship, "and after you shall have heard me, you will then be able at least to understand whether the proposal you make for my daughter's hand is a generous one or not. My daughter, Sir Edward, is illegitimate."

"Illegitimate, my lord!" replied the other, with an evident shock which he could not conceal. "Great God! my lord, your words are impossible."

"My young friend, they are both possible and true. Listen to me:

"In early life I loved a young lady of a decayed but respectable family. I communicated our attachment to my friends, who pronounced me a fool, and did not hesitate to attribute my affection for her to art on the part of the lady, and intrigue on that of her relatives. I was at the time deeply, almost irretrievably, embarrassed. Be this as it may, I knew that the imputations against Maria, for such was her name, as well as against her relatives, were utterly false; and as a proof I did so, I followed her to France, where, indeed, I had first met her. Well, we were privately married there; for, although young at the time, I was not without a spirit of false pride and ambition, that tended to prevent me from acknowledging my marriage, and encountering boldly, as I ought to have done, the resentment of my relations and the sneers of the world. Owing to this unmanly spirit on my part, our marriage, though strictly correct and legal in every respect, was nevertheless a private one, as I have said. In the meantime I had entered parliament, and it is not for me to dwell upon the popularity with which my efforts there were attended. I consequently lived a good deal apart from my wife, whom I had not courage to present as such to the world. Every day now established my success in the House of Commons, and increased my ambition. The constitution of my wife had been naturally a delicate one, and I understood, subsequently to our union, that there had been decline in her family to such an extent, that nearly one-half of them had died of it. In this way we lived for four years, having no issue. About the commencement of the fifth my wife's health began to decline, and as that session of parliament was a very busy and a very important one, I was but little with her. Ever since the period of our marriage, she had been attended by a faithful maid, indeed, rather a companion, well educated and accomplished, named Norton, subsequently married to a cousin of her own name. After a short visit to my wife, in whose constitution decline had now set in, and whom I ought not to have left, I returned to parliament, more than ever ambitious for distinction. I must do myself the justice to say that I loved her tenderly; but at the same time I felt disappointed at not having a family. On returning to London I found that my brother, who had opposed all notion of my marriage with peculiar bitterness, and never spoke of my wife with respect, was himself about to be married to one of the most fascinating creatures on whom my eyes ever rested; and, what was equally agreeable, she had an immense fortune in her own right, and was, besides, of a high and distinguished family.

"She was beautiful, she was rich—she was, alas! ambitious. Well, we met, we conversed, we compared minds with each other; we sang together, we danced together, until at length we began to feel that the absence of the one caused an unusual depression in the other. I was said to be one of the most eloquent commoners of the day—her family were powerful—my wife was in a decline, and recovery hopeless. Here, then, was a career for ambition; but that was not all. I was poor—embarrassed almost beyond hope—on the very verge of ruin. Indeed, so poor, that it was as much owing to the inability of maintaining my wife in her proper rank, as to fear of my friends and the

world, that I did not publicly acknowledge her. But why dwell on this? I loved the woman whose heart and thought had belonged to my brother—loved her to madness; and soon perceived that the passion was mutual. I had not, however, breathed a syllable of love, nor was it ever my intention to do so. My brother, however, was gradually thrown off, treated with coldness, and ultimately with disdain, while no one suspected the cause. It is painful to dwell upon subsequent occurrences. My brother grew jealous, and, being a high-spirited young man, released Lady Emily from her engagement. I was mad with love; and this conduct, honorable and manly as it was in him, occasioned an explanation between me and Lady Emily, in which, weak and vacillating as I was, in the frenzy of the moment I disclosed, avowed my passion, and—but why proceed? We loved each other, not 'wisely, but too well.' My brother sought and obtained a foreign lucrative appointment, and left the country in a state of mind which it is very difficult to describe. He refused to see me on his departure, and I have never seen him since.

"The human heart, my young friend, is a great mystery. I now attached myself to Lady Emily, and was about to disclose my marriage to her; but as the state of my wife's health was hopeless, I declined to do so, in the expectation that a little time might set me free. My wife was then living in a remote little village in the south of France; most of her relatives were dead, and those who survived were at the time living in a part of Connaught, Galway, to which any kind of intelligence, much less foreign, seldom ever made its way. Now, I do not want to justify myself, because I cannot do so. I said this moment that the human heart is a great mystery. So it is. Whilst my passion for Lady Emily was literally beyond all restraint, I nevertheless felt visitations of remorse that were terrible. The image of my gentle Maria, sweet, contented, affectionate, and uncomplaining, would sometimes come before me, and—pardon me, my friend; I am very weak, but I will resume in a few moments. Well, the struggle within me was great. I had a young duke as a rival; but I was not only a rising man, but actually had a party in the House of Commons. Her family, high and ambitious, were anxious to procure my political support, and held out the prospect of a peerage. My wife was dying; I loved Lady Emily; I was without offspring; I was poor; I was ambitious. She was beautiful, of high family and powerful connections; she was immensely rich, too, highly accomplished, and enthusiastically attached to me. These were temptations.

"At this period it so fell out that a sister of my wife's became governess in Lady Emily's family; but the latter were ignorant of the connection. This alarmed me, frightened me; for I feared she would disclose my marriage. I lost no time in bringing about a private interview with her, in which I entreated her to keep the matter secret, stating that a short time would enable me to bring her sister with *éclat* into public life. I also prevailed upon her to give up her situation, and furnished her with money for Maria, to whom I sent her, with an assurance that my house should ever be her home, and that it was contrary to my wishes ever to hear my wife's sister becoming a governess; and this indeed was true. I also wrote to my wife, to the effect that the pressure of my parliamentary duties would prevent me from seeing her for a couple of months.

"In this position matters were for about a fortnight or three weeks, when, at last, a letter reached me from my sister-in-law, giving a detailed account of my wife's death, and stating that she and Miss Norton were about to make a tour to Italy, for the purpose of acquiring the language. This letter was a diabolical falsehood, Sir Edward; but it accomplished its purpose. She had gleaned enough of intelligence in the family, by observation and otherwise, to believe that my wife's death alone would enable me, in a short time, to become united to Lady Emily; and that if my marriage with her took place whilst her sister lived, I believing her to be dead, she would punish me for what she considered my neglect of her, and my unjustifiable attachment to another woman during Maria's life. All communication ceased between us. My wife was unable to write; but from what her sister stated to her, probably with exaggerations, her pride prevented her from holding any correspondence with a husband who refused to acknowledge his marriage with her, and whose affections had been transferred to another. At all events, the blow took effect. Believing her dead, and deeming myself at liberty, I married Lady Emily, after a lapse of six months, exactly as many weeks before the death of my first wife. Of course you perceive now, my friend, that my last marriage was null and void; and that, hurried on by the eager impulses of love and ambition, I did, without knowing it, an act which has made my children illegitimate. It is true, my union with Lady Emily was productive to me of great results. I was created an Irish peer, in consequence of the support

I gave to my wife's connections. The next step was an earldom, with an English peerage, together with such an accession of property in right of my wife, as made me rich beyond my wishes. So far, you may say, I was a successful man; but the world cannot judge of the heart, and its recollections. My second wife was a virtuous woman, high, haughty, and correct; but notwithstanding our early enthusiastic affection, the experiences of domestic life soon taught us to feel, that, after all, our dispositions and tastes were unsuitable. She was fond of show, of equipage, of fashionable amusements, and that empty dissipation which constitutes the substance of aristocratic existence. I, on the contrary, when not engaged in public life, with which I soon grew fatigued, was devoted to retirement, to domestic enjoyment, and to the duties which devolved upon me as a parent. I loved my children with the greatest tenderness, and applied myself to the cultivation of their principles, and the progress of their education. All, however, would not do. I was unhappy; unhappy, not only in my present wife, but in the recollection of the gentle and affectionate Maria. I now felt the full enormity of my crime against that patient and angelic being. Her memory began to haunt me—her virtues were ever in my thoughts; her quiet, uncomplaining submission, her love, devotion, tenderness, all rose up in fearful array against me, until I felt that the abiding principle of my existence was a deep remorse, that ate its way into my happiness day by day, and has never left me through my whole subsequent life. This, however, was attended with some good, as it recalled me, in an especial manner, to the nobler duties of humanity. I felt now that truth, and a high sense of honor, could alone enable me to redeem the past, and atone for my conduct with respect to Maria. But, above all, I felt that independence of mind, self-restraint, and firmness of character, were virtues, principles, what you will, without which man is but a cipher, a tool of others, or the sport of circumstances.

"My second wife died of a cold, caught by going rather thinly dressed to a fashionable party too soon after the birth of Emily; and my son, having become the pet and spoiled child of his mother and her relatives, soon became imbued with fashionable follies, which, despite of all my care and vigilance, I am grieved to say, have degenerated into worse and more indefensible principles. He had not reached the period of manhood when he altogether threw off all regard for my control over him as a father, and led a life since of which the less that is said the better.

"The facts connected with my second marriage have been so clearly established that defence is hopeless. The registry of our marriage, and of my first wife's death, have been laid before me, and Mrs. Mainwaring, herself, was ready to substantiate and prove them by her personal testimony. My own counsel, able and eminent men as they are, have dissuaded me from bringing the matter to a trial, and thus making public the disgrace which must attach to my children. You now understand, Sir Edward, the full extent of your generosity in proposing for my daughter's hand, and you also understand the nature of my private communication yesterday with your uncle."

"But, my lord, how did your brother become aware of the circumstances you have just mentioned?"

"Through Mrs. Mainwaring, who thought it unjust that a profligate should inherit so much property, with so bad a title to it, whilst there were virtuous and honorable men to claim it justly; such are the words of a note on the subject which I have received from her this very morning. Thus it is that vice often punishes itself. Now, Sir Edward, I am ready to hear you."

"My lord," replied Sir Edward, "the case is so peculiar, so completely out of the common course, that, morally speaking, I cannot look upon your children as illegitimate. I have besides great doubts whether the prejudice of the world, or its pride, which visits upon the head of the innocent child the error, or crime if you will, of the guilty parent, ought to be admitted as a principle of action in life."

"Yes," replied the earl; "but on the other hand, to forbid it altogether might tend to relax some of the best principles in man and woman. Vice must frequently be followed up for punishment even to its consequences as well as its immediate acts, otherwise virtue were little better than a name. For this, however, there is a remedy—an act of parliament must be procured to legitimatize my children. I shall take care of that, although I may not live to see it." *

"Be that as it may, my lord, I cannot but think that in the eye of religion and morality your children are certainly legitimate; all that is against them being a point of law. For my part, I earnestly beg to renew my proposal for the hand of Lady Emily."

"Then, Sir Edward, you do not feel yourself deterred by anything I have stated?"

* This was done, and the circumstance is still remembered by many persons in the north of Ireland.

"My lord, I love Lady Emily for her own sake—and for her own sake only."

"Then," replied her father, "bring her here. I feel very weak—I am getting heavy. Yesterday's disclosures gave me a shock which I fear will—but I trust I am prepared—go—remember, however, that my darling child knows nothing of what I have mentioned to you—Dunroe does. I had not courage to tell her that she has been placed by her father's pride, by his ambition, and by his want of moral restraint, out of the pale of life. Go, and fetch her here."

That they approached him with exulting hearts—that he joined their hands, and blessed them—is all that is necessary to be mentioned now.

In the course of that evening, a reverend dignitary of the church, Dean Palmer, whom we have mentioned occasionally in this narrative, and a very different man indeed from our freind Dr. Sombre, called at Sir Thomas Gourlay's to inquire after his health, and to see Miss Gourlay. He was shown up to the drawing room, where Lucy, very weak, but still relieved from the great evil which she had dreaded so much, soon joined him.

"Miss Gourlay," said he, "I trust your father is better?"

"He is better, sir, in mere bodily health. The cupping, and blistering, and loss of blood from the arms, have relieved him, and his *delirium* has nearly passed away; but, then, he is silent and gloomy, and depressed, it would seem, beyond the reach of hope or consolation."

"Do you think he would see me?"

"No, sir, he would not," she replied. "Two or three clergymen have called for that purpose; but the very mention of them threw him into a state almost bordering on frenzy."

"Under these circumstances," replied the good Dean, "it would be wrong to press him. When he has somewhat recovered, I hope he may be prevailed on to raise his thoughts to a better life than this. And now, my dear young lady, I have a favor to request at your hands."

"At mine, sir! If there is any thing within my power——"

"This is, I assure you."

"Pray, what is it, sir?"

"Would you so far oblige me as to receive a visit from Lord Dunroe?"

"In any other thing within the limits of my power, sir—in anything that ought to be asked of me—I would feel great pleasure in obliging you; but in this you must excuse me."

"I saw Lord Cullamore in the early part of the day," replied Dean Palmer, "and he told me to say, that it was his wish you should see him; he added, that he felt it was a last request."

"I shall see him," replied the generous girl, "instantly; for his lordship's sake I shall see him, although I cannot conceive for what purpose Lord Dunroe can wish it."

"It is sufficient, Miss Gourlay, that you consent to see him. He is below in my carriage; shall I bring him up?"

"Do so, sir. I am going to prevail, if I can, on papa, to take a composing draught, which the doctors have ordered him. I shall return again in a few minutes."

Sir Thomas Gourlay had got up some hours before, and was seated in an arm-chair as she entered.

"How do you feel now, papa?" she asked, with the utmost affection and tenderness; "oh, do not be depressed; through all changes of life your Lucy's affections will be with you."

"Lucy," said he, "come and kiss me."

In a moment her arms were about his neck, and she whispered encouragingly, whilst caressing him, "Papa, now that I have not been thrust down that fearful abyss, believe me, we shall be very happy yet."

He gave her a long look; then shook his head, but did not speak.

"Endeavor to keep up your spirits, dearest papa; you seem depressed, but that is natural after what you have suffered. Will you take the composing draught? It will relieve you."

"I believe it will, but I cannot take it from *your* hand; and he kept his eyes fixed upon her with a melancholy gaze as he spoke.

"And why not from mine, papa? Surely you would not change your mind now. You have taken all your medicine from me, up to this moment."

"I will take it myself, presently, Lucy."

"Will you promise me, papa?" she said, endeavoring to smile.

"Yes, Lucy, I promise you."

"But, papa, I had forgotten to say that Lord Dunroe has called to ask an interview with me. He and Dean Palmer are now in the drawing-room."

"Have you seen him?" asked her father.

"Not yet, papa."

"Will you see him?"

"Lord Cullamore sent the Dean to me to say, that it was his earnest request I should —his last."

"His last! Lucy. Well, then, see him—there is a great deal due *to a last request*."

"Oh, yes, I shall see him. Well, good-by, papa. Remember now that you take

the composing draught. I shall return to you after I have seen Lord Dunroe."

She was closing the door, when he recalled her. "Lucy," said he, "come here."

"Well, papa; well, dearest papa?"

"Kiss me again," said he.

She stooped as before, and putting her arms about his neck, kissed him like a child. He took her hand in his, and looked on her with the same long earnest look, and putting it to his lips, kissed it; and as he did, Lucy felt a tear fall upon it. "Lucy," said he, "I have one word to say to you."

Lucy was already in tears; that one little drop—the symptom of an emotion she had never witnessed before—and she trusted the forerunner of a softened and repentant heart, had already melted hers.

"Lucy," he said, "*forgive me.*"

The floodgates of her heart and of her eyes were opened at once. She threw herself on his bosom; she kissed him, and wept long and loudly.

He, in the meantime, had regained the dread composure, that death-like calmness, into which he had passed from his frenzy.

"Forgive you, papa? I do—I do, a thousand times; but I have nothing to forgive. Do I not know that all your plans and purposes were for my advancement, and, as you hoped, for my happiness?"

"Lucy," said he, "disgrace is hard to bear; but still I would have borne it had my great object in that advancement been accomplished; but now, here is the disgrace, yet the object lost forever. Then, my son, Lucy—I am his murderer; but I knew it not; and even that I could get over; but *you*, that is what prostrates me. And, again, to have been the puppet of that old villain! Even that, however, I could bear; yes, everything but *you!*—that was the great cast on which my whole heart was set; but now, mocked, despised, detested, baffled, detected, defeated. However, it is all over, like a troubled dream. Dry your eyes now," he added, "and see Dunroe."

"Would *you* wish to see Dean Palmer, papa?"

"No, no, Lucy; not at all; he could do *me* no good. Go, now, and see Dunroe, and do not let me be disturbed for an hour or two. You know I have seen the body of my son to-day, and I wish I had not."

"I am sorry you did, papa; it has depressed you very much."

"Go, Lucy, go. In a couple of hours I—Go, dear; don't keep his lordship waiting."

Poor Lucy's heart was in a tumult of delight as she went down stairs. In the whole course of her life she had never witnessed in her father anything of tender emotion until then, and the tear that fell upon her hand she knew was the only one she ever saw him shed.

"I have hope for papa yet," she said to herself, as she was about to enter the drawing-room; "I never thought I loved him so much as I find I do now."

On advancing into the room, for an instant's time she seemed confused; her confusion, however, soon became surprise—amazement, when Dean Palmer, taking our friend the stranger by the hand, led him toward her, exclaiming, "Allow me, Miss Gourlay, to have the honor of presenting to you Lord Dunroe."

"Lord Dunroe!" exclaimed Lucy, in her turn, looking aghast with astonishment. "What is this, sir—what means this, gentlemen? This house, pray recollect, is a house of death and of suffering."

"It is the truth, Miss Gourlay," replied the Dean. "Here stands the veritable Lord Dunroe, whose father is now the earl of Cullamore."

"But, sir, I don't understand this."

"It is very easily understood, however, Miss Gourlay. This gentleman's father was the late Earl's brother; and he being now dead, his son here inherits the title of Lord Dunroe."

"But the late Earl's son?"

"Has no claim to the title, Miss Gourlay. His lordship here will give you the particulars at leisure, and on a more befitting occasion. I saw the late Earl to-day, not long before his death. He was calm, resigned, and full of that Christian hope which makes the death of the righteous so beautiful. He was not, indeed, without sorrow; but it was soothed by his confidence in the mercy of God, and his belief in the necessity and wisdom of sorrow and affliction to purify and exalt the heart."

"And now, Lucy," said the stranger—for so we shall call him still—taking her hand in his, "I trust that all obstacles between our union are removed at last. Our love has been strongly tested, and you especially have suffered much. Your trust in Providence, however, like that of Lady Gourlay, has not been in vain; and as for me, I learned much, and I hope to learn more, from your great and noble example. I concealed my name for many reasons: partly from delicacy to my uncle, the late Earl, and his family; and I was partly forced to do it, in consequence of an apprehension that I had killed a nobleman in a hasty duel. He was not killed, however, thank God; nor was his wound so dangerous as it looked at first; neither was I aware until afterwards that the individual who forced me into it was

my own cousin Dunroe. It would have been very inconvenient to me to have been apprehended and probably cast into prison at a time when I had so many interests to look after; and, indeed, not the least of my motives was the fear of precipitating your father's enmity against Lady Gourlay's son, by discovering that I, who am her nephew, should have been seen about the town of Ballytrain, where, when a boy, I had spent a good deal of my early life. Had he known my name, he would have easily suspected my object. Your mother was aware of my design in coming to Ireland; but as I knew the risk of involving my uncle's children, and the good old man's reputation besides, in a mesh of public scandal at a time when I did not feel certain of being able to establish my claims, or rather my father's, for I myself was indifferent to them, I resolved to keep as quiet as possible, and not to disclose myself even to you until necessity should compel me."

Much more conversation ensued in connection with matters in which our lovers felt more or less interest. At length the gentlemen rose to go away, when Gillespie thrust a face of horror into the door, and exclaimed, bolting, as he spoke, behind the Dean, "O, gentlemen, for God's sake, save me! I'll confess and acknowledge everything."

"What's the matter, Sir?" asked the Dean.

"The dead man, sir; he's sitting up in the bed; and I know what he's come back for. You're a parson, sir, and, for heaven's sake, stand between him and me."

On proceeding to the room where the baronet's son had been laid out, they found him sitting, certainly, on the bedside, wondering at the habiliments of death which were about him. That which all had supposed to have been death, was only a fit of catalepsy, brought on him by the appearance of his father, who had, on more than one occasion, left a terrible impress of himself upon his mind, and who, he had been informed some years before, was the cause of all his sufferings. Even at the sight of Lucy herself, he had been deeply agitated, although he could not tell why. He was immediately attended to, a physician sent for, and poor Lucy felt an elevation of heart and spirits which she had not experienced for many a long day.

"Oh, do not go," she said to her lover and the Dean, "until I communicate to papa this twofold intelligence of delight; your strange good fortune, and the resurrection, I may term it, of my brother. The very object—the great engrossing object of papa's life and ambition gained in so wonderful a way! Do, pray, gentlemen, remain for a few minutes until I see him. O, what delight, what ecstasy will it not give him!"

She accordingly went up stairs, slowly it is true, for she was weak; and nothing further was heard except one wild and fearful scream, whose sharp tones penetrated through the whole house.

"Ha!" exclaimed Lord Dunroe, "here is evil. Goodness me!—it is Miss Gourlay's voice; I know it. Let us go up; I fear something is wrong with her father."

They accordingly sought the baronet's apartment, attended by the servants, whom Lucy's wild scream had alarmed, and brought also toward the same direction. On entering the room, the body of Lucy was found lying beside, or rather across that of her father, whom, on removing her, they found to be dead. Beside him lay a little phial, on which there was no label, but the small portion of liquid that was found in it was clear and colorless as water. It was prussic acid. Lucy was immediately removed, and committed to the care of Alley Mahon and some of the other females, and the body of the baronet was raised and placed upon his own bed. The Dean and Lord Dunroe looked upon his lifeless but stern features with a feeling of awe.

"Alas!" exclaimed the good Dean, "and is it thus he has gone to his great account? We shall not follow his spirit into another life; but it is miserable to reflect that one hour's patience might have saved him to the world and to God, and showed him, after all, that the great object of his life had been accomplished. Blind and impatient reasoner!—what has he done?"

"Yes," replied Dunroe, looking on him with a feeling of profound melancholy; "there he lies—quiet enough now—the tumults of his strong spirit are over forever. That terrible heart is still at last—that fiery pulse will beat no more!"

We have now very little to state which our readers may not anticipate. Lucy and Lady Emily, each made happy in the great object of woman's heart—love, only exchanged residences.

Lucy's life was a long and bountiful blessing to her fellow-creatures. Her feelings were never contracted within the narrow circle of her own class, but embraced the great one of general humanity. She acted upon the noble principle of receiving from God the ample gifts of wealth and position, not for the purpose of wasting them in expensive and selfish enjoyments, but for that of causing them to diffuse among her fellow-creatures the greatest possible portion of happiness. This she considered her high destination, and well and nobly she fulfilled

it. In this, the great and true purpose of life, her husband and she went heart-in-heart, hand-in-hand; nor were Sir Edward Gourlay, and his kind and gentle Emily, far behind them in all their good-will and good works.

Lord Dunroe, having no strength of character to check his profligate impulses, was, in the course of some years, thrown off by all his high connections, and reduced to great indigence. Norton's notion of his character was correct. The society of that treacherous sharper was necessary to him, and in some time after they were reconciled. Norton ultimately became driver of a celebrated mail-coach on the great York road, and the other, its guard; thus resolving, as it would seem, to keep the whip-hand of the weak and foolish nobleman in every position of life. Several of our English readers may remember them, for they were both remarkable characters, and great favorites with the public.

Dandy Dulcimer and Alley followed the example of their master and mistress, and were amply provided for by their friends, with whom they lived in confidential intimacy for the greater portion of their lives.

Thomas Corbet, his sister, and her son, disappeared; and it was supposed that they went to America.

M'Bride, in a short time after the close of our narrative, took a relish for foreign travel, and resolved to visit a certain bay of botanical celebrity not far from the antipodes. That he might accomplish this point with as little difficulty as possible, he asked a gentleman one evening for the loan of his watch and purse; a circumstance which so much tickled the fancy of a certain facetious judge of witty memory, that, on hearing a full account of the transaction, he so far and successfully interfered with the government as to get his expenses during the journey defrayed by his Majesty himself. His last place of residence in this country was a very magnificent one near Kilmainham, where he led a private and secluded life, occasionally devoting himself to the progress of machinery in his hours of recreation, but uniformly declining to take country exercise.

Poor Trailcudgel was restored to his farm: and Lucy's brother lived with her for many years, won back by her affection and kindness to the perfect use of his reason; and it was well known that her children, boys and girls, were all very fond of Uncle Thomas.

Old Corbet took to devotion, became very religious, and lost in temper, which was never good, as much as he seemed to gain by penitence. He died suddenly from a fit of paralysis, brought on by the loss of a thirty shilling note, which was stolen from his till by Mrs. M'Bride.

On the occasion of Lucy's marriage with her lover, Father M'Mahon, who was invited to a double wedding—both Sir Edward and Dunroe being married on the same day—rode all the way to Dublin upon Freney the Robber, in order that his friend might see the new saddle upon Freney, and the priest himself upon the new saddle. Mr. Birney was also of the party, and never was his round rosy face and comic rolling eye more replete with humor and enjoyment; and as a reward for his integrity, as well as for the ability with which he assisted the stranger, we may as well mention that he was made Law Agent to both properties—a recompense which he well deserved. We need scarcely say that old Sam and Beck were also there; that their healths were drunk, and that old Sam told them how there was nothing more plain than that there never was such a wife in existence as his Beck, and that Providence all through intended Ned to be restored to his own—he, old Sam, always acting in this instance as Adjutant under Providence. It was clear, he said—quite evident—everything the work of Providence on the one hand, and on the other, "*all the heart of man!*"

THE EVIL EYE;

OR, THE BLACK SPECTRE.

PREFACE.

THERE is very little to be said about this book in the shape of a preface. The superstition of the Evil Eye is, and has been, one of the most general that ever existed among men. It may puzzle philosophers to ask why it prevails wherever mankind exists. There is not a country on the face of the earth where a belief in the influence of the Evil Eye does not prevail. In my own young days it was a settled dogma of belief. I have reason to know, however, that, like other superstitions, it is fast fading out of the public mind. Education and knowledge will soon banish those idle and senseless superstitions: indeed, it is a very difficult thing to account for their existence at all. I think some of them have come down to us from the times of the Druids,—a class of men whom, excepting what is called their human sacrifices, I respect. My own opinion is, that what we term human sacrifices was nothing but their habitual mode of executing criminals. Toland has written on the subject and left us very little the wiser. Who could, after all, give us information upon a subject which to us is only like a dream?

What first suggested the story of the Evil Eye to me was this: A man named Case, who lives within a distance of about three or four hundred yards of my residence, keeps a large dairy; he is the possessor of five or six and twenty of the finest cows I ever saw, and he told me that a man who was an enemy of his killed three of them by his overlooking them,—that is to say, by the influence of the Evil Eye.

The opinion in Ireland of the Evil Eye is this: that a man or woman possessing it may hold it harmless, unless there is some selfish design or some spirit of vengeance to call it into operation. I was aware of this, and I accordingly constructed my story upon that principle. I have nothing further to add: the story itself will detail the rest.

CHAPTER I.

Short and Preliminary.

IN a certain part of Ireland, inside the borders of the county of Waterford, lived two respectable families, named Lindsay and Goodwin, the former being of Scotch descent. Their respective residences were not more than three miles distant; and the intimacy that subsisted between them was founded, for many years, upon mutual good-will and esteem, with two exceptions only in one of the families, which the reader will understand in the course of our narrative. Each ranked in the class known as that of the middle gentry. These two neighbors—one of whom, Mr. Lindsay, was a magistrate—were contented with their lot in life, which was sufficiently respectable and independent to secure to them that true happiness which is most frequently annexed to the middle station. Lindsay was a man of a kind and liberal heart, easy and passive in his nature, but with a good deal of sarcastic humor, yet neither severe nor prejudiced, and, consequently, a popular magistrate as well as a popular man. Goodwin might be said to possess a similar disposition; but he was of a more quiet and unobtrusive character than his cheerful neighbor. His mood of mind was placid and serene, and his heart as tender and affectionate as ever beat in a human bosom. His principal enjoyment lay in domestic life—in the society, in fact, of his wife and one beautiful daughter, his only child, a girl of nineteen when our tale opens. Lindsay's family consisted of one son and two daughters; but his wife, who was a widow when he married her, had another son by her first husband, who had been abroad almost since his childhood, with a grand-uncle, whose intention was to provide for him, being a man of great wealth and a bachelor.

We have already said that the two families were upon the most intimate and friendly

terms; but to this there was one exception in the person of Mrs. Lindsay, whose natural disposition was impetuous, implacable, and overbearing; equally destitute of domestic tenderness and good temper. She was, in fact, a woman whom not even her own children, gifted as they were with the best and most affectionate dispositions, could love as children ought to love a parent. Utterly devoid of charity, she was never known to bestow a kind act upon the poor or distressed, or a kind word upon the absent. Vituperation and calumny were her constant weapons; and one would imagine, by the frequency and bitterness with which she wielded them, that she was in a state of perpetual warfare with society. Such, indeed, was the case; but the evils which resulted from her wanton and indefensible aggressions upon private character almost uniformly recoiled upon her own head; for, as far as her name was known, she was not only unpopular, but odious. Her husband was a man naturally fond of peace and quietness in his own house and family; and, rather than occasion anything in the shape of domestic disturbance, he continued to treat her intemperate authority sometimes with indifference, sometimes with some sarcastic observation or other, and occasionally with open and undisguised contempt. In some instances, however, he departed from this apathetic line of conduct, and turned upon her with a degree of asperity and violence that was as impetuous as it was decisive. His reproaches were then general, broad, fearful; but these were seldom resorted to unless when her temper had gone beyond all reasonable limits of endurance, or in defence of the absent or inoffensive. It mattered not, however, what the reason may have been, they never failed to gain their object at the time; for the woman, though mischievous and wicked, ultimately quailed, yet not without resistance, before the exasperated resentment of her husband. Those occasional victories, however, which he gained over her with reluctance, never prevented her from treating him, in the ordinary business of life, with a systematic exhibition of abuse and scorn. Much of this he bore, as we have said; but whenever he chose to retort upon her with her own weapons in their common and minor skirmishes, she found his sarcasm too cool and biting for a temper so violent as hers, and the consequence was, that nothing enraged her more than to see him amuse himself at her expense.

This woman had a brother, who also lived in the same neighborhood, and who, although so closely related to her by blood, was, nevertheless, as different from her in both character and temper as good could be from evil. He was wealthy and generous, free from everything like a worldly spirit, and a warm but unostentatious benefactor to the poor, and to such individuals as upon inquiry he found to be entitled to his beneficence. His wife had, some years before, died of decline, which, it seems, was hereditary in her family. He felt her death as a calamity which depressed his heart to the uttermost depths of affliction, and from which, indeed, he never recovered. All that remained to him after her demise was a beautiful little girl, around whom his affections gathered with a degree of tenderness that was rendered almost painful by the apprehension of her loss. Agnes, from her eighth or ninth year, began to manifest slight symptoms of the same fatal malady which had carried away her mother. These attacks filled his heart with those fearful forebodings, which, whilst they threw him into a state of terror and alarm, at the same time rendered the love he bore her such as may be imagined, but cannot be expressed. It is only when we feel the probability of losing a beloved object that the heart awakens to a more exquisite perception of its affections for it, and wonders, when the painful symptoms of disease appear, why it was heretofore unconscious of the full extent of its love. Such was the nature of Mr. Hamilton's feelings for his daughter, whenever the short cough or hectic cheek happened to make their appearance from time to time, and foreshadow, as it were, the certainty of an early death; and then he should be childless—a lonely man in the world, possessing a heart overflowing with affection, and yet without an object on which he could lavish it, as now, with happiness and delight. He looked, therefore, upon decline as upon an approaching foe, and the father's heart became sentinel for the welfare of his child, and watched every symptom of the dreaded disease that threatened her, with a vigilance that never slept. Under such circumstances we need not again assure our readers that his parental tenderness for this beautiful girl—now his "only one," as he used to call her—was such as is rare even in the most affectionate families; but in this case the slight and doubtful tenure which his apprehensions told him he had of her existence raised his love of her almost to idolatry. Still she improved in person, grace, and intellect; and although an occasional shadow, as transient as that which passes over and makes dim the flowery fields of May or April, darkened her father's heart for a time, yet it passed away, and she danced on in the light of youthful happiness, without a

single trace of anxiety or care. Her father's affection for her was not, however, confined to herself; on the contrary, it passed to and embraced every object that was dear to her —her favorite books, her favorite playthings, and her favorite companions. Among the latter, without a single rival, stood her young friend, Alice Goodwin, who was then about her own age. Never was the love of sisters greater or more beautiful than that which knit the innocent hearts of those two girls together. Their affections, in short, were so dependent upon each other that separation and absence became a source of anxiety and uneasiness to each. Neither of them had a sister, and in the fervor of their attachment, they entered into a solemn engagement that each of them should consider herself the sister of the other. This innocent experiment of the heart—for such we must consider it in these two sisterless girls —was at least rewarded by complete success. A new affinity was superadded to friendship, and the force of imagination completed what the heart begun.

Next to Agnes was Alice Goodwin awarded a place in Mr. Hamilton's heart. 'Tis true he had nieces; but in consequence of the bitter and exasperating temper of their mother, who was neither more nor less than n incendiary among her relations, he had ot spoken to her for years; and this fact ccasioned a comparative estrangement beween the families. Sometimes, however, er nieces and she visited, and were always upon good terms; but Agnes's heart had been preoccupied; and even if it had not, the heartless predictions of her aunt, who entertained her with the cheering and consoling information that "she had death in her face," and that "she knew from the high color of her cheek that she would soon follow her mother," would have naturally estranged the families. Now, of this apprehension, above all others, it was the father's wish that Agnes should remain ignorant; and when she repeated to him, with tears in her eyes, the merciless purport of her aunt's observations, he replied, with a degree of calm resentment which was unusual to him,

"Agnes, my love, let not anything your aunt may say alarm you in the least; she is no prophetess, my dear child. Your life, as is that of all his creatures, is in the hands of God who gave it. I know her avaricious and acrimonious disposition—her love of wealth, and her anxiety to aggrandize her family. As it is, she will live to regret the day she ever uttered those cruel words to you, my child. You shall visit at your uncle's no more. Whenever the other members of her family may please to come here, we shall receive them with kindness and affection; but I will not suffer you to run the risk of listening to such unfeeling prognostications in future."

In the meantime her health continued in a state sufficiently satisfactory to her father. It is true an occasional alarm was felt from time to time, as a slight cold, accompanied with its hard and unusual cough, happened to supervene; but in general it soon disappeared, and in a brief space she became perfectly recovered, and free from every symptom of the dreadful malady.

In this way the tenor of her pure and innocent life went on, until she reached her sixteenth year. Never did a happier young creature enjoy existence—never lived a being more worthy of happiness. Her inseparable and bosom friend was Alice Goodwin, now her sister according to their artless compact of love. They spent weeks and months alternately with each other; but her father never permitted a day to pass without seeing her, and every visit filled his happy spirit with more hopeful anticipations.

At this period it occurred to him to have their portraits drawn, and on hearing him mention this intention, their young hearts were ecstatic with delight.

"But, papa," said Agnes, "if you do I have a favor to ask of you."

"Granted, Agnes, if it be possible."

"O, quite possible, papa; it is to get both our portraits painted in the same frame, for, do you know, I don't think I could feel happy if Alice's portrait was separated from mine."

"It shall be done, darling—it shall be done."

And it *was* done, accordingly; for what father could refuse a request founded upon an affection so tender and beautiful as theirs?

Agnes has now entered her seventeenth year—but how is this? Why does her cheek begin to get alternately pale and red? And why does the horizon of the father's heart begin to darken? Alas! it is so—the spoiler is upon her at last. Appetite is gone —her spirits are gone, unless in these occasional ebullitions of vivacity which resemble the lightnings which flash from the cloud that is gathering over her. It would be painful to dwell minutely upon the history of her illness—upon her angelic patience and submission to the will of God, and upon the affection, now consecrated by approaching death into something sacred, which she exhibited to her father and Alice. The latter was never from her during the progress of that mournful decline. The poor dying girl

found all the tenderest offices of love and friendship anticipated. Except heaven she had scarcely anything to wish for. But who can even imagine the hopeless agony of her father's soul? She had been the single remaining plank which bore him through a troubled ocean to a calm and delightful harbor; but now she is going down, leaving him to struggle, weak and exhausted for a little, and then the same dark waves will cover them both.

At length the dreadful hour arrived—the last slight spasm of death was over, and her spotless soul passed into heaven from the bereaved arms of her hopeless and distracted father, who was reduced by the depth and wildness of despair to a state of agony which might wring compassion from a demon.

On the morning of her interment, Alice, completely prostrated by excess of grief and watching, was assisted to bed, being unable to accomplish even the short distance to her father's house, and for nearly a fortnight serious doubts were entertained of her recovery. Her constitution, however, though not naturally strong, enabled her to rally, and in three weeks' time she was barely able to go home to her family. On the day following Mr. Hamilton called to see her—a task to which, under the dreadful weight of his sorrow, he was scarcely equal. He said he considered it, however, his duty, and he accordingly went. His visit, too, was very short, nor had he much to say, and it was well he had not; for he could by no exertion have summoned sufficient fortitude for a lengthened conversation on a subject arising from the loss of a child so deeply beloved.

"Alice," said he, "I know the arrangement entered into between you—and—and——"

Here he was overcome, and could not for a few minutes maintain sufficient calmness to proceed, and poor Alice was almost as deeply affected as himself. At last he strove to go on.

"You know," he resumed, "the agreement I allude to. You were to be sisters, and you *were* sisters. Well, my dear Alice, for *her* sake, as well as for your own, and as *she* looked upon you in that affectionate light, the contract between you, as far as it now can be done, shall be maintained. Henceforth you are *my daughter*. I adopt you. All that she was to have shall be yours, reverting, however, should you die without issue, to my nephew, Henry Woodward; and should he die childless, to his brother, Charles Lindsay; and should he die without offspring, then to my niece Maria. I have arranged it so, and have to say that, except the hope of meeting my child in death, it is now the only consolation left me. I am, I know, fulfilling her wishes; and, my dear Alice, you will relieve my heart—my broken heart—by accepting it."

"O, would to God," replied Alice, sobbing bitterly, "that I could give a thousand times as much to have our beloved Agnes back again! I have now no sister! Alas! alas! I have now no sister!"

"Ah, my child," he replied, "for now I will call you so, *your* grief, though deep and poignant, will pass away in time, but mine will abide with me whilst I stay here. That period, however, will not be long; the prop of my existence, the source of my happiness, is gone; and I will never know what happiness is until I rejoin her and her blessed mother. Good-by, my daughter; I will have neither reply nor remonstrance, nor will I be moved by any argument from this my resolution."

He then passed out of the house, entered his carriage with some difficulty, and proceeded home with a heart considerably relieved by what he had done.

It was in vain that Alice and her father *did* subsequently remonstrate with him upon the subject. He refused to listen to them, and said his determination was immovable.

"But," he added, "if it be any satisfaction to you to know it, I have not forgotten my relations, to whom I have left the legacies originally intended for them. I would have left it directly to Henry Woodward, were it not that his grasping mother sent him to another relation, from whom she calculated that he might have larger expectations; and I hope he may realize them. At all events, my relatives will find themselves in exactly the same position as if our beloved Agnes had lived."

Mr. Hamilton, then advanced in years—for Agnes might be termed the child of his old age—did not survive her death twelve months. That afflicting event fairly broke him down. Death, however, to him had no terrors, because he had nothing to detain him here. On the contrary, he looked to it only as a release from sorrow; an event that would soon wipe away all tears from his eyes, draw the sting of affliction from his heart, and restore him once more to his beloved Agnes and her dear mother. He looked forward only to close his eyes against the world and sleep with *them*—and so he did.

When his will was opened, the astonishment and dismay of his relations may be easily imagined, as well as the bitterness of their disappointment. The bequeathal of the bulk of his property to a stranger, who could urge no claim of consanguinity upon

him, absolutely astonished them; and their resentment at his caprice—or rather what they termed his dotage—was not only deep, but loud. To say the truth, such an unexpected demise of property was strongly calculated to try their temper. After the death of Agnes—an event which filled the unfeeling and worldly heart of her aunt with delight—they made many a domestic calculation, and held many a family council as to the mode in which their uncle's property might be distributed among them, and many anticipations were the result, because there was none in the usual descent of property to inherit it but themselves. Now, in all this, they acted very naturally—just, perhaps, as you or I, gentle reader, would act if placed in similar circumstances, and sustained by the same expectations.

In the meantime matters were not likely to rest in quiet. Murmurs went abroad, hints were given, and broader assertions advanced, that the old man had not been capable of making a will, and that his mind had been so completely disordered and prostrated by excessive grief for the loss of his daughter, that he became the dupe and victim of undue influence in the person of a selfish and artful girl—that artful girl being no other than Alice Goodwin, aided and abetted by her family. Every circumstance, no matter how trivial, that could be raked up and collected, was now brought together, and stamped with a character of significance, in order to establish *his* dotage and *their* fraud. It is not necessary to dwell upon this. In due time the matter came to a trial, for the will had been disputed, and, after a patient hearing, its validity was completely established, and all the hopes and expectations of the Lindsays blown into air.

In the meantime, and while the suit was pending, the conduct of Alice was both generous and disinterested. She pressed her parents to allow her, under the peculiar circumstances of the case, to renounce the bequest, inasmuch as she thought that Mr. Hamilton's relatives had a stronger and prior claim. This, however, they peremptorily refused to do.

"I care not for money," said her father, "nor have I much to spare; but you must consider, my dear Alice, that the act upon the part of Mr. Hamilton was a spontaneous demise of his own property, as a reward to you on behalf of his daughter, for the affection which you bore her, and which subsisted between you. You were her nurse, her friend, her sister; you tended her night and day during her long illness, even to the injury of your health, and almost at the risk of your very life. Suppose, for instance, that Mr. Hamilton had had male heirs; in that case, the Lindsays would have been just as they are, perhaps not so well; for he might not have left them even a legacy. Then, they unjustly tax us with fraud, circumvention, and the practice of undue influence; and, indeed, have endeavored to stamp an indelible stain upon your character and honor. Every man, my dear, as the proverb has it, is at liberty to do what he pleases with his own, according to his free will, and a reasonable disposition. Let me hear no more of this, then, but enjoy with gratitude that which God and your kind friend have bestowed upon you."

We need not assure our readers that the Lindsays henceforth were influenced by an unfriendly feeling toward the Goodwins, and that all intercourse between the families terminated. On the part of Mrs. Lindsay, this degenerated into a spirit of the most intense hatred and malignity. To this enmity, however, there were exceptions in the family, and strong ones, too, as the reader will perceive in the course of the story.

Old Lindsay himself, although he mentioned the Goodwins with moderation, could not help feeling strongly and bitterly the loss of property which his children had sustained, owing to this unexpected disposition of it by their uncle. Here, then, were two families who had lived in mutual good-will and intimacy, now placed fronting each other in a spirit of hostility. The Goodwins felt indignant that their motives should be misinterpreted by what they considered deliberate falsehood and misrepresentation; and the Lindsays could not look in silence upon the property which they thought ought to be theirs, transferred to the possession of strangers, who had wheedled a dotard to make a will in their favor. Such, however, in thousands of instances, are the consequences of the

"Opes irritamenta malorum."

The above facts, in connection with these two families, and the future incidents of our narrative, we have deemed it necessary, for the better understanding of what follows, to place in a preliminary sketch before our readers.

CHAPTER II.

A Murderer's Wake and the Arrival of a Stranger.

It is the month of June, and the sun has gone down amidst a mass of those red and angry clouds which prognosticate a night of storm and tempest. The air is felt to be

oppressive and sultry, and the whole sky is overshadowed with gloom. On such a night the spirit sinks, cheerfulness abandons the heart, and an indefinable anxiety depresses it. This impression is not peculiar to man, who, on such occasions, is only subject to the same instinctive apprehension which is known to influence the irrational animals. The clouds are gathering in black masses; but there is, nevertheless, no opening between them through which the sky is visible. The gloom is unbroken, and so is the silence; and a person might imagine that the great operations of Nature had been suspended and stood still. The outlying cattle betake them to shelter, and the very dogs, with a subdued and timid bark, seek the hearth, and, with ears and tail hanging in terror, lay themselves down upon it as if to ask protection from man. On such a night as this we will request the reader to follow us toward a district that trenches upon the foot of a dark mountain, from whose precipitous sides masses of gray rock, apparently embedded in heath and fern, protrude themselves in uncouth and gigantic shapes. 'Tis true they were not then visible; but we wish the reader to understand the character of the whole scenery through which we pass. We diverge from the highway into a mountain road, which resembles the body of a serpent when in motion, going literally up one elevation, and down another. To the right, deep glens, gullies, and ravines; but the darkness with which they are now filled is thick and impervious to the eye, and nothing breaks the silence about us but the rush of the mountain torrent over some jutting precipice below us. To the left all is gloom, as it would be even were there light to guide the sight, because on that side spreads a black, interminable moor. As it is we can see nothing; yet as we get along we find that we are not alone. Voices reach our ears; but they are not, as usual, the voices of mirth and laughter. These which we hear —and they are not far from us—are grave and serious; the utterance thick and low, as if those from whom they proceed were expressing a sense of sympathy or horror. We have now advanced up this rugged path about half a mile from the highway we have mentioned, and discovered a light which will guide us to our destination. As we approach the house the people are increasing in point of numbers; but still their conversation is marked by the same strange and peculiar character. Perhaps the solemn depth of their voices gains something by the ominous aspect of the sky; but, be this as it may, the feeling which it occasions fills one with a different and distinct sense of discomfort. We ourselves feel it, and it is not surprising; for, along this wild and rugged path of darkness, we are conducting the reader to the wake of a murderer. We have now arrived within fifty yards of the house, which, however, we cannot see, for nothing but a solitary light is visible. But, lo! a flash of lightning! and there for a moment is the whole rugged and savage scenery revealed. The huge, pointed mountains, the dreary wastes, the wild, still glens, the naked hills of granite, and the tremendous piles of rocks, ready, one would think, to crash down from the positions where they seem to hang, if only assailed by a strong gale of wind—these objects, we say, were fearful and startling in themselves; but the sensations which they produced were nothing in comparison with the sight of an unpainted deal coffin which stood near the door, against the side wall of the house. The appearance of a coffin, but especially at night, is one that casts a deep shadow over the spirits, because it is associated with death, of which it is the melancholy and depressing exponent; but to look upon it by such an awful though transient light as that which proceeds from the angry fires of heaven, and to reflect upon the terrible associations of blood and crime which mingle themselves with that of a murderer, is a dreadful but wholesome homily to the heart. We now enter the house of death, where the reader must suppose himself to be present, and shall go on to describe the scene which presents itself.

On entering, we found the house nearly crowded; but we could observe that there were very few of the young and light-hearted present, and scarcely any females, unless those who were related to the family of the deceased, or to himself. The house was low and long, and the kitchen in which they had laid him out was spacious, but badly furnished. Altogether its destitution was calculated to deepen the sense of awe which impressed those who had come to spend the night with the miserable widow and wailing orphans of the murderer.

The unfortunate man had been executed that morning after having acknowledged his crime, and, as the laws of that period with respect to the interment of the convicted dead were not so strict as they are at present, the body was restored to his friends, in order that they might bury it when and where they wished. The crime of the unhappy man was deep, and so was that which occasioned it. His daughter, a young and beautiful girl, had been seduced by a gentleman in the neighborhood who was unmarried; and that act of guilt and weakness on her part was the first act that ever brought

shame upon the family. All the terrible passions of the father's heart leaped into action at the ruin of his child, and the disgrace which it entailed upon his name. The fury of domestic affection stimulated his heart, and blazed in his brain even to madness. His daughter was obliged to fly with her infant and conceal herself from his vengeance, though the unhappy girl, until the occurrence of that woful calamity, had been the solace and the sunshine of his life. The guilty seducer, however, was not doomed to escape the penalty of his crime. Morrissey —for that was the poor man's name—cared not for law; whether it was to recompense him for the degradation of his daughter, or to punish him for inflicting the vengeance of outraged nature upon the author of her ruin. What compensation could satisfy his heart for the infamy entailed upon her and him? what paltry damages from a jury could efface her shame or restore her innocence? Then, the man was poor, and to the poor, under such circumstances, there exists no law, and, consequently, no redress. He strove to picture to himself his beautiful and innocent child; but he could not bear to bring the image of her early and guiltless life near him. The injury was irreparable, and could only be atoned for by the blood of the destroyer. He could have seen her borne shameless and unpolluted to the grave, with the deep, but natural, sorrow of a father; he could have lived with her in destitution and misery; he could have begged with her through a hard and harsh world; he could have seen her pine in want; moan upon the bed of sickness; nay, more, he could have seen her spirit pass, as it were, to the God who gave it, so long as that spirit was guiltless, and her humble name without spot or stain; yes, he could have witnessed and borne all this, and the blessed memory of her virtues would have consoled him in his bereavement and his sorrow. But to reflect that she was trampled down into guilt and infamy by the foot of the licentious libertine, was an event that cried for blood; and blood he had, for he murdered the seducer, and that with an insatiable rapacity of revenge that was terrible. He literally battered the head of his victim out of all shape, and left him a dead and worthless mass of inanimate matter. The crime, though desperate, was openly committed, and there were sufficient witnesses at his trial to make it a short one. On that morning, neither priest, nor friar, nor chaplain, nor jailer, nor sheriff could wring from him one single expression of regret or repentance for what he had done. The only reply he made them was this—"Don't trouble me; I knew what my fate was to be, and will die with satisfaction."

After cutting him down, his body, as we have said, was delivered to his friends, who, having wrapped it in a quilt, conveyed it on a common car to his own house, where he received the usual ablutions and offices of death, and was composed upon his own bed into that attitude of the grave which will never change.

The house was nearly filled with grave and aged people, whose conversation was low, and impressed with solemnity, that originated from the painful and melancholy spirit of the event that had that morning taken place. A deal table was set lengthwise on the floor; on this were candles, pipes, and plates of cut tobacco. In the usual cases of death among the poor, the bed on which the corpse is stretched is festooned with white sheets, borrowed for the occasion from the wealthier neighbors. Here, however, there was nothing of the kind. The associations connected with murder were too appalling and terrible to place the rites required, either for the wake or funeral of the murderer, within the ordinary claims of humanity for these offices of civility to which we have alluded. In this instance none of the neighbors would lend sheets for what they considered an unholy purpose; the bed, therefore, on which the body lay had nothing to ornament it. A plain drugget quilt was his only covering, but he did not feel the want of a better.

It was not the first time I had ever seen a corpse, but it was the first time I had ever seen that of a murderer. I looked upon it with an impression which it is difficult, if not impossible, to describe. I felt my nerves tingle, and my heart palpitate. To a young man, fresh, and filled with the light-hearted humanity of youth, approximation to such an object as then lay before me is a singular trial of feeling, and a painful test of moral courage. The sight, however, and the reflections connected with it, rendered a long contemplation of it impossible, and, besides, I had other objects to engage my attention. I now began to observe the friends and immediate connections of the deceased. In all, there were only seven or eight women, including his wife. There were four boys and no daughters; for, alas! I forgot to inform the reader that his fallen daughter was his only one; a fact which, notwithstanding his guilt, must surely stir up the elements of our humanity in mitigation of his madness.

This house of mourning was, indeed, a strange, a solemn, and a peculiar one. The women sat near the bed upon stools, and

such other seats as they had prepared. The wife and his two sisters were rocking themselves to and fro, as is the custom when manifesting profound sorrow in Irish wakehouses; the other women talked to each other in a low tone, amounting almost to a whisper. Their conduct was marked, in fact, by a grave and mysterious monotony; but after a little reflection, it soon became painfully intelligible. Here was shame, as well as guilt and sorrow—here was shame endeavoring to restrain sorrow; and hence the silence, and the struggle between them which it occasioned. The wife from time to time turned her heavy eyes upon the countenance of the corpse; and after the first sensations of awe had departed from me, I ventured to look upon it with a purpose of discovering in its features the lineaments of guilt. Owing to the nature of his death, that collapse which causes the flesh to shrink almost immediately after the spirit has departed was not visible here. The face was rather full and livid, but the expression was not such as penitence or a conviction of crime could be supposed to have left behind it. On the contrary, the whole countenance had somewhat of a placid look, and the general contour was unquestionably that of affection and benevolence.

It was easy, however, to perceive that this agonizing restraint upon the feelings of that loving wife could not last long, and that the task which the poor woman was endeavoring to perform in deference to the conventional opinions of society was beyond her strength. Hers, indeed, was not a common nor an undivided sorrow; for, alas, she had not only the loss of her kind husband and his ignominious death to distract her, but the shame and degradation of their only daughter which occasioned it; and what a trial was that for a single heart! From time to time a deep back-drawing sob would proceed from her lips, and the eye was again fixed upon the still and unconscious features of her husband. At length the chord was touched, and the heart of the wife and mother could restrain itself no longer. The children had been for some time whispering together, evidently endeavoring to keep the youngest of them still; but they found it impossible—he must go to awaken his daddy. This was too much for them, and the poor things burst out into an uncontrollable wail of sorrow. The conversation among the spectators was immediately hushed; but the mother started to her feet, and turning to the bed, bent over it, and raised a cry of agony such as I never heard nor hope ever to hear again. She clapped her hands, and rocking herself up and down over him, gave vent to her accumulated grief, which now rushed like a torrent that had been dammed up and overcome its barriers, from her heart.

"O Harry," said she in Irish—but we translate it—"O Harry, the husband of the kind heart, the loving father, and the good man! O Harry, Harry, and is it come to this with you and me and our childre! They may say what they will, but you're *not* a murderer. It was your love for our unfortunate Nannie that made you do what you did. O, what was the world to you without *her!* Wasn't she the light of your eyes, and the sweet pulse of your loving heart! And did ever a girl love a father as she loved you, till the destroyer came across her—ay, the destroyer that left us as we now are, sunk in sorrow and misery that will never end in this world more! And now, what is she, and what has the destroyer made her? O, when I think of how you sought after her you loved as you did, to take her life, and when I think of how she that loved you as she did was forced to fly from the hand that would pluck out your own heart sooner than injure a hair of her head—so long as she was innocent—O, when I think of all this, and look upon you lying there now, and all for the love you bore her, how can my heart bear it, and how can I live. O, the destroyer, the villain! the devil! what has he wrought upon us! But, thank God, he is punished—the father's love punished him. They are liars! you are no murderer. The mother's heart within me tells me that you did what was right—you acted like a man, my husband. God bless you, and make your soul happy for its love to Nannie. I'll kiss you, Harry—I'll kiss you, my heart's treasure, for your noble deed—but O Harry, you don't know the lips of sorrow that kiss you now. Sure they are the lips of your own Rose, that gave her young heart to you, and was happy for it. Don't feel ashamed, Harry; it's a good man's case to die the death you did, and be at rest, as I hope you are, for you are not a murderer; and if you are, it is only in the eye of the law, and it was your love for Nannie that did it."

This woeful dirge of the mother's heart, and the wife's sorrow, had almost every eye in tears; and, indeed, it was impossible that the sympathy for her should not be deep and general. They all knew the excellence and mildness of her husband's character, and that every word she uttered concerning him was truth.

In Irish wakehouses, it is to be observed, the door is never closed. The heat of the house, and the crowding of the neighbors to it, render it necessary that it should be

open; but independently of this, we believe it a general custom, as it is also to keep it so during meals. This last arises from the spirit of hospitality peculiar to the Irish people.

When his wife had uttered the words "you are no murderer," a young and beautiful girl entered the house in sufficient time to have heard them distinctly. She was tall, her shape was of the finest symmetry, her features, in spite of the distraction which, at first glance, was legible in them, were absolutely fascinating. They all knew her well; but the moment she made her appearance, the conversation, and those expressions of sympathy which were passing from one to another, were instantly checked; and nothing now was felt but compassion for the terrible ordeal that they knew was before her mother. She rushed up to where her mother had sat down, her eyes flashing, and her long brown hair floating about her white shoulders, which were but scantily covered.

"You talk of a murderer, mother," she exclaimed. "You talk of a murderer, do you? But if murder has been committed, as it has, *I*—*I* am the murderer. Keep back now, let me look upon my innocent father —upon that father that *I* have murdered."

She approached the bed on which he lay, her eyes still flashing, and her bosom panting, and there she stood gazing upon his features for about two minutes.

The silence of the corpse before them was not deeper than that which her unexpected presence occasioned. There she stood gazing on the dead body of her father, evidently torn by the pangs of agony and remorse, her hands clenching and opening by turns, her wild and unwinking eyes riveted upon those moveless features, which his love for her had so often lit up with happiness and pride. Her mother, who was alarmed, shocked, stunned, gazed upon her, but could not speak. At length she herself broke the silence.

"Mother," said she, "I came to see my father, for I know he won't strike me now, and he never did. O, no, because I ran away from him and from all of you, but not till after I had deserved it; before that I was safe. Mother, didn't my father love me once better than his own life? I think he did. O, yes, and I returned it by murdering him—by sending him—that father there that loved me so well—by—by sending him to the hangman—to a death of disgrace and shame. That's what *his own Nannie*, as he used to call me, did for him. But no shame —no guilt to you, father; the shame and the guilt are *your own Nannie's*, and that's the only comfort I have; for you're happy, what I will never be, either in this world or the next. You are now in heaven; but you will never see your own Nannie *there*."

The recollections caused by her appearance, and the heart-rending language she used, touched her mother's heart, now softened by her sufferings into pity for her affliction, if not into a portion of the former affection which she bore her.

"O Nannie, Nannie!" said she, now weeping bitterly upon a fresh sorrow, "don't talk that way—don't, don't; you have repentance to turn to; and for what you've done, God will yet forgive you, and so will your mother. It was a great crime in you; but God can forgive the greatest, if his own creatures will turn to him with sorrow for what they've done."

She never once turned her eyes upon her mother, nor raised them for a moment from her father's face. In fact, she did not seem to have heard a single syllable she said, and this was evident from the wild but affecting abstractedness of her manner.

"Mother!" she exclaimed, "that man they say is a murderer, and yet *I* am not worthy to touch him. Ah! I'm alone now —altogether alone, and *he*—*he* that loved me, too, was taken away from me by a cruel death—ay, a cruel death; for it was barbarous to kill him as if he was a wild beast—ay, and without one moment's notice, with all his sins upon his head. He is gone—he is gone; and there lies the man that murdered him—there he lies, the sinner; curse upon his hand of blood that took him I loved from me! O, my heart's breakin' and my brain is boilin'! What will I do? Where will I go? Am I mad? Father, my curse upon you for your deed of blood! I never thought I'd live to curse you; but you don't hear me, nor know what I suffer. Shame, disgrace—ay, and I'd bear it all for *his* sake that you plunged, like a murderer, as you were, into eternity. How does any of you know what it is to love as I did? or what it is to lose the man you love by a death so cruel? And this hair that *he* praised so much, who will praise it or admire it now, when he is gone? Let it go, too, then. I'll not keep it on me—I'll tear it off—off!"

Her paroxysm had now risen to a degree of fury that fell little, if anything, short of insanity—temporary insanity it certainly was. She tore her beautiful hair from her head in handfuls, and would have proceeded to still greater lengths, when she was seized by some of those present, in order to restrain her violence. On finding that she was held fast, she looked at them with blazing eyes, and struggled to set herself free; but

on finding her efforts vain, she panted deeply three or four times, threw back her head, and fell into a fit that, from its violence, resembled epilepsy. After a lapse of ten minutes or so, the spasmodic action, having probably wasted her physical strength, ceased, and she lay in a quiet trance; so quiet, indeed, that it might have passed for death, were it not for the deep expression of pain and suffering which lay upon her face, and betrayed the fury of the moral tempest which swept through her heart and brain. All the mother's grief now was hushed—all the faculties of her soul were now concentrated on her daughter, and absorbed by the intense anxiety she felt for her recovery. She sat behind the poor girl, and drew her body back so that her head rested on her bosom, to which she pressed her, kissing her passive lips with streaming eyes.

"O, darling Nannie!" she exclaimed, "strive and rouse yourself; it is your loving mother that asks you. Waken up, poor misled and heart-broken girl, waken up; I forgive you all your errors. O, avillish machree (sweetness of my heart), don't you hear that it is your mother's voice that's spakin' to you!"

She was still, however, insensible; and her little brothers were all in tears about her.

"O mother!" said the oldest, sobbing, "is Nannie dead too? When she went away from us you bid us not to cry, that she would soon come back; and now she has only come back to die. Nannie, I'm your own little Frank; won't you hear *me!* Nannie, will you never wash my face of a Sunday morning more? will you never comb down my hair, put the pin in my shirt collar, and kiss me, as you used to do before we went to Mass together?"

The poor mother was so much overcome by this artless allusion to her innocent life, involving, as it did, such a manifestation of affection, that she wept until fairly exhausted, after which she turned her eyes up to heaven and exclaimed, whilst her daughter's inanimate body still lay in her arms,

"O Lord of mercy, will you not look down with pity and compassion on me this night!"

In the course of about ten minutes after this her daughter's eyes began to fill with those involuntary tears which betoken in females recovery from a fit; they streamed quietly, but in torrents, down her cheek. She gave a deep sigh, opened her eyes, looked around her, first with astonishment, and then toward the bed with a start of horror.

"Where am I?" said she.

"You are with me, darlin'," replied the mother, kissing her lips, and whispering, "Nannie, I forgive you—I forgive you; and whisper, your father did before he went to death."

She smiled faintly and sorrowfully in her mother's face, and said, "*Mother, I didn't know that.*" After which she got up, and proceeding to the bed, she fell upon his body, kissed his lips, and indulged in a wild and heart-breaking wail of grief. This evidently afforded her relief, for she now became more calm and collected.

"Mother," said she, "I must go."

"Why, sure you won't leave us, Nannie?" replied the other with affectionate alarm.

"O, I must go," she repeated; "bring me the children till I see them once—Frank first."

The mother accordingly brought them to her, one by one, when she stooped down and kissed them in turn, not without bitter tears, whilst they, poor things, were all in an uproar of sorrow. She then approached her mother, threw herself in her arms, and again wept wildly for a time, as did that afflicted mother along with her.

"Mother, farewell," said she at length—"farewell; think of me when I am far away—think of your unfortunate Nannie, and let every one that hears of my misfortune think of all the misery and all the crime that may come from one false and unguarded step."

"O, Nannie darling," replied her mother, "don't desert us now; sure you wouldn't desert your mother now, Nannie?"

"If my life could make you easy or happy, mother, I could give it for your sake, worthless now and unhappy as it is; but I am going to a far country, where my shame and the misfortunes I have caused will never be known. I must go, for if I lived here, my disgrace would always be before you and myself; then I would soon die, and I am not yet fit for death."

With these words the unhappy girl passed out of the house, and was never after that night seen or heard of, but once, in that part of the country.

In the meantime that most pitiable mother, whose afflicted heart could only alternate from one piercing sorrow to another, sat down once more, and poured forth a torrent of grief for her unhappy daughter, whom she feared, she would never see again.

Those who were present, now that the distressing scene which we have attempted to describe was over, began to chat together with more freedom.

"Tom Kennedy," said one of them, accosting a good-natured young fellow, with a clear, pleasant eye, "how are all your family

at Beech Grove? Ould Goodwin and his pretty daughter ought to feel themselves in good spirits after gaining the lawsuit in the case of Mr. Hamilton's will. They bate the Lindsays all to sticks."

"And why not," replied Kennedy; "who had a better right to dispose of his property than the man that owned it? and, indeed, if any one livin' desarved it from another, Miss Alice did from him. She nearly brought herself to death's door, in attending upon and nursing her sister, as she called poor Miss Agnes; and, as for her grief at her death, I never saw anything like it, except"—he added, looking at the unfortunate widow—"where there was blood relationship."

"Well, upon my sowl," observed another, "I can't blame the Lindsays for feeling so bittherly about it as they do. May I never see yestherday, if a brother of mine had property, and left it to a stranger instead of to his own—that is to say, my childre—I'd take it for granted that he was fizzen down stairs for the same. It was a shame for the ould sinner to *scorn* his own relations for a stranger."

"Well," said another, "one thing is clear—that since he did blink them about the property, it couldn't get into better hands. Your master, Tom, is the crame of a good landlord, as far as his property goes, and much good may it do him and his! I'll go bail that, as far as Miss Alice herself is consarned, many a hungry mouth, will be filled many a naked back covered, and many a heavy heart made light through the manes of it."

"Faith," said a third spokesman, "and that wouldn't be the case if that skinflint barge of Lindsay's had got it in her clutches. At any rate, it's a shame for her and them to abuse the Goodwins as they do. If ould Hamilton left it to them surely it wasn't their fault."

"Never mind," said another, "I'll lay a wager that Mrs. Lindsay's son—I mane the step-son that's now abroad with the uncle—will be sent for, and a marriage will follow between him and Miss Goodwin."

"It may be so," replied Tom, "but it's not very probable. I know the man that's likely to walk into the property, and well worthy he is of it."

"Come, Tom, let us hear who is the lucky youth?"

"Family saicrets," replied Tom, "is not to be revaled. All I can say is, that he is a true gentleman. Give me another blast o' the pipe, for I must go home."

Tom, who was servant to Mr. Goodwin, having now taken his "blast," wished them good-night; but before he went he took the sorrowing widow's cold and passive hand in his, and said, whilst the tears stood in his eyes,

"May God in heaven pity you and support your heart, for you are the sorely tried woman this miserable night!"

He then bent his steps to Beech Grove, his master's residence, the hour being between twelve and one o'clock.

The night, as we have already said, had been calm, but gloomy and oppressive. Now, however, the wind had sprung up, and, by the time Kennedy commenced his journey home, it was not only tempestuous but increasing in strength and fury every moment. This, however, was not all;—the rain came down in torrents, and was battered against his person with such force that in a few moments he was drenched to the skin. So far, it was wind and rain—dreadful and tempestuous as they were. The storm, however, was only half opened. Distant flashes of lightning and sullen growls of thunder proceeded from the cloud masses to the right, but it was obvious that the thunderings above them were only commencing their deep and terrible pealings. In a short time they increased in violence and fury, and resembled, in fact, a West Indian hurricane more than those storms which are peculiar to our milder climates. The tempest-voice of the wind was now in dreadful accordance with its power. Poor Kennedy, who fortunately knew every step of the rugged road along which he struggled and staggered, was frequently obliged to crouch himself and hold by the projecting crags about him, lest the strength of the blast might hurl him over the rocky precipices by the edges of which the road went. With great difficulty, however, and not less danger, he succeeded in getting into the open highway below, and into a thickly inhabited country. Here a new scene of terror and confusion awaited him. The whole neighborhood around him were up and in alarm. The shoutings of men, the screams of women and children, all in a state of the utmost dread and consternation, pierced his ears, even through the united rage and roaring of the wind and thunder. The people had left their houses, as they usually do in such cases, from an apprehension that if they remained in them they might be buried in their ruins. Some had got ladders, and attempted, at the risk of their lives, to secure the thatch upon the roofs by placing flat stones, sods, and such other materials, as by their weight, might keep it from being borne off like dust upon the wings of the tempest. Their voices, and screams, and lamentations, in accordance, as

they were, with the uproar of the elements, added a new feature of terror to this dreadful tumult. The lightnings now became more vivid and frequent, and the pealing of the thunder so loud and near, that he felt his very ears stunned by it. Every cloud, as the lightnings flashed from it, seemed to open, and to disclose, as it were, a furnace of blazing fire within its black and awful shroud. The whole country around, with all its terrified population running about in confusion and dismay, were for the moment made as clear and distinct to the eye as if it were noonday, with this difference, that the scene borrowed from the red and sheeted flashes a wild and spectral character which the light of day never gives. In fact, the human figures, as they ran hurriedly to and fro, resembled those images which present themselves to the imagination in some frightful dream. Nay, the very cattle in the fields could be seen, in those flashing glimpses, huddled up together in some sheltered corner, and cowering with terror at this awful uproar of the elements. It is a very strange, but still a well-known fact, that neither man nor beast wishes to be alone during a thunder-storm. Contiguity to one's fellow creatures seems, by some unaccountable instinct, to lessen the apprehension of danger to one individual when it is likely to be shared by many, a feeling which makes the coward in the field of battle fight as courageously as the man who is naturally brave.

The tempest had not yet diminished any of its power; so far from that, it seemed as if a night-battle of artillery was going on, and raging still with more violence in the clouds. Thatch, doors of houses, glass, and almost everything light that the winds could seize upon, were flying in different directions through the air; and as Kennedy now staggered along the main road, he had to pass through a grove of oaks, beeches, and immense ash trees that stretched on each side for a considerable distance. The noises here were new to him, and on that account the more frightful. The groanings of the huge trees, and the shrieking of their huge branches as they were crushed against each other, sounded in his ears like the supernatural voices of demons, exulting at their participation in the terrors of the storm. His impression now was that some guilty sorcerer had raised the author of evil, and being unable to lay him, the latter was careering in vengeance over the earth until he should be appeased by the life of some devoted victim—for such, when a storm more than usually destructive and powerful arises, is the general superstition of the people—at least it was so among the ignorant in our early youth.

In all thunder-storms there appears to be a regular gradation—a beginning, a middle, and an end. They commence first with a noise resembling the crackling of a file of musketry where the fire runs along the line, man after man; then they increase, and go on deepening their terrors until one stunning and tremendous burst takes place, which is the acme of the tempest. After this its power gradually diminishes in the same way as it increased—the peals become less loud and less frequent, the lightning feebler and less brilliant, until at length it seems to take another course, and after a few exhausted volleys it dies away with a hoarse grumble in the distance.

Still it thundered and thundered terribly; nor had the sweep of the wind-tempest yet lost any of its fury. At this moment Kennedy discovered, by a succession of those flashes that were lighting the country around him, a tall young female without cloak or bonnet, her long hair sometimes streaming in the wind, and sometimes blown up in confusion over her head. She was proceeding at a tottering but eager pace, evidently under the influence of wildness and distraction, or rather as if she felt there was something either mortal or spectral in pursuit of her. He hailed her by her name as she passed him, for he knew her, but received no reply. To Tom, who had, as the reader knows, been a witness of the scene we have described, this fearful glimpse of Nannie Morrissey's desolation and misery, under the pelting of the pitiless storm and the angry roar of the elements, was distressing in the highest degree, and filled his honest heart with compassion for her sufferings.

He was now making his way home at his utmost speed, when he heard the trampling of a horse's feet coming on at a rapid pace behind him, and on looking back he saw a horseman making his way in the same direction with himself. As he advanced, the repeated flashes made them distinctly visible to each other.

"I say," shouted the horseman at the top of his lungs, "can you direct me to any kind of a habitation, where I may take shelter?"

"Speak louder," shouted Tom; "I can't hear you for the wind."

The other, in a voice still more elevated, repeated the question, "I want to get under the roof of some human habitation, if there be one left standing. I feel that I have gone astray, and this is no night to be out in."

"Faith, sir," again shouted Tom, "it's pure gospel you're spakin', at any rate. A

habitation! Why, upon my credibility, they'd not deserve a habitation that 'ud refuse to open the door for a dog on such a night as this, much less to a human creature with a sowl to be saved. A habitation! Well, I think I can, and one where you'll be well treated. I suppose, sir, you're a gentleman?"

"Speak out," shouted the traveller in his turn; "I can't hear you."

Tom shaded his mouth with his hand, and shouted again, "I suppose, sir, you're a gentleman?"

"Why, I suppose I am," replied the stranger, rather haughtily.

"Because," shouted Tom, "devil a traneen it 'ud signify to them I'm bringing you to whether you are or not. The poorest man in the parish would be sheltered as well as you, or maybe a betther man."

"Are we near the house?" said the other.

"It's just at hand, sir," replied Tom, "and thanks be to God for it; for if ever the devil was abroad on mischief, he is this night, and may the Lord save us! It's a night for a man to tell his grandchildre about, and he may call it the 'night o' the big storm.'"

A lull had now taken place, and Tom heard a laugh from the stranger which he did not much relish; it was contemptuous and sarcastic, and gave him no very good opinion of his companion. They had now arrived at the entrance-gate, which had been blown open by the violence of the tempest. On proceeding toward the house, they found that their way was seriously obstructed by the fall of several trees that had been blown down across it. With some difficulty, however, they succeeded in reaching the house, where, although the hour was late, they found the whole family up, and greatly alarmed by the violence of the hurricane. Tom went in and found Mr. and Mrs. Goodwin in the parlor, to both of whom he stated that a gentleman on horseback, who had lost his way, requested shelter for the night.

"Certainly, Kennedy, certainly; why did you not bring the gentleman in? Go and desire Tom Stinton to take his horse to the stable, and let him be rubbed down and fed. In the meantime, bring the gentleman in."

"Sir," said Tom, going to the bottom of the hall door-steps, "will you have the goodness to walk in; the masther and misthress are in the parlor; for who could sleep on such a night as this?"

On entering he was received with the warmest and most cordial hospitality.

"Sir," said Mr. Goodwin, "I speak in the name of myself and my wife when I bid you heartily welcome to whatever my roof can afford you, especially on such an awful night as this. Take a seat, sir; you must want refreshments before you put off those wet clothes and betake yourself to bed, after the dreadful severity of such a tempest."

"I have to apologize, sir, for this trouble," replied the stranger, "and to thank you most sincerely for the kindness of the reception you and your lady have given to an utter stranger."

"Do not mention it, sir," said Mr. Goodwin; "come, put on a dry coat and waistcoat, and, in the meantime, refreshments will be on the table in a few minutes. The servants are all up and will attend at once.

The stranger refused, however, to change his clothes, but in a few minutes an abundant cold supper, with wine and spirits, were placed upon the table, to all of which he did such ample justice that it would seem as if he had not dined that day. The table having been cleared, Mr. Goodwin joined him in a glass of hot brandy and water, and succeeded in pressing him to take a couple more, whilst his wife, he said, was getting a bed and room prepared for him. Their chat for the next half hour consisted in a discussion of the storm, which, although much abated, was not yet over. At length, after an intimation that his room was ready for him, he withdrew, accompanied by a servant, got into an admirable bed, and in a few minutes was fast asleep.

CHAPTER III.

Breakfast next morning.—Woodward, on his way Home, meets a Stranger.—Their Conversation.

The next morning he joined the family in the breakfast parlor, where he was received with much kindness and attention. The stranger was a young man, probably about twenty-seven, well made, and with features that must be pronounced good; but, from whatever cause it proceeded, they were felt to be by no means agreeable. It was impossible to quarrel with, or find fault with them; their symmetry was perfect; the lips well defined, but hard and evidently unfeeling; his brows, which joined each other, were black, and, what was very peculiar, were heaviest where they met—a circumstance which, notwithstanding the regularity of his other features, gave him, unless when he smiled, a frowning if not a sinister aspect. That, however, which was most remarkable in his features was the extraordinary fact that his eyes were each of a different color, one being black and piercing in its gleam,

and the other gray; from which circumstance he was known from his childhood by the name of *Harry na Suil Gloir*—Suil Gloir being an epithet always bestowed by the Irish upon persons who possessed eyes of that unnatural character. This circumstance, however, was not observed on that occasion by any of the family. His general manners, though courteous, were cold, and by no means such as were calculated either to bestow or inspire confidence. His language, too, was easy enough when he spoke, but a cold habit of reserve seemed to permeate his whole being, and to throw a chill upon the feelings of those to whom he addressed himself. So much was this the case that whenever he assumed an air of familiarity a dark, strange, and undefinable spirit, which was strongly felt, seemed not only to contradict his apparent urbanity, but to impress his auditors with a sense of uneasiness sometimes amounting to pain—an impression, however, for which they could not at all account.

"Sir," said Mr. Goodwin, "I hope you slept well after what you suffered under the tempest of last night?"

"I assure you, sir, I never enjoyed a sounder night's sleep in my life," replied their guest; "and were it not for the seasonable shelter of your hospitable roof I know not what would have become of me. I am unacquainted with the country, and having lost my way. I knew not where to seek shelter, for the night was so dreadfully dark that unless by the flashes of the lightning nothing could be seen."

"It was certainly an awful—a terrible night," observed his host; "but come, its severity is now past; let me see you do justice to your fare;—a little more ham?"

"Thank you, sir," replied the other; "if you please. Indeed, I cannot complain of my appetite, which is at all times excellent"—and he certainly corroborated the truth of his statement by a sharp and vigorous attack upon the good things before him.

"Sir," said Mrs. Goodwin, "we feel happy to have had the satisfaction of opening our doors to you last night; and there is only one other circumstance which could complete our gratification."

"The gratification, madam," he replied, "as well as the gratitude, ought to be all on my side, although I have no doubt, and can have none, that the consciousness of your kindness and hospitality are equally gratifying on yours. But may I ask to what you allude, madam?"

"You are evidently a gentleman, sir, and a stranger, and we would feel obliged by knowing—"

"O, I beg your pardon, madam," he replied, interrupting her; "I presume that you are good enough to flatter me by a wish to know the name of the individual whom your kindness and hospitality have placed under such agreeable obligations. For my part I have reason to bless the tempest which, I may say, brought me under your roof. 'It is an ill wind,' says the proverb, 'that blows nobody good;' and it is a clear case, my very kind hostess, that at this moment we are mutually ignorant of each other. I assure you, then, madam, that I am not a knight-errant travelling in disguise and in quest of adventure, but a plain gentleman, by name Woodward, step-son to a neighbor of yours, Mr. Lindsay, of Rathfillan House. I need scarcely say that I am Mrs. Lindsay's son by her first husband. And now, madam, may I beg to know the name of the family to whom I am indebted for so much kindness."

Mrs. Goodwin and her husband exchanged glances, and something like a slight cloud appeared to overshadow for a moment the expression of their countenances. At length Mr. Goodwin spoke.

"My name, sir," he proceeded, "is Goodwin; and until a recent melancholy event, your family and mine were upon the best and most cordial terms; but, unfortunately, I must say that we are not so now—a circumstance which I and mine deeply regret. You must not imagine, however, that the knowledge of your name and connections could make the slightest difference in our conduct toward you on that account. Your family, Mr. Woodward, threw off our friendship and disclaimed all intimacy with us; but I presume you are not ignorant of the cause of it."

"I should be uncandid if I were to say so, sir. I am entirely aware of the cause of it; but I cannot see that there is any blame whatsoever to be attached to either you or yours for the act of my poor uncle. I assure you, sir, I am sorry that my family failed to consider it in its proper light; and you will permit me to request that you will not identify my conduct with theirs. So far as I at least am concerned, my uncle's disposition of his property shall make no breach nor occasion any coolness between us. On the contrary, I shall feel honored by being permitted to pay my respects to you all, and to make myself worthy of your good opinions."

"That is generously spoken, Mr. Woodward," replied the old man; "and it will afford us sincere pleasure to reciprocate the sentiments you have just expressed."

"You make me quite happy, sir," replied

Woodward, bowing very courteously. "This, I presume, is the young lady to whom my cousin Agnes was so much attached?"

"She is, sir," replied her father.

"Might I hope for the honor of being presented to her, Mr. Goodwin?"

"With pleasure, sir. Alice, my dear, although you already know who this gentleman is, yet allow me, nevertheless, to present him to you."

The formal introduction accordingly took place, after which Woodward, turning to Mrs. Goodwin, said,

"I am not surprised, madam, at the predilection which my cousin entertained for Miss Goodwin, even from what I see; but I feel that I am restrained by her presence from expressing myself at further length. I have only to say that I wish her every happiness, long life, and health to enjoy that of which she seems, and I am certain is, so worthy."

He accompanied those words with a low bow and a very gracious smile, after which, his horse having been brought to the door, he took his leave with a great deal of politeness, and rode, according to the directions received from Mr. Goodwin, toward his father's house.

After his departure the family began to discuss his character somewhat to the following effect:

"That is a fine young man," said Mr. Goodwin, "liberal-minded and generous, or I am much mistaken. What do *you* think, Martha," he added, addressing his wife.

"Upon my word," replied that lady, "I am much of your opinion—yet I don't know either; although polite and courteous, there is something rather disagreeable about him."

"Why," inquired her husband, "what is there disagreeable about him? I could perceive nothing of the sort; and when we consider that his uncle, who left this property to Alice, was his mother's brother, and that he was nephew by blood as well as by law, and that it was the old man's original intention that the property should go directly to him, or in default of issue, to his brother—I think when we consider this, Martha, that we cannot but entertain a favorable impression of him, considering what he has lost by the unexpected turn given to his prospects in consequence of his uncle's will. Alice, my dear, what is your opinion of him?"

"Indeed, papa," she replied, "I have had—as we all have had—but a very slight opportunity to form any opinion of him. As for me, I can judge only by the impressions which his conversation and person have left upon me."

"Well, anything favorable or otherwise?"

"Anything at all *but* favorable, papa—I experienced something like pain during breakfast, and felt a strong sense of relief the moment he left the room."

"Poor child, impressions are nothing. I have met men of whom first impressions were uniformly unfavorable, who, notwithstanding their rough outsides, were persons of sterling worth and character."

"Yes, papa, and men of great plausibility and ease of manner, who, on the contrary, were deep, hypocritical and selfish when discovered and their hearts laid open. As regards Mr. Woodward, however, heaven forbid that I should place the impressions of an ignorant girl like myself against the knowledge and experience of a man who has had such opportunities of knowing the world as you. All I can say is, that whilst he seemed to breathe a very generous spirit, my impressions were completely at variance with every sentiment he uttered. Perhaps, however, I do him injustice—and I should regret that very much. I will then, in deference to your opinion, papa, endeavor to control those impressions and think as well of him as I can."

"You are right, Alice, and I thank you. We should never, if possible, suffer ourselves to be prematurely ungenerous in our estimate of strangers, especially when we know that this world is filled with the most absurd and ridiculous prejudices. How do you know, my dear child, that yours is not one of them?"

"Alice, love," said her mother, "I think, upon reflection, your father is right, as he always is; let us not be less generous than this young man, and you know it *would* be ungenerous to prejudge him; and this comes the more strange from you, my love, inasmuch as I never yet heard you express a prejudice almost against any person."

"Because I don't remember, mamma, that I ever felt such an impression—prejudice—call it what you will—against any individual as I do against this man. I absolutely fear him without knowing why."

"Precisely so, my dear Alice," replied her father, "precisely so; and, as you say, *without knowing why*. In that one phrase, my child, you have defined *prejudice* to the letter. Fie, Alice; have more sense, my dear: have more sense. Dismiss this foolish prejudice against a young man, who, from what he said at breakfast, is entitled to better feelings at your hands."

"As I said, papa, I shall certainly strive to do so."

Alice Goodwin's person and character must, at this stage of our narrative, be made known to our readers. As to her person, it

is only sufficient to say that she was a tall, beautiful girl, of exceeding grace and wonderful proportions. There was, however, a softness about her appearance of constitutional delicacy that seemed to be incompatible with a strong mind, or perhaps we should rather say that was identical with an excess of feeling. This was exhibited in the tenderness of her attachment to Agnes Hamilton, and in the agonizing grief which she experienced at her death—a grief which had wellnigh become fatal to a girl of her fragile organization. The predominant trait, however, in her character was timidity and a terror of a hundred trifles, which, in the generality of her sex, would occasion only indifference or laughter. On that very morning, for instance, she had not recovered from her painful apprehensions of the thunder-storm which had occurred on the preceding night. Of thunder, but especially of lightning, she was afraid even to pusillanimity; indeed so much so, that on such occurrences she would bind her eyes, fly down stairs, and take refuge in the cellar until the hurly-burly in the clouds was over. This, however, was not so much to be wondered at by those who live in our present and more enlightened days; as our readers will admit when they are told that the period of our narrative is in the reign of that truly religious monarch, Charles the Second, who, conscious of his inward and invisible grace, was known to exhaust himself so liberally of his virtue, when touching for the Evil, that there was very little of it left to regulate that of his own private life. In those days Ireland was a mass of social superstitions, and a vast number of cures in a variety of diseases were said to be performed by witches, wizards, fairy-men, fairy-women, and a thousand other impostors, who, supported by the gross ignorance of the people, carried that which was first commenced in fraud and cunning into a self-delusion, which, in process of time, led them to become dupes to their own impostures. It is not to be wondered at, then, that Alice Goodwin, a young creature of a warm imagination and extraordinary constitutional timidity, should feel the full force of the superstitions which swarmed around her, and impregnated her fancy so strongly that it teemed with an unhealthy creation, which frequently rendered her existence painful by a morbid apprehension of wicked and supernatural influences. In other respects she was artlessness itself, could never understand what falsehood meant, and, as to truth, her unspotted mind was transparent as a sunbeam. Our readers are not to understand, however, that though apparently flexible and ductile, she possessed no power of moral resistance. So very far from that, her disposition, wherever she thought herself right, was not only firm and unbending, but sometimes rose almost to obstinacy. This, however, never appeared, unless she considered herself as standing upon the basis of truth. In cases where her judgment was at fault, or when she could not see her way, she was a perfect child, and, like a child, should be taken by the hand and supported. It was, however, when mingling in society that her timidity and bashfulness were most observable; these, however, were accompanied with so much natural grace, and unaffected innocence of manner, that the general charm of her whole character was fascinating and irresistible; nay, her very weaknesses created an atmosphere of love and sympathy around her that nobody could breathe without feeling her influence. Her fear of ghosts and fairies, her dread of wizards and witches, of wise women and strolling conjurers, with the superstitious accounts of whom the country then abounded, were, in the eyes of her more strong-minded friends, only a source of that caressing and indulgent affection which made its artless and innocent object more dear to them. Every one knows with what natural affection and tenderness we love the object which clings to us for support under the apprehension of danger, even when we ourselves are satisfied that the apprehension is groundless. So was it with Alice Goodwin, whose harmless foibles and weaknesses, associated as they were with so much truth and purity, rendered her the darling of all who knew her.

Woodward had not proceeded far on his way when he was overtaken by an equestrian, who came up to him at a smart pace, which, however, he checked on getting beside him.

"A fine morning, sir, after an awful night," observed the stranger.

"It is, sir," replied Woodward, "and a most awful night it assuredly was. Have you heard whether there has been destruction to life or property to any extent?"

"Not so much to life," replied his companion, "but seriously, I understand, to property. If you had ridden far you must have observed the number of dwelling-houses and out offices that have been unroofed, and some of them altogether blown down."

"I have not ridden far," said Woodward; "I was obliged to take shelter in the house of a country gentleman named Goodwin, who lives over in the trees."

"You were fortunate in finding shelter anywhere," replied the stranger, "during such a tempest. I remember nothing like it."

As they proceeded along, indulging in similar chat, they observed that five or six countrymen, who had been walking at a smart pace, about a couple of hundred yards before them, came suddenly to a stand-still, and, after appearing to consult together, they darted off the road and laid themselves down, as if with a view of concealment, behind the grassy ditch which ran along it.

"What can these persons mean?" asked Woodward; "they seem to be concealing themselves."

"Unquestionably they do," replied the stranger; "and yet there appears to be no pursuit after them. I certainly can give no guess as to their object."

While attempting, as they went along, to account for the conduct of the peasants, they were met by a female with a head of hair that was nearly blood-red, and whose features were hideously ugly, or rather, we should say, absolutely revolting. Her brows, which were of the same color as the hair, were knit into a scowl, such as is occasioned by an intense expression of hatred and malignity, yet which was rendered almost frightful by a squint that would have disfigured the features of a demon. Her coarse hair lay matted together in stiff, wiry waves on each side of her head, from whence it streamed down her shoulders, which it covered like a cape of scarlet. As they approached each other, she glanced at them with a look from which they could only infer that she seemed to meditate the murder of each, and yet there was mingled with its malignity a bitter but derisive expression that was perfectly diabolical.

"What a frightful hag!" exclaimed Woodward, addressing his companion; "I never had a perfect conception of the face of an ogress until now! Did you observe her walrus tusks, as they projected over her misshapen nether lip? The hag appears to be an impersonation of all that is evil."

"She may be a very harmless creature for all that," replied the other; "we are not to judge by appearances. I know a man who had murder depicted in his countenance, if ever a man had, and yet there lived not a kinder, more humane, or benevolent creature on earth. He was as simple, too, as a child, and the most affectionate father and husband that ever breathed. These, however, may be exceptions; for most certainly I am of opinion that the countenance may be considered, in general, a very certain index to the character and disposition. But what is this?—here are the men returning from their journey, let us question them."

"Pray," said Woodward, addressing them, "if it be not impertinent, may I inquire why you ran in such a hurry off the road just now, and hid yourselves behind the ditch?"

"Certainly, sir, you may," replied one of them; "we wor on our way to the fair of Knockmore, and we didn't wish to meet Pugshy Roe" (Red Peggy).

"But why should you not wish to meet her?"

"Bekaise, sir, she's unlucky—unlucky in the three ways—unlucky to man, unlucky to baste, and unlucky to business. She overlooks, sir; she has the Evil Eye—the Lord be about us!"

"The Evil Eye," repeated Woodward, dryly; "and pray, what harm could her evil eye do you?"

"Why, nothing in the world," replied the man, naively, "barrin' to wither us off o' the earth—that's all."

"Has she been long in this neighborhood?" asked the stranger.

"Too long, your honor. Sure she overlooked Biddy Nelligan's child, and it never did good afterwards."

"And I," said another, "am indebted to the thief o' hell for the loss of as good a cow as ever filled a piggin."

"Well, sure," observed a third, "Father Mullen is goin' to read her out next Sunday from the althar. She has been banished from every parish in the country. Indeed, I believe he's goin' to drown the candles against her, so that, plaise the Lord, she'll have to tramp."

"How does she live and maintain herself?" asked the stranger again.

"Why, sir," replied the man, "she tuck possession of a waste cabin and a bit o' garden belongin' to it; and Larry Sullivan, that owns it, was goin' to put her out, when, Lord save us, he and his whole family were saized with sickness, and then he sent word to her that if she'd take it off o' them and put it on some one else he'd let her stay."

"And did she do so?"

"She did, sir; every one o' them recovered, and she put it on his neighbor, poor Harry Commiskey and his family, that used to visit them every day, and from them it went over the country—and bad luck to her! Devil a man of us would have had luck or grace in the fair to-day if we had met her. That's another gift she has—to bring bad luck to any one that meets her first in the mornin'; for if they're goin' upon any business it's sure not to thrive with them. She's worse than Mrs. Lindsay; for Mrs. Lindsay, although she's unlucky to meet, and unlucky to cattle, too, has no power over any one's life; but they say it has always been in *her* family, too."

The equestrians then proceeded at a rather brisk pace until they had got clear of the peasants, when they pulled up a little.

"That is a strange superstition, sir," said Woodward, musingly.

"It is a very common one in this country, at all events," replied the other; "and I believe pretty general in others as well as here."

"Do you place any faith in it?" asked the other.

The stranger paused, as if investigating the subject in question, after which he replied,

"To a certain extent I do; but it is upon this principle, that I believe the force of imagination on a weak mind constitutes the malady. What is your own opinion?"

"Why, that it is not a superstition but a fact; a fact, too, which has been frequently proved; and, what is more, it is known, as the man said, to be hereditary in families."

"I don't give credence to that," said the stranger.

"Why not, sir?" replied Woodward; "are not the moral qualities hereditary? are not the tempers and dispositions hereditary, as well as decline, insanity, scrofula, and other physical complaints?"

The stranger paused again, and said, "Perhaps so. There is certainly much mystery in human nature; more, probably, than we can conceive or be aware of. Time, however, and the progress of science, will develop much. But who was this Mrs. Lindsay that the man spoke of?"

"That lady, sir," replied the other, "is my mother."

The stranger, from a feeling of delicacy, made no observation upon this, but proceeded to take another view of the same subject.

"Suppose, then," he added, "that we admit the fact that the eye of a certain individual can transfuse, by the force of strong volition, an *evil* influence into the being or bodily system of another—why should it happen that an eye or touch charged with *beneficence*, instead of evil, should fail to affect with a sanative contagion those who labor under many diseases?"

"The only reply I can make to your question," said Woodward, "is this: the one has been long and generally known to exist, whereas the *latter* has never been heard of, which most assuredly would not have been the case if it had *ever* existed; as for the cure of the King's Evil it is a royal imposture."

"I believe in the *latter*," observed the other calmly.

"Upon what grounds?" asked his companion.

"Simply because I know a person who possesses the sanative power I speak of."

"And I believe in the former," replied Woodward, "and upon better grounds still, because I possess it myself."

"You will pardon me," said the other; "but I hesitate to believe that."

Woodward, who felt this imputation against his veracity with resentment, suddenly pulled up his horse, and, turning himself on the saddle, looked upon his companion with an expression that was as extraordinary as it was blighting. The stranger, on the other hand, reining in *his* horse, and taking exactly the same attitude as Woodward, bent his eye on him in return; and there they sat opposite to each other, where we will leave them until we describe the somewhat extraordinary man who had become the fellow-traveller of the hero of the breakfast table.

He was mounted upon a powerful charger; for indeed it was evident at a glance that no other would have been equal to his weight. He was well-dressed—that is to say, in the garb of a country gentleman of the day. He wore his own hair, however, which fell in long masses over his shoulders, and a falling collar, which came down over his breast. His person was robust and healthy looking, and, what is not very usual in large men, it was remarkable for the most consummate proportion and symmetry. He wore boots and silver spurs, and his feet were unusually small, considering his size, as were also his hands. That, however, which struck the beholder with amazement, was the manly beauty of his features. At a first glance this was visible; but on contemplating them more closely you began to feel something strange and wonderful associated with a feeling of veneration and pleasure. Even this, however, was comparatively little to what a still more deliberate perusal of that face brought to light. There could be read that extraordinary union of humility and grandeur; but above all, and beyond all other expressions, there proceeded from his eyes, and radiated like a halo from every part of his countenance, a sense of power which was felt to be irresistible. His eyes, indeed, were almost transparent with light—a light so clear, benignant, and strong, that it was impossible to withstand their glance, radiant with benevolence though it was. The surrender to that glance, however, was a willing and a pleasing one. The spectator submitted to it as an individual would to the eye of a blessed spirit that was known to communicate nothing but good. There, then, they sat contemplating one another, each, as it were, in the exercise of

some particular power, which, in this case, appeared to depend altogether on the expressions of the eye. The gaze was long and combative in its character, and constituted a trial of that moral strength which each, in the peculiar constitution of his being, seemed to possess. After some time, however, Woodward's glance seemed to lose its concentrative power, and gradually to become vague and blank. In a little time he felt himself rapidly losing ground, and could hardly avoid thinking that the eyes of his opponent were looking into his very soul: his eyelids quivered, his eyes assumed a dull and listless appearance, and ultimately closed for some moments—he was vanquished, and he felt it.

"What is the matter with you?" said his companion at length, "and why did you look at me with such a singular gaze? I hope you do not feel resentment at what I said. I hesitated to believe you only because I thought you might be mistaken."

"I entertain no resentment against you," replied Woodward; "but I must confess I feel astonished. Pray, allow me to ask, sir, are you a medical man?"

"Not at all," replied the other; "I never received a medical education, and yet I perform a great number of cures."

"Then, sir," said Woodward, "I take it, with every respect, that you must be a quack."

"Did you ever know a quack to work a cure without medicine?" replied the other; "*I* cure *without* medicine, and that is more than the quack is able to do *with* it; I, consequently, cannot be a quack."

"Then, in the devil's name, what are you?" asked Woodward, who felt that his extraordinary fellow-traveller was amusing himself at his expense.

"I reply to no interrogatory urged upon such authority," said the stranger; "but let me advise you, young man, not to allow that mysterious and malignant power which you seem to possess to gratify itself by injury to your fellow-creatures. Let it be the principal purpose of your life to serve them by every means within your reach, otherwise you will neglect to your cost those great duties for which God created you. Farewell, my friend, and remember my words; for they are uttered in a spirit of kindness and good feeling."

They had now arrived at cross-roads; the stranger turned to the right, and Woodward proceeded, as directed, toward Rathfillan House, the residence of his father

The building was a tolerably large and comfortable one, without any pretence to architectural beauty. It had a plain porch before the hall-door, with a neat lawn, through which wound a pretty drive up to the house. On each side of the lawn was a semicircle of fine old trees, that gave an ancient appearance to the whole place.

Now, one might imagine that Woodward would have felt his heart bound with affection and delight on his return to all that ought to have been dear to him after so long an absence. So far from that, however, he returned in disappointment and illtemper, for he calculated that unless there had been some indefensible neglect, or unjustifiable offence offered to his uncle Hamilton by his family, that gentleman, who, he knew, had the character of being both affectionate and good-natured, would never have left his property to a stranger. The alienation of this property from himself was, indeed, the bitter reflection which rankled in his heart, and established in it a hatred against the Goodwins which he resolved by some means to wreak upon them in a spirit of the blackest vengeance. Independently of this, we feel it necessary to say here, that he was utterly devoid of domestic affection, and altogether insensible to the natural claims and feelings of consanguinity. His uncle abroad, for instance, had frequently urged him to pay a visit to his relatives, and, of course, to supply him liberally with the necessary funds for the journey. To every such suggestion, however, he gave a decided negative. "If they wish to see me," he would reply, "let them come and see me: as for me, I have no wish to see them, and I shall not go."

This unnatural indifference to the claims of blood and affection, not only startled his uncle, but shook his confidence in the honor and integrity of his favorite. Some further discoveries of his dishonesty ultimately led to his expulsion from the heart of that kind relative, as well as from the hospitable roof of which he proved himself so unworthy.

With such a natural disposition, and affected as he must have been by a train of circumstances so decidedly adverse to his hopes and prospects, our readers need not feel surprised that he should return home in anything but an agreeable mood of mind.

CHAPTER IV.

Woodward meets a Guide—His Reception at Home—Preparations for a Fête.

WOODWARD rode slowly, as he indulged in those disagreeable reflections to which we alluded, until he reached a second cross-roads, where he found himself somewhat at

a loss whether to turn or ride straight onward. While pausing for a moment, as to which way he should take, the mellow whistle of some person behind him indulging in a light-hearted Irish air, caused him to look back, when he saw a well-made, compact, good-looking young fellow approaching, who, finding his attention evidently directed to him, concluded his melody and respectfully touched his hat."

"Pray, my good friend," said Woodward, "can you direct me to Rathfillan, the residence of Mr. Lindsay, the magistrate?"

"Misther Lindsay's, is it?"

"Yes; I said so."

"Well, I think I can, sir."

"Yes; but are you sure of it?"

"Well, I think I am, sir."

"You think! why, d—n it, sir, do you not know whether you are or not?"

"May I ax, sir," inquired the other in his turn, "if you are a religious character?"

"Why, what the devil has that to do with the matter in question?" said Woodward, beginning to lose his temper. "I ask you to direct me to the residence of a certain gentleman, and you ask me whether I am a religious character? What do you mean by that?"

"Why, sir," replied the man, "not much, I'm afeard—only if you had let me speak, which you didn't, God pardon you, I was going to say, that if you knew the way to heaven as well as I do to Misther Lindsay's you might call yourself a happy man, and born to luck."

Woodward looked with something of curiosity at his new companion, and was a good deal struck with his appearance. His age might be about twenty-eight or from that to thirty; his figure stout and well-made; his features were decidedly Milesian, but then they were Milesian of the best character; his mouth was firm, but his lips full, red, and handsome; his clear, merry eyes would puzzle one to determine whether they were gray or blue, so equally were the two colors blended in them. After a very brief conversation with him, no one could doubt that humor formed a predominant trait in his disposition. In fact, the spirit of the forthcoming jest was visible in his countenance before the jest itself came forth; but although his whole features bore a careless and buoyant expression, yet there was no mistaking in them the unquestionable evidences of great shrewdness and good sense. He also indulged occasionally in an ironical and comic sarcasm, which, however, was never directed against his friends; this he reserved for certain individuals whose character entitled them to it at his hands. He also drew the long-bow, when he wished, with great skill and effect. Woodward, after having scrutinized his countenance for some time, was about to make some inquiries, as a stranger, concerning his family and the reputation they bore in the neighborhood, when he found himself, considerably to his surprise, placed in the witness-box for a rather brisk fire of cross-examination.

"You are no stranger in this part of the country, I presume," said he, with a view of bringing him out for his own covert and somewhat ungenerous purposes.

"I am no stranger, sure enough, sir," replied the other, "so far as a good slice of the *counthry* side goes; but if I am not you are, sir, or I'm out in it."

"Yes, I am a stranger here."

"Never mind, sir, don't let that disthress you; it's a good man's case, sir. Did you thravel far, wid submission? I spake in kindness, sir."

"Why, yes, a—a—pretty good distance; but about Mr. Lindsay and—"

"Yes, sir; crossed *over*, sir, I suppose? I mane from the *other side?*"

"O! you want to know if I crossed the Channel?"

"Had you a pleasant passage, sir?"

"Yes, tolerable."

"Thank God! I hope you'll make a long stay with us, sir, in this part of the *counthry*. If you have any business to do with Mr. Lindsay—as of coorse you have—why, I don't think you and he will quarrel; and by the way, sir, I know him and the family well, and if I only got a glimpse, I could throw in a word or two to guide you in dalin' wid him—that is, if I knew the business."

"As to that," replied Woodward, "it is not very particular; I am only coming on a pretty long visit to him, and as you say you know the family, I would feel glad to hear what you think of them."

"Misther Lindsay, or rather Misther Charles, and you will have a fine time of it, sir. There's delightful fishin' here, and the best of shootin' and huntin' in harvest and winter—that is, *if you stop so long.*"

"What kind of a man is Mr. Lindsay?"

"A fine, clever * man, sir; six feet in his stockin' soles, and made in proportion."

"But I want to know nothing about his figure; is the man reputed good or bad?"

"Why, just good or bad, sir, according as he's treated."

"Is he well liked, then? I trust you understand me now."

"By his friends, sir, no man betther—by them that's his enemies, not so well."

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* Portly, large, comely.

THE GAZE WAS LONG AND COMBATIVE IN ITS CHARACTER, AND CONSTITUTED A TRIAL OF THAT MORAL STRENGTH WHICH EACH, IN THE PECULIAR CONSTITUTION OF HIS BEING, SEEMED TO POSSESS.—*Evil Eye; or the Black Spectre, Page* 631.

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"You mentioned a son of his, Charles, I think; what kind of a young fellow is he?"

"Very like his father, sir."

"I see; well, I thank you, my friend, for the liberality of your information. Has he any daughters?"

"Two, sir; but very unlike their *mother*."

"Why, what kind of a woman *is* their mother?"

"She's a saint, sir, of a sartin class—ever and always at her prayers," (*sotto voce*, "such as they are—cursing her fellow-cratures from mornin' till night.")

"Well, at all events, it is a good thing to be religious."

"Devil a better, sir; but she, as I said, is a saint *from*—heaven" (*sotto voce*, "and very *far* from it too.) But, sir, there's a lady in this neighborhood—I won't name her—that has a tongue as sharp and poisonous as if she lived on rattlesnakes; and she has an eye of her own that they say is every bit as dangerous."

"And who is she, my good fellow?"

"Why, a very intimate friend of Mrs. Lindsay's, and seldom out of her company. Now, sir, do you see that house wid the tall chimleys, or rather do you see the tall chimleys—for you can't see the house itself? That's where the family we spake of lives, and there you'll see Mrs. Lindsay and the lady I mention."

Woodward, in fact, knew not what to make of his guide; he found him inscrutable, and deemed it useless to attempt the extortion of any further intelligence from him. The latter was ignorant that Mrs. Lindsay's son was expected home, as was every member of that gentleman's family. He had, in fact, given them no information of his return. The dishonest fraud which he had practised upon his uncle, and the apprehension that that good old man had transmitted an account of his delinquency to his relatives, prevented him from writing, lest he might, by subsequent falsehoods, contradict his uncle, and thereby involve himself in deeper disgrace. His uncle, however, was satisfied with having got rid of him, and forbore to render his relations unhappy by any complaint of his conduct. His hope was, that Woodward's expulsion from his house, and the withdrawal of his affections from him, might, upon reflection, cause him to turn over a new leaf—an effort which would have been difficult, perhaps impracticable, had he transmitted to them a full explanation of his perfidy and ingratitude.

A thought now occurred to Woodward with reference to himself. He saw that his guide, after having pointed out his father's house to him, was still keeping him company.

"Perhaps you are coming out of your way," said he; "you have been good enough to show me Mr. Lindsay's residence, and I have no further occasion for your services. I thank you: take this and drink my health;" and as he spoke he offered him some silver.

"Many thanks, sir," replied the man, in a far different tone of voice, "many thanks; but I never resave or take payment for an act of civility, especially from any gentleman on his way to the family of Mr. Lindsay. And now, sir, I will tell you honestly and openly that there is not a better gentleman alive this day than he is. Himself, his son, and daughter * are loved and honored by all that know them; and woe betide the man that 'ud dare to *cruck* (crook) his finger at one of them."

"You seem to know them very well."

"I have a good right, sir, seein' that I have been in the family ever since I was a gorson."

"And is Mrs. Lindsay as popular as her husband?"

"She is *his* wife, sir—the mother of his children, and my misthress; afther that you may judge for yourself."

"Of course, then, you are aware that they have a son abroad."

"I am, sir, and a fine young man they say he is. Nothing vexes them so much as that he won't come to see them. He's never off their tongue; and if he's aquil to what they say of him, upon my credit the sun needn't take the trouble of shinin' on him."

"Have they any expectation of a visit from him, do you know?"

"Not that I hear, sir; but I know that nothing would rise the cockles of their hearts aquil to seein' him among them. Poor fellow! Mr. Hamilton's will was a bad business for him, as it was thought he'd have danced into the property. But then, they say, his other uncle will provide for him, especially as he took him from the family, by all accounts, on that condition."

This information—if information it could be called—was nothing more nor less than wormwood and gall to the gentleman on whose ears and into whose heart it fell. The consciousness of his present position—discarded by a kind uncle for dishonesty, and deprived, as he thought, by the caprice or mental imbecility, of another uncle, of a property amounting to upwards of twelve hundred per annum—sank upon his heart with a feeling which filled it with a deep and al-

* His daughter Jane was with a relation in England, and does not appear in this romance.

most blasphemous resentment at every person concerned, which he could scarcely repress from the observation of his guide.

"What is your name?" said he abruptly to him; and as he asked the question he fixed a glance upon him that startled his companion.

The latter looked at him, and felt surprised at the fearful expression of his eye; in the meantime, we must say, that he had not an ounce of coward's flesh on his bones.

"What is my name, sir?" he replied. "Faith, afther that look, if you don't know my name, I do yours; there was your mother's eye fastened on me to the life. However, take it easy, sir; devil a bit I'm afeared. If you're not her son, Misther Woodward, why, I'm not Barney Casey, that's all. Don't deny it, sir; you're welcome home, and I'm glad to see you, as they all will be."

"Harkee, then," said Woodward, "you are right; but, mark me, keep quiet, and allow me to manage matters in my own way; not a syllable of the discovery you have made, or it will be worse for you. I am not a person to be trifled with."

"Troth, and you're right there, sir; it's what I often said, often say, and often will say of myself. Barney Casey is not the boy to be trifled wid."

On arriving at the house, Barney took round the horse—a hired one, by the way—to the stable, and Woodward knocked. On the door being opened, he inquired if Mr. Lindsay was within, and was answered in the affirmative.

"Will you let him know a gentleman wishes to see him for a few minutes?"

"What name, sir, shall I say?"

"O, it doesn't matter—say a gentleman."

"Step into the parlor, sir, and he will be with you immediately."

He did so, and there was but a very short time when his step-father entered. Short, as the time was, however, he could not prevent himself from reverting to the strange equestrian he had met on his way, nor to the extraordinary ascendancy he had gained over him. Another young man placed in his circumstances would have felt agitated and excited by his approaching interview with those who were so nearly related to him, and whom, besides, he had not seen for such a long period of time. To every such emotion, however, he was absolutely insensible; there was no beating pulse, no heaving of the bosom, not a nerve disturbed by the tremulous vibrations of awakened affection, no tumult of the heart, no starting tear—no! there was nothing of all this—but, on the contrary, a calm, cold, imperturbable spirit, so dead and ignorant of domestic attachment, that the man could neither feel nor understand what it meant.

When his step-father entered, he naturally bowed to the stranger, and motioned him to a seat, which the other accordingly took. Lindsay certainly was, as Barney Casey had said, a very fine-looking man for his years. He was tall, erect, and portly, somewhat inclined to corpulency, of a handsome, but florid countenance, in which might be read a large expression of cheerfulness and good humor, together with that peculiar tinge which results from conviviality. Indeed, there could scarcely be witnessed a more striking contrast than that between his open, kind-looking features, and the sharp, disagreeable symmetry which marked those of his step-son with such a dark and unpleasant character.

"My servant tells me," said Lindsay, courteously, "that you wished to see me."

"I did, sir," replied Woodward; "in that he spoke correctly; I wished to see you, and I am glad to see you."

"I thank you, sir," replied the other, bowing again; "but—ahem—in the meantime, sir, you have the advantage of me."

"And intend to keep it, sir, for a little," replied Woodward with one of his cold smiles. "I came to speak to you, sir, concerning your son who is abroad, and to ask if you have recently heard from himself or his uncle."

"O, then, I presume, sir," replied Lindsay, "you are an acquaintance or friend of his; if so, allow me to bid you welcome; nothing, I assure you, could afford either myself or my family greater pleasure than to meet and show attention to any friend of his. Unfortunately, we have heard nothing from him or his uncle for nearly the last year and a half; but, you will be doubly welcome, sir, if you can assure us that they are both well. His uncle, or rather I should say his grand-uncle, for in that relation he stands to him, adopted him, and a kinder man does not live."

"I believe Mr. Woodward and his uncle are both well, the former, I think, sir, is your step-son only."

"Don't say *only*, sir, he is just as much the son of my affection as his brother, and now, sir, may I request to know the name of the gentleman I am addressing?"

"Should you wish to see Henry Woodward himself, sir?"

"Dear sir, nothing would delight me more, and all of us, especially his mother; yet the ungrateful boy would never come near us, although he was pressed and urged to do so a hundred times."

"Well, then, sir," replied that gentleman, rising up, "he now stands before you; I am Henry Woodward, father."

A hug that half strangled him was the first acknowledgment of his identity. "Zounds, my dear Harry—Harry, my dear boy, you're welcome a thousand times, ten thousand times. Stand off a little till I look at you; fine young fellow, and your mother's image. Gadzooks, I was stupid as a block not to know you; but who would have dreamed of it. There, I say—hallo, Jenny!—come here, all ot you; here is Harry at last. Are you all deaf, or asleep?"

These words he shonted out at the top of his voice, and in a few minutes his mother, Charles, and his sister Maria entered the room, the two latter in a state of transport.

"Here, Jenny, here he is; you have the first claim; confound it, Charley, Maria, don't strangle the boy; ha, ha, ha!"

In fact, the precaution, so far as the affectionate brother and sister were concerned, was anything but needless. His mother, seeing their eagerness to embrace him, which they did with tears of delight, stood calmly by until he was disentangled from their arms, when she approached him and imprinted two kisses upon his lips, with an indifference of manner that, to a stranger, would have been extraordinary, but which, to those who were present, excited no surprise; for she had scarcely, during her life, ever kissed one of her own children. Nothing, indeed, could exceed the tumultuous exultation of spirits with which they received him, nor was honest Lindsay himself less joyously affected. Yet it might be observed that there was a sparkle in the eye of his mother, which was as singular as it was concentrated and intense. Such an expression might be observed in a menagerie when a tigress, indolently dallying with one of her cubs, exhibits, even in repose, those fiery scintillations in the eye which startle the beholders. The light of that eye, though intense, was cold, calculating, and disagreeable to look upon. The frigidity of her manner and reception of him might, to a certain extent, be accounted for from the fact that she had gone to his uncle's several times for the purpose of seeing him, and watching his interests. Let us not, therefore, impute to the coldness of her habits any want of affection for him; on the contrary, his little finger was a thousand times dearer to her than the bodies and souls of all her other children, adding to them her husband himself, put together. Besides, she was perfectly unsusceptible of emotions of tenderness, and, consequently, a woman of powerful will, inflexible determination, and the most inexorable resentments. She was also ambitious, as far as she had scope for it, within her sphere of life, and would have been painfully penurious in her family, were it not that the fiery resolution of her husband, when excited by long and intolerable provocation, was at all times able to subdue her—a superiority over her will and authority which she never forgave him. In fact, she neither loved himself, nor anything in common with him; and the natural affection which he displayed on the return of her son was one reason why *she* received him with such apparent indifference. To all the rest of the family she had a heart of stone. Since her second marriage they had lost three children; but, so far as she was concerned, each of them went down into a tearless grave. She had once been handsome; but her beauty, like her son's, was severe and disagreeable. There is, however, such a class of beauty, and it is principally successful with men who have a *penchant* for overcoming difficulties, because it is well known that the fact of conciliating or subduing it is justly considered no ordinary achievement. A great number of our old maids may trace their solitude and their celibacy to the very questionable gift of such beauty, and the dispositions which usually accompany it. She was tall, and had now grown thin, and her features had become sharpened by ill-temper into those of a fleshless, angular-faced vixen. Altogether she was a faithful exponent of her own evil and intolerable disposition; and it was said that she had inherited that and the "unlucky eye." from a family that was said to have been deservedly unpopular, and equally unscrupulous in their resentments.

"Well, Harry," said she, after the warm-hearted ebullition of feeling produced by his appearance had subsided, "so you have returned to us at last; but indeed you return now to a blank and dismal prospect. Miss Goodwin's adder tongue has charmed the dotage of your silly old uncle to some purpose for herself."

"Confound it, Jenny," said her husband, "let the young man breathe, at least, before you bring up that eternal subject. Is not the matter over and decided? and where is the use of your making both yourself and us unhappy by discussing it?"

"It may be decided, but it is not over, Lindsay," she replied; "don't imagine it: I shall pursue the Goodwins, especially that sorceress, Alice, with a vengeance that will annul the will, and circumvent those who wheedled him into the making of it. My curse upon them all, as it will be!"

"Harry, when you become better acquainted with your mother," said his step-

father, "you will get sick of this. Have you breakfasted; for that is more to the point?"

"I have, sir," replied the other; "and you would scarcely guess where;" and here he smiled and glanced significantly at his mother.

"Why, I suppose," said Lindsay, "in whatever inn you stopped at."

"No," he replied; "I was obliged to seek shelter from the storm last night, and where do you think I found it?"

"Heaven knows. Where?"

"Why, with your friend and neighbor, Mr. Goodwin."

"No friend, Harry," said his mother; "don't say that."

"I slept there last night," he proceeded, "and breakfasted there this morning, and nothing could exceed the cordiality and kindness of my reception."

"Did they know who you were?" asked his mother, with evident interest.

"Not till this morning, at breakfast."

"Well," said she again, "when they heard it?"

"Why, their attention and kindness even redoubled," replied her son; "and as for Miss Goodwin herself, she's as elegant, as sweet, and as lovely a girl as I ever looked on. Mother, I beg you to entertain no implacable or inveterate enmity against her. I will stake my existence that she never stooped to any fraudulent circumvention of my poor uncle. Take my word for it, the intent and execution of the will must be accounted for otherwise."

"Well and truly said, Harry," said his step-father—"well and generously said; give me your hand, my boy; thank you. Now, madam," he proceeded, addressing his wife, "what have you to say to the opinion of a man who has lost so much by the transaction, when you hear that that opinion is given in her favor?"

"Indeed, my dear Harry," observed his sister, "she is all that you have said of her, and much more, if you knew her as we do; she is all disinterestedness and truth, and the most unselfish girl that ever breathed."

Now, there were two persons present who paused upon hearing this intelligence; one of whom listened to it with unexpected pleasure, and the other with mingled emotions of pleasure and pain. The first of these were Mrs. Lindsay, and the other her son Charles. Mrs. Lindsay, whose eyes were not for a moment off her son, understood the significant glance he had given her when he launched forth so heartily in the praise of Alice Goodwin; neither did the same glance escape the observation of his brother Charles, who inferred, naturally enough, from the warmth of the eulogium that had been passed upon her, that she had made, perhaps, too favorable an impression upon his brother. Of this, however, the reader shall hear more in due time.

"Well," said the mother slowly, and in a meditating voice, "perhaps, after all, we may have done her injustice. If so, no person would regret it more than myself; but we shall see. You parted from them, Harry, on friendly terms?"

"I did, indeed, my dear mother, and am permitted, almost solicited, to make their further acquaintance, and cultivate a friendly intimacy with them, which I am determined to do."

"Bravo, Harry, my fine fellow; and we will be on friendly terms with them once more. Poor, honest, and honorable old Goodwin! what a pity that either disunion or enmity should subsist between us. No; the families must be once more cordial and affectionate, as they ought to be. Bravo, Harry! your return is prophetic of peace and good feeling; and, confound me, but you shall have a bonfire this night for your generosity that will shame the sun. The tar-barrels shall blaze, and the beer-barrels shall run to celebrate your appearance amongst us. Come, Charley, let us go to Rathfillan, and get the townsfolk to prepare for the *fête*: we must have fiddlers and pipers, and plenty of dancing. Barney Casey must go among the tenants, too, and order them all into the town. Mat Mulcahy, the inn-keeper, must give us his best room; and, my life to yours, we will have a pleasant night of it."

"George," exclaimed his wife, in a tone of querulous remonstrance, "you know how expensive—"

"Confound the expense and your penury both," exclaimed her husband; "is it to your own son, on his return to us after such an absence, that you'd grudge the expense of a blazing bonfire?"

"Not the bonfire," replied his wife, "but—"

"Ay, but the cost of drink to the tenants. Why, upon my soul, Harry, your mother is anything but popular here, you must know; and I think if it were not from respect to me and the rest of the family she'd be indicted for a witch. Gadzooks, Jenny, will I never get sense or liberality into your head? Ay, and if you go on after your usual fashion, it is not unlikely that you may have a tar-barrel of your own before long. Go, you and Harry, and tell your secrets to each other while we prepare for the jubilation. In the meantime, we must get up an extempore dinner to-day—the *set* dinner will come in due time, and be a different affair; but at all

events some of the neighbors we must have to join us in the jovialities—hurroo!"

"Well, George," said she, with her own peculiar smile, "I see you are in one of your moods to-day."

"Ay, right enough, the *imperative* one, my dear."

"And, so far as I am concerned, it would not certainly become me to stand in the way of any honor bestowed upon my son Harry; so I perceive you must only have it your own way—*I consent.*"

"I don't care a fig whether you do or not. When matters come to a push, I am always master of my own house, and ever will be so—and you know it. Good-by, Harry, we will be back in time for dinner, with as many friends as we can pick up on so short notice—hurroo!"

He and Charles accordingly went forth to make the necessary preparations, and give due notice of the bonfire, after which they succeeded in securing the attendance of about a dozen guests to partake of the festivity.

Barney, in the meantime, having received his orders for collecting, or, as it was then called, *warning in* the tenantry to the forthcoming bonfire, proceeded upon his message in high spirits, not on account of the honor it was designed to confer on Woodward, against whom he had already conceived a strong antipathy, in consequence of the resemblance he bore to his mother, but for the sake of the fun and amusement which he purposed to enjoy at it himself. The first house he went into was a small country cabin, such as a petty farmer of five or six acres at that time occupied. The door was not of wood, but of wicker-work woven across long wattles and plastered over with clay mortar. The house had two small holes in the front side-walls to admit the light; but during severe weather these were filled up with straw or rags to keep out the storm. On one side of the door stood a large *curra*, or, "ould man," for it was occasionally termed both—composed of brambles and wattles tied up lengthwise together—about the height of a man and as thick as an ordinary sack. This was used, as they termed it, "to keep the wind from the door." If the blast came from the right, it was placed on that side, and if from the left, it was changed to the opposite. Chimneys, at that period, were to be found only upon the houses of extensive and wealthy farmers, the only substitute for them being a simple hole in the roof over the fireplace. The small farmer in question cultivated his acres with a spade: and after sowing his grain he harrowed it in with a large thorn bush, which he himself, or one of his sons, dragged over it with a heavy stone on the top to keep it close to the surface. When Barney entered this cabin he found the *vanithee*, or woman of the house, engaged in the act of grinding oats into meal for their dinner with a quern, consisting of two diminutive millstones turned by the hand; this was placed upon a *praskeen*, or coarse apron, spread under it on the floor to receive the meal. An old woman, her mother, sat spinning flax with the distaff—for as yet flax wheels were scarcely known—and a lubberly young fellow about sixteen, with able, well shaped limbs and great promise of bodily strength, sat before the fire managing a double task, to wit, roasting, first, a lot of potatoes in the *greeshaugh*, which consisted of half embers and half ashes, glowing hot; and, secondly, at a little distance from the larger lighted turf, two duck eggs, which, as well as the potatoes, he turned from time to time, that they might be equally done. All this he conducted by the aid of what was termed a *muddha vristha*, or rustic tongs, which was nothing more than a wattle, or stick, broken in the middle, between the ends of which he held both his potatoes and his eggs while turning them. Two good-looking, fresh-colored girls were squatted on their *hunkers* (hams), cutting potatoes for seed—late as the season was—with two case knives, which had been borrowed from a neighboring farmer of some wealth. The dress of the women was similar and simple. It consisted of a long-bodied gown that had only half skirts; that is to say, instead of encompassing the whole person, the lower part of it came forward only as far as the hip bones, on each side, leaving the front of the petticoat exposed. This posterior part of the gown would, if left to fall to its full length, have formed a train behind them of at least two feet in length. It was pinned up, however, to a convenient length, and was not at all an ungraceful garment, if we except the sleeves, which went no farther than the elbows—a fashion in dress which is always unbecoming, especially when the arms are thin. The hair of the elder woman was doubled back in front, from about the middle of the forehead, and the rest of the head was covered by a *dowd cap*, the most primitive of all female headdresses, being a plain shell, or skull-cap, as it were, for the head, pointed behind, and without any fringe or border whatsoever. This turning up of the hair was peculiar only to married life, of which condition it was universally a badge. The young females wore theirs fastened behind by a skewer, but on this occasion one of them, the youngest, allowed it to fall in natural ringlets about her cheeks and shoulders.

"God save all here," said Barney, as he entered the house.

"God save you kindly, Barney," was the instant reply from all.

"Ah, Mrs. Davoren," he proceeded, "ever the same; by this and by that, if there's a woman living ignorant of one thing, and you are that woman."

"Sorrow off you, Barney! well, what is it?"

"Idleness, achora. Now, let me see if you have e'er a finger at all to show; for upon my honorable word they ought to be worn to the stumps long ago. Well, and how are you all? But sure I needn't ax. Faith, you're crushin' the *blanther** anyhow, and that looks well."

"We must live, Barney; 'tis a poor shift we'd make 'idout the praties and the *broghan*," (meal porridge).

"What news from the big house?"

"News, is it? Come, Corney, come, girls, bounce; news is it? O, faitha', twin it's I that has the news that will make you all shake your feet to-night."

"Blessed saints, Barney what is it?"

"Bounce, I say, and off wid ye to gather *brusna* (dried and rotten brambles) for a bonfire in the great town of Rathfillan."

"A bonfire, Barney! Arra, why, man alive?"

"Why? Why, bekaise the masther's stepson and the misthress's own pet has come home to us to set the counthry into a state o' conflagration wid his beauty. There won't be a whole cap in the barony before this day week. They're to have fiddlers, and pipers, and dancin', and drinkin' to no end; and the glory of it is that the masther, God bless him, is to pay for all. Now!"

The younger of the two girls sprang to her feet with the elasticity and agility of a deer.

"O, *beetha*, Barney," she exclaimed, "but that will be the fun! And the misthress's son is home? Arra, what is he like, Barney? Is he as handsome as Masther Charles?"

"I hope he's as good," said her mother.

"As good, Bridget? No, but worth a shipload of him; he has a pair of eyes in his head, Granua," (*anglice*, Grace,) addressing the younger, "that 'ud turn *Glendhis* (the dark glen) to noonday at midnight; divil a lie in it; and his hand's never out of his pocket wid generosity."

"O, mother," said Grace, "won't we all go?"

"Don't ax your mother anything about it," replied Barney, "bekaise mother, and father, and sister, and brother, daughter and son, is all to come."

"Arra, Barney," said Bridget Davoren, for such was her name, "is this gentleman like his *ecald* of a mother?"

"Hasn't a feature of her purty face," he replied, "and, to the back o' that, is very much given to religion. Troth, my own opinion is, he'll be one of ourselves yet; for I can tell you a saicret about him."

"A saicret, Barney," said Grace; "maybe he's married?"

"Married, no; he tould me himself this mornin' that it's not his intention ever to marry 'till he meets a purty girl to plaise him; he'll keep a loose foot, he says, and an aisy conscience till then, he says; but the saicret is this, he never aits flesh mate of a Friday—when he *can't* get it. Indeed, I'm afeared he's too good to be long for this world; but still, if the Lord was to take him, wouldn't it be a proof that he had a great regard for him!"

Grace Davoren was flushed and excited with delight. She was about eighteen, rather tall for her age, but roundly and exquisitely moulded; her glossy ringlets, as they danced about her cheeks and shoulders, were black as ebony; but she was no *brunette;* for her skin was milk white, and that portion of her bosom, which was uncovered by the simple nature of her dress, threw back a polished light like ivory; her figure was perfection, and her white legs were a finer specimen of symmetry than ever supported the body of the Venus de Medicis. This was all excellent; but it was the sparkling lustre of her eyes, and the radiance of her whole countenance, that attracted the beholder. If there was anything to be found fault with, it was in the spirit, not in the physical perfection, of her beauty. There was, for instance, too much warmth of coloring and of constitution visible in her whole exquisite person; and sometimes her glances would puzzle you to determine whether they were those of innocence or of challenge. Be this as it may, she was a rare specimen of rustic beauty and buoyancy of spirit.

"O, Barney," said she, "that's the pleasantest news I heard this month o' Sundays—sich dancin' as we'll have! and maybe I won't foot it, and me got my new shoes and drugget gown last week;" and here she lilted a gay Irish air, to which she set a-dancing with a lightness of foot and vivacity of manner that threw her whole countenance into a most exquisite glow of mirthful beauty.

"Granua," said her mother, reprovingly, "think of yourself and what you are about; if you worn't a light-hearted, and, I'm afeard,

* *Blanter*, a well-known description of oats. It was so called from having been originally imported from Blantire in Scotland.

a light-headed, girl, too, you wouldn't go on as you do, especially when you know what you know, and what Barney here, too, knows."

"Ah," said Barney, his whole manner immediately changing, "have you heard from *him*, poor fellow?"

"Torley's gone to the mountains," she replied, "and—but here he is. Well, Torley, what news, asthore?"

Her husband having passed a friendly greeting to Barney, sat down, and having taken off his hat, lifted the skirt of his cothamore (big coat) and wiped the perspiration off his large and manly forehead, on which, however, were the traces of deep care. He did not speak for some time, but at length said:

"Bridget, give me a drink."

His wife took a wooden noggin, which she dipped into a churn and handed him. Having finished it at a draught, he wiped his mouth with his gathered palm, breathed deeply, but was still silent.

"Torley, did you hear me? What news of that unfortunate boy?"

"No news, Bridget, at least no good news; the boy's an outlaw, and will be an outlaw—or rather he won't be an outlaw long; they'll get him soon."

"But why would they get him? hasn't he sense enough to keep from them?"

"That's just what he has not, Bridget; he has left the mountains and come down somewhere to the Infield country; but where, I cannot make out."

"Well, asthore, he'll only bring on his own punishment. Troth, I'm not a bit sorry that Granua missed him. I never was to say, *for* the match, but *you* should have your way, and force the girl there to it, over and above. Of what use is his land and wealth to him now?"

"God's will be done," replied her husband, sorrowfully. "As for me, I can do no more in it, nor I won't. I was doing the best for my child. He'll be guided by no one's advice but his own."

"That's true," replied his wife, "you did. But here's Barney Casey, from the big house, comin' to warn the tenantry to a bonfire that's to be made to-night in Rathfillan, out of rejoicin' for the misthress's son that's come home to them."

Here Barney once more repeated the message, with which the reader is already acquainted.

"You are all to come," he proceeded, "ould and young; and to bring every one a backload of sticks and *brusna* to help to make the bonfire."

"Is this message from the masther or misthress, Barney?" asked Davoren.

"O, straight from himself," he replied. "I have it from his own lips. Troth he's ready to leap out of his skin wid delight."

"Bekaise," added Davoren, "if it came from the misthress, the sorrow foot either I or any one of my family would set near her; but from himself, that's a horse of another color. Tell him, Barney, we'll be there, and bring what we can to help the bonfire."

Until this moment the young fellow at the fire never uttered a syllable, nor seemed in the slightest degree conscious that there was any person in the house but himself. He was now engaged in masticating the potatoes and eggs, the latter of which he ate with a thin splinter of bog deal, which served as a substitute for an egg-spoon, and which is to this day used among the poor for the same purpose in the remoter parts of Ireland. At length he spoke:

"This won't be a good night for a bonfire anyhow."

"Why, Andy, *abouchal?*" (my boy.)

"Bekaise, mudher, *the storm was in the fire** last night when I was rakin' it."

"Then we'll have rough weather," said his father; "no doubt of that."

"Don't be afeard," said Barney, laughing; "take my word for it, if there's to be rough weather, and that some witch or wizard has broken bargain with the devil, the misthress has intherest to get it put off till the bonfire's over."

He then bade them good-by, and took his departure to fulfil his agreeable and welcome mission. Indeed, he spent the greater portion of the day not only in going among the tenants in person, but in sending the purport of the said mission to be borne upon the four winds of heaven through every quarter of the barony; after which he proceeded to the little market-town of Rathfillan, where he secured the services of two fiddlers and two pipers. This being accomplished, he returned home to his master's, ripe and ready for both dinner and supper; for, as he had missed the former meal, he deemed it most judicious to kill, as he said, the two birds with one stone, by demolishing them both together.

* This is a singular phenomenon, which, so far as I am aware, has never yet been noticed by any Irish or Scotch writers when describing the habits and usages of the people in either country. When stirring the *greeshaugh*, or red-hot ashes, at night at the settling, or mending, or raking of the fire, a blue, phosphoric-looking light is distinctly visible in the embers, and the more visible in proportion to the feebleness of the light emitted by the fire. It is only during certain states of the atmosphere that this is seen. It is always considered as a prognostic of severe weather, and its appearance is termed as above.

CHAPTER V.

The Bonfire—The Prodigy.

Andy Davoren's prognostic, so far as the appearance of the weather went, seemed, at a first glance, to be literally built on ashes. A calm, mild, and glorious serenity lay upon the earth; the atmosphere was clear and golden; the light of the sun shot in broad, transparent beams across the wooded valleys, and poured its radiance upon the forest tops, which seemed empurpled with its rich and glowing tones. All the usual signs of change or rough weather were wanting. Everything was quiet; and a general stillness was abroad, which, when a sound did occur, caused it to be heard at an unusual distance. Not a breath of air stirred the trees, which stood as motionless as if they had been carved of marble. Notwithstanding all these auspicious appearances, there were visible to a clear observer of nature some significant symptoms of a change. The surfaces of pools and rivers were covered with large white bubbles, which are always considered as indications of coming rain. The dung heaps, and the pools generally attached to them, emitted a fetid and offensive smell; and the pigs were seen to carry straw into their sties, or such rude covers as had been constructed for them.

In the meantime the dinner party in Lindsay's were enjoying themselves in a spirit quite as genial as his hospitality. It consisted of two or three country squires, a Captain Dowd—seldom sober—a pair of twin brothers, named Cumming, with a couple of half sirs—a class of persons who bore the same relation to a gentleman that a salmon-trout does to a salmon. The Protestant clergyman of the parish was there—a jocund, rattling fellow, who loved his glass, his dog, his gun, and, if fame did not belie him, paid more devotion to his own enjoyments than he did to his Bible. He dressed in the extreme of fashion, and was a regular dandy parson of that day. There also was Father Magauran, the parish priest, a rosy-faced, jovial little man, with a humorous twinkle in his blue eye, and an anterior rotundity of person that betokened a moderate relish for the convivialities. Altogether it was a merry meeting; and of the host himself it might be said that he held as conspicuous a place in the mirth as he did in the hospitality.

"Come, gentleman," said he, after the ladies had retired to the withdrawing-room, "come, gentlemen, fill high; fill your glasses."

"Troth," said the priest, "we'd put a heap on them, if we could."

"Right, Father Magauran; do put a heap on them, if you can; but, at all events, let them be brimmers; I'm going to propose a toast."

"Let it be a lady, Lindsay, if you love me," said the parson, filling his glass.

"Sorra hair I care if it is," said the priest, "provided she's dacent and attends her duty; go on, squire; give us her name at once, and don't keep the parson's teeth watering."

"Be quiet, reverend gentlemen," said Lindsay, laughing; "how can a man speak when you take the words out of his month?"

"The Lord forbid we'd swallow them though," subjoined the parson; "if we did we'd not be long in a state of decent so briety."

"Talk about something you understand my worthy friends, and allow me to proceed," replied the host; "don't you know that every interruption keeps you from your glass? Gentlemen, I have great pleasure in proposing the health of my excellent and worthy step-son, who has, after a long absence, made me and all my family happy by his return amongst us. I am sure you will all like him when you come to know him, and that the longer you know him, the better you will like him. Come now, let me see the bottom of every man's glass uppermost. I do not address myself directly to the parson or the priest, because that, I know, would be, as the latter must admit, a want of confidence in their kindness.

"Parson," said the priest, in a whisper, "that last observation is gratifying from Lindsay."

"Lindsay is a gentleman," replied the other, in the same voice; "and the most popular magistrate in the barony. Come, then."

Here the worthy gentleman's health was drank with great enthusiasm, after which he thanked them in very grateful and courteous terms, paying at the same time, some rather handsome compliments to the two clergymen with respect to the appropriate gravity and exquisite polish of their manners. He saw the rapidity with which they had gulped down the wine, and felt their rudeness in interrupting Mr. Lindsay, when about to propose his health, as offensive, and he retorted it upon them with peculiar irony, that being one of the talents, which, among others, he had inherited from his mother.

"I cannot but feel myself happy," said he, "in returning to the roof of so hospitable a father; but sensible to the influences of religion, as I humbly trust I am, I must express a still higher gratification in having the delightful opportunity of making the ac-

proper and becoming example will, I am sure, guide my steps—if I have only grace to follow it—into those serious and primitive habits which characterize themselves, and are so decent and exemplary in the ministers of religion. They may talk of the light of the gospel; but, if I don't mistake, the light of the gospel itself might pale its ineffectual fires before that which shines in their apostolic countenances."

The mirth occasioned by this covert, but comical, rebuke, fell rather humorously upon the two worthy gentlemen, who, being certainly good-natured and excellent men, laughed heartily.

"That's a neat speech," said the parson, "but not exactly appropriate. Father Tom and I are quite unworthy of the compliment he has paid us."

"Neat," said Father Tom; "I don't know whether the gentleman has a profession or not; but from the tone and spirit in which he spoke, I think that if he has taken up any other than that of his church, he has missed his vocation. My dear parson, he talks of the light of our countenances—a light that is lit by hospitality on the one hand, and moderate social enjoyment on the other. It is a light, however, that neither of us would exchange for a pale face and an eye that seems to have something mysterious at the back of it."

"Come, come, Harry," said Lindsay, "you mustn't be bantering these two gentlemen; as I said of yourself, the longer you know them the better you will relish them. They have both too much sense to carry religion about with them like a pair of hawkers, crying out 'who'll buy, who'll buy;' neither do they wear long faces, nor make themselves disagreeable by dragging religion into every subject that becomes the topic of conversation. On the contrary, they are cheerful, moderately social, and to my own knowledge, with all their pleasantry, are active exponents of much practical benevolence to the poor. Come, man, take your wine, and enjoy good company."

"Lindsay," said one of the guests, a magistrate, "how are we to get the country quiet? Those rapparees and outlaws will play the devil with us if we don't put them down. That young scoundrel, *Shawn na Middogue*, is at the head of them it is said, and, it would seem, possesses the power of making himself invisible; for we cannot possibly come at him, although he has been often seen by others."

"Why, what has been Shawn's last exploit?"

"Nothing that I have heard of since Bingham's robbery; but there is none of us safe. Have you your house and premises secured?"

"Not I," replied Lindsay, "unless by good bolts and bars, together with plenty of arms and ammunition."

"How is it that these fellows are not taken?" asked another.

"Because the people protect them," said a third; "and because they have strength and activity; and thirdly, because we have no adequate force to put them down."

"All very sound reasons," replied the querist; but as to *Shawn na Middogue*, the people are impressed with a belief that he is under the protection of the fairies, and can't be taken on this account. Even if they were willing to give him up, which they are not, they dare not make the attempt, lest the vengeance of the fairies might come down on themselves and their cattle, in a thousand shapes."

"I will tell you what the general opinion upon the subject is," replied the other. "It seems his foster-mother was a midwife, and that she was called upon once, about the hour of midnight, to discharge the duties of her profession toward a fairyman's wife, and this she refused to do unless they conferred some gift either upon herself personally, or upon some one whom she should name. Young Shawn, it appears, was her favorite, and she got a solemn promise from them to take him under their protection, and to preserve him from danger. This is the opinion of the people; but whether it is true or not I won't undertake to determine."

"Come, gentlemen," said their host, "push the bottle; remember we must attend the bonfire."

"So," said the magistrate, "you are sending us to blazes, Mr. Lindsay."

"Well, at all events, my friends," continued Mr. Lindsay, "we must make haste, for there's little time to spare. Take your liquor, for we must soon be off. The evening is delightful. If you are for coffee, let us adjourn to the ladies; and after the bonfire we will return and make a night of it."

"Well said, Lindsay," replied the parson; "and so we will."

"Here, you young stranger," said the priest, addressing Woodward, "I'll drink your health once more in this bumper. You touched us off decently enough, but a little too much on the sharp, as you would admit if you knew us. Your health again, sir, and you are welcome among us!"

"Thank you, sir," replied Woodward; "I am glad to see that you can bear a jest from

me or my father, even when it is at your own expense—your health."

"Are you a sportsman?" asked the parson; "because, if you are not, just put yourself under my patronage, and I will teach you something worth knowing. I will let you see what shooting and hunting mean."

"I am a bit of one," replied Woodward, "but shall be very happy to put myself into your hand, notwithstanding."

"If I don't lengthen your face I shall raise your heart," proceeded the divine. "If I don't make a sportsman of you—"

"Ay," added the priest, "you will find yourself in excellent hands, Mr. Woodward."

"If I don't make a sportsman of you—confound your grinning, Father Tom, what are you at?—I'll make a far better thing of you, that is, a good fellow, always, of course, provided that you have the materials in you."

"Not a doubt of it," added Father Tom; "you'll polish the same youth until he shines like yourself or his worthy father here. He'll give you a complexion, my boy—a commodity that you sadly want at present."

The evening was now too far advanced to think of having coffee—a beverage, by the way, to which scarcely a single soul of them was addicted. They accordingly got to their legs, and as darkness was setting in they set out for the village to witness the rejoicings. Young Woodward, however, followed his brother to the drawing-room, whither he had betaken himself at an early hour after dinner. Under their escort, their mother and sister accompanied them to the bonfire. The whole town was literally alive with animation and delight. The news of the intended bonfire had gone rapidly abroad, and the country people crowded into the town in hundreds. Nothing can at any time exceed the enthusiasm with which the Irish enter into and enjoy scenes like that to which they now flocked with such exuberant spirits. Bells were ringing, drums were beating, fifes were playing in the town, and horns sounding in every direction, both in town and country. The people were apparelled in their best costume, and many of them in that equivocal description of it which could scarcely be termed costume at all. Bareheaded and barefooted multitudes of both sexes were present, regardless of appearances, half mad with delight, and exhibiting many a frolic and gambol considerably at variance with the etiquette of fashionable life, although we question whether the most fashionable *fête* of them all ever produced half so much happiness. Farmers had come from a distance in the country, mounted upon lank horses ornamented with incrusted hips, and caparisoned with long straw back-suggaums that reached from the shoulders to the tail, under which ran a crupper of the same material, designed, in addition to a hay girth, to keep this primitive riding gear firm upon the animal's back. Behind the farmer, generally sat either a wife or a daughter, remarkable for their scarlet cloaks and blue petticoats; sometimes with shoes and stockings, and very often without them. Among those assembled, we cannot omit to mention a pretty numerous sprinkling of that class of strollers, vagabonds, and impostors with which the country, at the period of our tale, was overrun. Fortune-tellers, of both sexes, quacks, cardcutters, herbalists, cow-doctors, whisperers, with a long list of such cheats, were at the time a prevailing nuisance throughout the kingdom; nor was there a fair proportion of them wanting here. That, however, which filled the people with the most especial curiosity, awe, and interest, was the general report that nothing less than a live conjurer, who had come to town on that very evening, was then among them. The town, in fact, was crowded as if it had been for an illumination; but as illuminations, unless they could be conducted with rushlights, were pageants altogether unknown in such small remote towns as Rathfillan, the notion of one had never entered their heads. All around the country, however, even for many miles, the bonfires were blazing, and shone at immense distances from every hill-top. We have said before that Lindsay was both a popular landlord and a popular magistrate; and on this account alone the disposition to do honor to any member of his family was recognized by the people as an act of gratitude and duty.

The town of Rathfillan presented a scene of which we who live in the present day can form but a faint conception. Yet, sooth to say, we ourselves have, about forty years ago, witnessed in remote glens and mountain fastnesses little clumps of cabins, whose inhabitants stood still in the midst even of the snail's progress which civilization had made in the rustic parts of Ireland; and who, upon examination, presented almost the same rude personal habits, antiquated social usages, agricultural ignorance, and ineradicable superstition as their ancestors did in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. Lindsay, knowing how unpopular his wife was, not only among their own tenantry, but throughout the country at large, and feeling, besides, how well that unpopularity was merited, very properly left her and Maria to his son Charles, knowing that as the two last named shared in the good-will which the people

bore him, their mother would be treated with forbearance and respect so long as she was in their company. He wished, besides, that Harry should seem to partake of the honor and gratitude which their enthusiasm would prompt them to pay to himself.

The whole town was one scene of life, bustle, and enjoyment. It was studded with bonfires, which were surrounded by wild groups of both sexes, some tolerably dressed, some ragged as Lazarus, and others young urchins with nothing but a slip of rag tied about their loins "to make them look jinteel and daicent." The monster bonfire, however —that which was piled up into an immense pyramid in honor of the stranger—was not ignited until the arrival of the quality. The moment the latter made their appearance it was set in a flame, and in a few minutes a blaze issued up from it into the air that not only dimmed the minor exhibitions, but cast its huge glare over the whole town, making every house and hut as distinctly visible as if it were broad daylight. Then commenced the huzzaing—the bells rang out with double energy—the drums were beaten more furiously—the large bullocks' horns were sounded until those who blew them were black in the face, and every manifestation of joy that could be made was resorted to. Fiddles and pipes were in busy requisition, and "the Boys of Rathfillan," the favorite local air, resounded in every direction. And now that the master and the quality had made their appearance, of course the drink should soon follow, and in a short time the hints to that effect began to thicken.

"Thunder and turf, Jemmy, but this is dry work; my throat's like a lime-burner's wig for want of a drop o' something to help me for the cheerin'."

"Hould your tongue, Paddy; do you think the masther's honor would allow us to lose our voices in his behalf. It's himself that hasn't his heart in a trifle, God bless him."

"Ah, thin, your honor," said another fellow, in tatters, "isn't this dust and hate enough to choke a bishop? O Lord, am I able to spake at all? Upon my sowl, sir, I think there's a bonfire in my throath."

Everything, however, had been prepared to meet these demands; and in about a quarter of an hour barrels of beer and kegs of whiskey were placed under the management of persons appointed to deal out their contents to the thirsty crowds. Then commenced the dancing, whilst the huzzaing, shouting, jingling of bells, squeaking of fifes, blowing of horns, and all the other component parts of this wild melody, were once more resumed with still greater vigor. The great feat of the night, however, so far as the people were concerned, was now to take place. This was to ascertain, by superior activity, who among the young men could leap over the bonfire, when burnt down to what was considered such a state as might make the attempt a safe one. The circles about the different fires were consequently widened to leave room for the run, and then commenced those hazardous but comic performances. As may be supposed, they proceeded with various success, and occasioned the most uproarious mirth whenever any unfortunate devil who had overtasked his powers in the attempt, happened to fail, and was forced to scamper out of the subsiding flames with scorched limbs that set him a dancing without music. In fact, those possessed of activity enough to clear them were loudly cheered, and rewarded with a glass of whiskey, a temptation which had induced so many to try, and so many to fail. When these had been concluded about the minor fires, the victors and spectators repaired to the great one, to try their fortune upon a larger and more hazardous scale. It was now nearly half burned down, but was still a large, glowing mass, at least five feet high, and not less than eighteen in diameter at the base. On arriving there they all looked on in silence, appalled by its great size, and altogether deterred from so formidable an attempt.

It would be death to try it, they exclaimed; no living man could do it; an opinion which was universally acceded to, with one single exception. A thin man, rather above the middle size, dressed in a long, black coat, black breeches, and black stockings, constituted that exception. There was something peculiar, and even strikingly mysterious, in his whole appearance. His complexion was pale as that of a corpse, his eyes dead and glassy, and the muscles of his face seemed as if they were paralyzed and could not move. His right hand was thrust in his bosom, and over his left arm he bore some dark garment of a very funereal cast, almost reminding one of a mortcloth.

"There is *one*," said he, in a hollow and sepulchral voice, "that *could* do it."

Father Magauran, who was present, looked at him with surprise; as indeed did every one who had got an opportunity of seeing him.

"I know there is," he replied, "a sartin individual who could do it; ay, in troth, and maybe if he fell into the flames, too, he'd only find himself in his own element; and if it went to that could dance a hornpipe in the middle of it."

This repartee of the priest's elicited loud

laughter from the by-standers, who, on turning round to see how the other bore it, found that he had disappeared. This occasioned considerable amazement, not unmixed with a still more extraordinary feeling. Nobody there knew him, nor had ever even seen him before; and in a short time the impression began to gain ground that he must have been no other than the conjurer who was said to have arrived in the town that day. In the meantime, while this point was under discussion, a clear, loud, but very mellow voice was heard about twenty yards above them, saying, "Stand aside, and make way—leave me room for a run."

The curiosity of the people was at once excited by what they had only a few minutes before pronounced to be a feat that was impossible to be accomplished. They accordingly opened a lane for the daring individual, who, they imagined, was about to submit himself to a scorching that might cost him his life. No sooner was the lane made, and the by-standers removed back, than a person evidently youthful, tall, elastic, and muscular, approached the burning mass with the speed and lightness of a deer, and flew over it as if he had wings. A tremendous shout burst forth, which lasted for more than a minute, and the people were about to bring him to receive his reward at the whiskey keg, when it was found that he also had disappeared. This puzzled them once more, and they began to think that there were more present at these bonfires than had ever received baptism; for they could scarcely shake themselves free of the belief that the mysterious stranger either was something supernaturally evil himself, or else the conjurer as aforesaid, who, by all accounts, was not many steps removed from such a personage. Of the young person who performed this unprecedented and terrible exploit they had little time to take any notice. Torley Davoren, however, who was one of the spectators, turned round to his wife and whispered,

"Unfortunate boy—madman I ought to say—what devil tempted him to come here?"

"Was it him?" asked his wife.

"Whist, whist," he replied; "let us say no more about it."

In the meantime, although the youthful performer of this daring feat may be said to have passed among them like an arrow from a bow, yet it so happened that the secret of his identity did not rest solely with Torley Davoren. In a few minutes whisperings began to take place, which spread gradually through the crowd, until at length the name of *Shawn na Middogue* was openly pronounced, and the secret—*now* one no longer—was instantly sent abroad through the people, to whom his fearful leap was *now* no miracle. The impression so long entertained of his connection with the fairies was thus confirmed, and the black stranger was no other, perhaps, than the king of the fairies himself.

At this period of the proceedings Mrs. Lindsay, in consequence of some significant whispers which were directly levelled at her character, suggested to Maria that having seen enough of these wild proceedings, it would be more advisable to return home—a suggestion to which Maria, whose presence there at all was in deference to her father's wishes, very gladly consented. They accordingly placed themselves under the escort of the redoubtable and gallant twins, and reached home in safety.

It was now expected that the quality would go down to the inn, where the largest room had been fitted up for refreshments and dancing, and into which none but the more decent and respectable classes were admitted. There most of the beauties of the town and the adjoining neighborhood were assembled, together with their admirers, all of whom entered into the spirit of the festivity with great relish. When Lindsay and his company were about to retire from the great bonfire, the conductors of the pageant, who also acted as spokesmen on the occasion, thus addressed them:

"It's right, your honors, that you should go and see the dancin' in the inn, and no harm if you shake a heel yourselves, besides taking something to wash the dust out o' your throats; but when you come out again, if you don't find a fresh and high blaze before you still, the devil's a witch."

As they proceeded toward the inn, the consequences of the drink, which the crowd had so abundantly received, began, here and there, to manifest many unequivocal symptoms. In some places high words were going on, in others blows; and altogether the affair seemed likely to terminate in a general conflict.

"Father," said his son Charles, "had you not better try and settle these rising disturbances?"

"Not I," replied the jovial magistrate, "let them thrash one another till morning; they like it, and I make it a point never to go between the poor people and their enjoyments. Gadzooks, Charley, don't you know it would be a tame and discreditable affair without a row?"

"Yes; but now that they've got drunk, they're cheering you, and groaning my mother."

"Devil's cure to her," replied his father; "if she didn't deserve it she'd not get it. What right had she to send my bailiffs to drive their cattle without my knowledge, and to take duty fowl and duty work from them whenever my back is turned, and contrary to my wishes? Come in till we have some punch; let them shout and fight away; it wouldn't be the thing, Charley, without it."

They found an exceedingly lively scene in the large parlor of the inn; but, in fact, every available room in the house was crowded. Then, after they had looked on for some time, every eye soon singled out the pride and beauty of the assembly in the person of Grace Davoren, whose features were animated into greater loveliness, and her eyes into greater brilliancy, by the light-hearted spirit which prevailed. She was dressed in her new drugget gown, had on her new shoes and blue stockings, a short striped blue and red petticoat, which displayed as much of her exquisite limbs as the pretty liberal fashion of the day allowed; her bust was perfection; and, as her black, natural ringlets fluttered about her milk-white neck and glowing countenance, she not only appeared inexpressibly beautiful, but seemed to feel conscious of that beauty, as was evident by a dash of pride—very charming, indeed—which shot from her eye, and mantled on her beautiful cheek.

"Why, Charles," exclaimed Woodward, addressing his brother in a whisper, "who is that lovely peasant girl?"

"Her father is one of our tenants," replied Charles; "and she was about to be married some time ago, but it was discovered, fortunately in time, that her intended husband was head and leader of the outlaws that infest the country. It was he, I believe, that leaped over the bonfire."

"Was she fond of him?"

"Well, it is not easy to say that; some say she was, and others that she was not. Barney Casey says she was very glad to escape him when he became an outlaw."

"By the way, where is Barney? I haven't seen him since I came to look at this nonsense."

"Just turn your eye to the farthest corner of the room, and you may see him in his glory."

On looking in the prescribed direction, there, sure enough, was Barney discovered making love hard and fast to a pretty girl, whom Woodward remembered to have seen that morning in Mr. Goodwin's, and with whom he (Barney) had become acquainted when the families were on terms of intimacy. The girl sat smiling on his knee, whilst Barney who had a glass of punch in his hand, kept applying it to her lips from time to time, and pressing her so lovingly toward him, that she was obliged occasionally to give him a pat upon the cheek, or to pull his whiskers. Woodward's attention, however, was transferred once more to Grace Davoren, from whom he could not keep his eyes—a fact which she soon discovered, as was evident by a slight *hauteur* and affectation of manner toward many of those with whom she had been previously on an equal and familiar footing.

"Charles," said he, "I must have a dance with this beautiful girl; do you think she will dance with me?"

"I cannot tell," replied his brother, "but you can ask her."

"By the way, where are my father and the rest? They have left the room."

"The landlord has got them a small apartment," replied Charles, "where they are now enjoying themselves. If you dance with Grace Davoren, however, be on your good behavior, for if you take any unbecoming liberties with her, you may repent it; don't imagine because you see these humble girls allowing their sweethearts to kiss them in corners, that either they or their friends will permit *you* to do so."

"That's as it may be managed, perhaps," said Woodward, who immediately approached Grace in imitation of what he had seen, and making her a low bow, said,

"I dance to you, Miss Davoren, if you will favor me."

She was then sitting, but immediately rose up, with a blushing but gratified face, and replied,

"I will, sir, but I'm not worthy to dance with a gentleman like you."

"You are worthy to dance with a prince," he replied, as he led her to their station, fronting the music.

"Well, my pretty girl," said he, "what do you wish?"

"Your will, sir, is my pleasure."

"Very well. Piper," said he, "play up 'Kiss my lady;'" which was accordingly done, and the dance commenced. Woodward thought the most popular thing he could do was to affect no superiority over the young fellows present, but, on the contrary, to imitate their style and manner of dancing as well as he could; and in this he acted with great judgment. They felt flattered and gratified even at his awkward and clumsy imitations of their steps, and received his efforts with much laughter and cheering; nor was Grace herself insensible to the mirth he occasioned. On he went, cutting and capering, until he had them in convulsions;

and when the dance was ended, he seized his partner in his arms, swung her three times round, and imprinted a kiss upon her lips with such good humor that he was highly applauded. He then ordered in drink to treat her and her friends, which he distributed to them with his own hand; and after contriving to gain a few minutes' private chat with Grace, he amply rewarded the piper. He was now about to take his leave and proceed with his brother, when two women, one about thirty-five, and the other far advanced in years, both accosted him almost at the same moment.

"Your honor won't go," said the less aged of the two, "until you get your fortune tould."

"To be sure he won't, Caterine," they all replied; "we'll engage the gentleman will cross your hand wid silver; like his father before him, his heart's not in the money."

"Never mind her, sir," said the aged crone, "she's a schemer, and will tell you nothing but what she knows will plaise you. Show *me* your hand, sir, and I'll tell you the truth."

"Never mind the *calliagh*, sir, (old woman, by way of reproach;) she's dotin', and hasn't remembered her own name these ten years."

"It doesn't matter," said Woodward, addressing Caterine, "I shall hear what you both have to say—but you first."

He accordingly crossed her hand with a piece of silver, after which she looked closely into it—then upon his countenance, and said,

"You have two things in your mind, and they'll both succeed."

"But, my good woman, any one might tell me as much."

"No," she replied, with confidence; "examine your own heart and you'll find *the two things* there that it is fixed upon; and whisper," she added, putting her lips to his ear, "I know what they are, and can help you in both. When you want me, inquire for Caterine Collins. My uncle is Sol Donnell, the herb doctor."

He smiled and nodded, but made no reply.

"Now," said he, "my old crone, come and let me hear what *you* have to say for me;" and as he spoke another coin was dropped into her withered and skinny hand.

"Bring me a candle," said she, in a voice that whistled with age, and if one could judge by her hag-like and repulsive features, with a malignity that was a habit of her life. After having inspected his palm with the candle, she uttered three eldrich laughs, or rather screams, that sounded through the room as if they were more than natural.

"Ha, ha, ha!" she exclaimed; "look here, there's the line of life stopped by a red instrument; that's not good; I see it, I feel it; your life will be short and your death violent; ay, indeed, the party bonfire of your life, for all so bright as it burns, will be put out wid blood—and that soon."

"You're a d—d old croaker," said Woodward, "and take delight in predicting evil. Here, my good woman," he added, turning to the other, "there's an additional half-crown for you, and I won't forget your words."

He and Charles then joined their friends in the other room, and as it was getting late they all resolved to stroll once more through the town, in order to take a parting look at the bonfires, to wish the people good-night, and to thank them for the kindness and alacrity with which they got them up, and manifested their good feeling upon so short a notice. The large fire was again blazing, having been recruited with a fresh supply of materials. The crowd were looking on; many were staggering about, uttering a feeble huzza, in a state of complete intoxication, and the fool of the parish was attempting to dance a hornpipe, when large, blob-like drops began to fall, as happens at the commencement of a heavy shower. Lindsay put his hand to his face, on which some few of them had fallen, and, on looking at his fingers, perceived that they were spotted as if with blood!

"Good God!" he exclaimed, "what is this? Am I bleeding?"

They all stared at him, and then at each other, with dismay and horror; for there, unquestionably, was the hideous and terrible fact before them, and legible on every face around them—it was raining blood!

An awe, which we cannot describe, and a silence, deep as that of the grave, followed this terrible prodigy. The silence did not last long, however, for in a few minutes, during which the blood fell very thickly, making their hands and visages appear as if they had been steeped in gore—in a few moments, we say, the heavens, which had become one black and dismal mass, opened, and from the chasm issued a red flash of lightning, which was followed almost immediately by a roar of thunder, so loud and terrific that the whole people became fearfully agitated as they stood round the blaze. It was extremely difficult, indeed, for ignorant persons to account for, or speculate upon, this strange and frightful phenomenon. As they stood in fear and terror, with their faces apparently bathed in blood, they seemed rather to resemble a group of hideous murderers, standing as if about to be driven into the flames of perdition itself. To compare them

to a tribe of red Indians surrounding their war fires, would be but a faint and feeble simile when contrasted with the terror which, notwithstanding the gory hue with which they were covered from top to toe, might be read in their terrified eyes and visages. After a few minutes, however, the alarm became more intense, and put itself forth into words. The fearful intelligence now spread. "It is raining blood! it is raining blood!" was shouted from every mouth; those who were in the houses rushed out, and soon found that it was true; for the red liquid was still descending, and in a few minutes they soon were as red as the others. The flight home now became one of panic; every house was crowded with strangers, who took refuge wherever they could find shelter; and in the meantime the lightning was flashing and the thunder pealing with stunning depth throughout the heavens. The bonfires were soon deserted; for even those who were drunk and tipsy had been aroused by the alarm, and the language in which it was uttered. Nobody, in fact, was left at the great fire except those who composed the dinner party, with the exception of the two clergymen, who fled and disappeared along with the mob, urged, too, by the same motives.

"This will not be believed," said Lindsay; "it is, beyond all doubt and scepticism, a prodigy from heaven, and must portend some fearful calamity. May God in heaven protect us! But who is this?"

As he spoke, a hideous old hag, bent over her staff, approached them; but it did not appear that she was about to pay them any particular attention. She was mumbling and cackling to herself when about to pass, but was addressed by Lindsay.

"Where are you going, you old hag? They say you are acquainted with more than you ought to know. Can you account for this blood that's falling?"

"Who are you that axes me?" she squeaked.

"I'm Mr. Lindsay, the magistrate."

"Ay," she screamed again, "it was for your son, Harry, *na Suil Gloir*,* that this bonfire was made to-night. Well he knows what I tould him, and let him think of it; but there will be more blood than this, and that before long, I can tell you and him."

So saying, she hobbled on, mumbling and muttering to herself like a witch rehearsing her incantations on her way to join their sabbath. They now turned their steps homewards, but had not proceeded far, when the rain came down as it might be supposed to have done in the deluge; the lightnings flashed, the thunder continued to roar, and by the time they reached Rathfillan House they were absolutely drenched to the skin. The next morning, to the astonishment of the people, there was not visible a trace or fragment of the bonfires; every vestige of them had disappeared; and the general impression now was, that there must have been something evil and unhallowed connected with the individual for whom they had been prepared.

* *Suil Gloir* was an epithet bestowed on persons whose eyes were of different colors.

CHAPTER VI.

Shawn-na-Middogue—Shan Dhinne-Dhuv, or The Black Spectre.

THE next evening was calm and mild; the sun shone with a serene and mellow light from the evening sky; the trees were green, and still; but the music of the blackbird and the thrush came sweetly from their leafy branches. Henry Woodward had been listening to a rather lengthy discussion upon the subject of the blood-shower, which, indeed, was the topic of much conversation and great wonder throughout the whole parish. His father, a Protestant gentleman, and with some portion of education, although not much, was, nevertheless, deeply imbued with the superstitions which prevailed around him, as, in fact, were most of those who existed in his day; the very air which he breathed was rife with them; but what puzzled him and his family most was the difficulty which they found in shaping the prodigy into significance. Why should it take place, and upon such an occasion, they could not for their lives imagine. The only persons in the family who seemed altogether indifferent to it were Woodward and his mother, both of whom treated it with ridicule and contempt.

"It comes before some calamity," observed Mr. Lindsay.

"It comes before a fiddle-stick, Lindsay," replied his wife. "Calamity! yes; perhaps you may have a headache to-morrow, for which the world must be prepared by a storm of thunder and lightning, and a shower of blood. The head that reels over night with an excess of wine and punch will ache in the morning without a prodigy to foretell it."

"Say what you will," he replied, "I believe the devil had a hand in it; and I tell you," he added, laughing, "that if you be advised by me, you'll begin to prepare your-

self—'a stitch in time saves nine,' you know—so look sharp, I say."

"This, Harry," she said, addressing her son, "is the way your mother has been treated all along; yes, by a brutal and coarse-minded husband, who pays no attention to anything but his own gross and selfish enjoyments; but, thank God, I have now some person to protect me."

"O, ho!" said her husband, "you are for a battle now. Harry, you don't know her. If she lets loose that scurrilous tongue of hers I have no chance; upon my soul, I'd encounter another half dozen of thunder-storms, and as many showers of blood, sooner than come under it for ten minutes; a West India hurricane is a zephyr to it."

"Ah, God help the unhappy woman that's blistered for life with an ignorant sot!—*such* a woman is to be pitied—and such a woman am I;—I, you good-for-nothing drunken booby, who made you what you are."

"O, fie! mamma," said Maria, "this is too bad to papa, who, you know, seldom replies to you at all."

"Miss Lindsay, I shall suffer none of your impertinence," said her mother; "leave the room, madam, this moment—how dare you? but I am not surprised at it;—leave the room, I say."

The poor, amiable girl, who was all fearfulness and affection, quietly left the room as she was desired, and her father, who saw that his worthy wife was brimful of a coming squall, put on his hat, and after having given one of his usual sardonic looks, left the apartment also.

"Mother," said her son Charles, "I must protest against the unjustifiable violence of temper with which you treat my father. You know he was only jesting in what he said to you this moment."

"Let him carry his jests elsewere, Mr. Charles," she replied, "he shan't indulge in them at my expense; nor will I have you abet him in them as you always do—yes, sir, and laugh at them in my face. All this, however, is very natural; as the old cock crows the young one learns. As for Maria, if she makes as dutiful a wife as she does a daughter, her husband may thank God for getting his full share of evil in this life."

"I protest to heaven, Harry," said Charles, addressing his brother, "if ever there was a meek, sweet-tempered girl living, Maria is. You do not yet know her, but you will, of course, have an opportunity of judging for yourself."

"You perceive, Harry," said his mother, addressing him in turn, "you perceive how they are banded against me; in fact, they are joined with their father in a conspiracy to destroy my peace and happiness. This is the feeling that prevails against me in the house at large, for which I may thank my husband and children—I don't include you, Harry. There is not a servant in our establishment but could poison me, and probably would, too, were it not for fear of the gallows."

Woodward listened to this strange scene with amazement, but was prudent enough to take no part in it whatsoever. On the contrary, he got his hat and proceeded out to take a stroll, as the evening was so fine, and the aspect of the country was so delightful.

"Harry," said his brother, "if you're for a walk I'll go with you,"

"Not at present, Charley," said he, "I am in a thoughtful mood, and generally prefer a lonely stroll on such a beautiful evening as this."

He accordingly went out, and bent his steps by a long, rude green lane, which extended upwards of half a mile across a rich country, undulating with fields and meadows. This was terminated by a clump of hawthorn trees, then white and fragrant with their lovely blossoms, which lay in rich profusion on the ground. Contiguous to this was a small but delightful green glen, from the side of which issued one of those beautiful spring wells for which the country is so celebrated. Over a verdant little hill, which concealed this glen and the well we mention, from a few humble houses, or rather a decenter kind of cabins, was visible a beaten pathway by which the inhabitants of this small hamlet came for their water. Upon this, shaded as he was by the trees, he steadily kept his eye for a considerable time, as if in the expectation of some person who had made an appointment to meet him. Half an hour had nearly elapsed—the shades of evening were now beginning to fall, and he had just come to the resolution of retracing his steps, with a curse of disappointment on his lips, when, on taking another, and what he intended to be a last glance at the pathway in question, he espied the individual for whom he waited. This was no other than the young beauty of the neighborhood—Grace Davoren. She was tripping along with a light and merry step, lilting an Irish air of a very lively character, to which she could scarcely prevent herself from dancing, so elastic and buoyant were her spirits. On coming to the brow of the glen she paused a moment and cast her eye searchingly around her, but seemed after the scrutiny to hesitate about proceeding farther.

Woodward immediately showed himself, and after beckoning to her, proceeded to-

ward the well. She still paused, however, as if irresolute; but after one or two significant gestures on his part, she descended with a slow and apparently a timid step, and in a couple of minutes stood beside the well. The immediate purport of their conversation is not essential to this narrative; but, indeed, we presume that our readers may give a very good guess at it without any assistance from us. The beautiful girl was young, and credulous, and innocent, as might naturally be inferred from the confusion of her manner, and the tremulous tones of her voice, which, indeed, were seductive and full of natural melody. Her heart palpitated until its beatings might be heard, and she trembled with that kind of terror which is composed of apprehension and pleasure. That a *gentleman—one of the quality*—could condescend to feel any interest in a humble girl like her, was what she could scarcely have dreamed; but when he told her of her beauty, the natural elegance and symmetry of her figure, and added that he loved her better than any girl, either high or low, he had ever seen, she believed that his words were true, and her brain became almost giddy with wonder and delight. Then she considered what a triumph it was over all her female acquaintances, who, if they knew it, would certainly envy her even far more than they did already. After about half an hour's conversation the darkness set in, and she expressed an apprehension lest some of her family should come in quest of her—a circumstance, she said, which might be dangerous to them both. He then prevailed on her to promise another meeting, which at length she did; but on his taking leave of her she asked him by which way he intended to go home.

"I came by the old green path," said he, "but intend to turn down the glen into the common road."

"O, don't go that way," said she; "if you do, you'll have to pass the haunted house, ay, and maybe, might meet the *Shan-dhinne-dhuv*."

"What is that," said he.

"O, Lord save us, sir," said she, "did you never hear of the *Shan-dhinne-dhuv?* A spirit, sir, that appears about the haunted house in the shape of a black ould man, and they say that nobody lives long afther seein' him three times."

"Yes; but did he ever take any person's life?"

"They say so, sir."

"When? How long ago?"

"Indeed, I can't tell that, sir; but sure every one says it."

"Well, what every one says must be true," he replied, smiling. "I, however, am not afraid of him, as I never go unarmed; and if I happen to meet him, trust me I will know what mettle he's made of before we part, or whether he belongs to this world or the other."

He then went down the glen, by the bottom of which the road went; and at a lonely place in a dark angle of it this far-famed spirit was said to appear.

This vain, but simple girl, the pride of her honest parents and all her simple relations and friends, took up her pitcher and proceeded with an elated heart by the pathway we have mentioned as leading to her father's house. We say her heart was elated at the notion of having engaged the affections of a handsome, young, and elegant *gentleman*, but at the same time she felt a secret sense of error, if not of guilt, in having given him a clandestine meeting, and kept an appointment which she knew her parents and brothers would have heard with indignation and shame. She was confident, however, in her own strength, and resolved in her mind that Woodward's attachment for her never should terminate either in her disgrace or ruin. There were, however, many foolish and pernicious ballads sung about that period at the hearths of the peasantry, in which some lord or squire of high degree was represented to have fallen in love with some beautiful girl of humble life, whom he married in spite of his proud relations, and after having made her a lady of rank, and dressed her in silks and satins, gold rings and jewels, brought her home to his castle, where they lived in grandeur and happiness for the remainder of their lives. The simple-minded girl began to imagine that some such agreeable destiny might be reserved for herself; and thus endeavored, by the deceitful sophistry of a credulous heart, and proud of her beauty, to palliate her conduct amidst the accusations of her own conscience, which told her she was acting wrong.

She had now got about half way home, when she saw an individual approach her at a rapid pace; and as the moon had just risen, his figure was distinctly before her, and she immediately felt a strong impression of terror and alarm. The individual in question was young, tall, and muscular; his person had in it every symptom of extraordinary activity and vigor. His features, however, were not at all such as could be termed handsome; so far from that, they were rude and stern, but not without a wild and disagreeable dignity. His eyes were at all times fierce and fiery, and gave unequivocal indications of a fierce and fiery spirit. He wore a pair of rude pantaloons that fitted closely to his finely made limbs, a short

jacket or Wyliecoat that also fitted closely to his body, over which he wore the usual cloak of that day, which was bound about his middle with a belt and buckle, in which was stuck a middogue, or, as it ought to be written, *meadoige*, and pronounced *maddogay*. He wore a kind of cap or *barrad*, which, as well as his cloak, could, by being turned inside out, instantly change his whole appearance, and mislead his pursuers—for he was the outlaw. Such was the startling individual who now approached her, and at whose fierce aspect she trembled—not less from her knowledge of the natural violence of his character than from a consciousness of her interview with Woodward.

"Well, Granua (Grace)," said he, quickly and with some vehemence, "where have you been?"

"At the well," she replied; "have you eyes in your head? Don't you see my pitcher?"

"I do; but what kept you there so long? and why is your voice tremblin', as if you wor afeard, or did something wrong? Why is your face pale, too?—it's not often so."

"The Lord save us, Shawn," replied Grace, attempting to treat those pointed interrogatories with a jocular spirit, "how can you expect me to answer such a catechize as you're pnttin' to me at wanst."

"Answer me, in the mane time," he replied; "I'll have no doubling, Granua."

"Has anything vexed you, Shawn?"

"*Chorp an diaoul!* tell me why you staid so long at the well"—and as he spoke his eyes flashed with resentment and suspicion.

"I didn't stay long at it."

"I say you did. What kept you?"

"Why, bekaise I didn't hurry myself, but took my time. I was often longer."

"You were spakin' to some one at the well."

"Ah, thin, Shawn, who would I be spakin' to?"

"Maybe I know—I believe I do—but I want now to know whether you're a liar, as I suspect you to be, or whether you are honest enough to tell the truth."

"Do you suspect me, then?"

"I do suspect you; or rather I don't—bekaise I know the truth. Answer me—who were you spakin' with?"

"Troth," said she, "I was lookin' at your sweetheart in the well," meaning her own shadow, "and was only asking her how she did."

"You danced with *Harry-na-Suil Balor* last night?"

"I did; because the gentleman axed me—and why would I refuse him?"

"You whispered in a corner with him?"

"I did not," she replied; "how could I when the room was so throng?"

"Ay, betther in a throng room than a thin one; ay, and you promised to meet him at the well to-night; and you kept your word."

A woman's courage and determination to persist in falsehood are never so decided and deliberate as when she feels that the suspicion expressed against her is true. She then gets into heroics and attempts to turn the tables upon her opponent, especially when she knows, as Miss Davoren did on this occasion, that he has nothing *but* suspicion to support him. She knew that her lover had been at the bonfire, and that his friends must have seen her dance with Woodward; and this she did not attempt to deny, because she could not; but as for their tryst at the well, she felt satisfied, from her knowledge of his jealous and violent character, that if he *had* been aware of it, it would not have been by seeking the fact through the medium of his threats and her fears that he would have proceeded. Had he seen Woodward, for instance, and herself holding a secret meeting in such a place and at such an hour, she concluded justly that the *middogue* or dagger, for the use of which he had been already so celebrated, would have been brought into requisition against either one or both.

"I'll talk no more to you," she replied, with a flushed face; "for even if I tould you the truth, you wouldn't believe me. I did meet him, then; are you satisfied now?"

This admission was an able stroke of policy on her part, as the reader will soon perceive.

"O," he exclaimed, with a bitter, or, rather, a furious expression of face, "*dar manim*, if you had, you wouldn't dare to confess as much. But listen to me; if I ever hear or know, to my own satisfaction, that you meet him, or keep his company, or put yourself in his power, I'll send six inches of this"—and he pulled out the glittering weapon—"into your heart and his; so now be warned and avoid him, and don't bring down my vengeance on you both."

"I don't see what right you have to bring me over the coals about any one. My father was forcin' me to marry you; but I now tell you to your teeth, that I never had the slightest intention of it. No! I wouldn't take the wealth of the barony, and be the wife of sich a savage murdherer. No man wid blood upon his hands and upon his sowl, as you have—a public robber, a murdherer, an outlaw—will ever be my husband. What right have you to tell me who I'm to spake to, or who I'm not to spake to?"

"Ah," he replied, "that wasn't your language to me not long ago."

"But you were a different boy then from what you are now. If you had kept your name free from disgrace and blood, I might have loved you; but I cannot love a man with such crimes to answer for as you have."

"You accuse me of shedding blood," he replied; "that is false. I have never shed blood nor taken life; but, on the contrary, did all in my power to prevent those who have placed me at their head from doin' so. Yet, when they did it in my absence, and against my orders, the blame and guilt is charged upon me because I am their leader. As for anything else I have done, I do not look upon it as a crime; let it rest upon the oppression that drove me and others to the wild lives we lead. We are forced to live now the best way we can, and that you know; but as to this *gentleman*, you mustn't spake to him at .any rate," he proceeded; "why should you? What 'ud make a man so high in life, and so far above you as he is, strive to become acquainted with you, unless to bring about your ruin to gratify his own bad passions? Think of it, and bring it home to your heart. You have too many examples before your eyes, young as you are, of silly girls that allow themselves to be made fools of, and desaved and ruined by such scoundrels as this. Look at that unfortunate girl in the mountains there—Nannie Morrissey; look at her father hanged only for takin' God's just revenge, as he had a right to do, on the villain that brought destruction upon her and his innocent family, and black shame upon their name that never had a spot upon it before. After these words you may now act as you like; but remember that you have got *Shawn-na-Middogue's warning*, and you ought to know what that is."

He then started off in the same direction which Woodward had taken, and Grace, having looked after him with considerable indignation on her own part and considerable apprehension on behalf of Woodward, took up her pitcher and proceeded home.

She now felt herself much disturbed, and experienced that state of mind which is often occasioned by the enunciation of that which is known to be truth, but which, at the same time, is productive of pain to the conscience, especially when that conscience begins to abandon the field and fly from its duty.

Woodward, as he had intended, preferred the open and common road home, although it was much longer, rather than return by the old green lane, which was rugged and uneven, and full of deep ruts, dangerous inequalities, and stumps of old trees, all of which rendered it not only a disagreeable, but a dangerous, path by night. Having got out upon the highway, which here, and until he reached near home, was, indeed, solemn-looking and lonely, not a habitation except the haunted house being visible for upwards of two miles, he proceeded on his way, thinking of his interview with Grace Davoren. The country on each side of him was nearly a desert; a gray ruin, some of whose standing and isolated fragments assumed, to the excited imagination of the terrified peasants as they passed it by night, the appearance of supernatural beings, stood to the left, in the centre of an antiquated church-yard, in which there had not been a corpse buried for nearly half a century—a circumstance which always invests a graveyard with a more fearful character. As Woodward gazed at these still and lonely relics of the dead, upon which the faint rays of the moon gleamed with a spectral and melancholy light, he could not help feeling that the sight itself, and the associations connected with it, were calculated to fill weak minds with strong feelings of supernatural terror. His, however, was not a mind accessible to any such impressions; but at the same time he could make allowance for them among those who had seldom any other notions to guide them on such subjects than those of superstition and ignorance.

The haunted house, which was not yet in sight, he did not remember, nor was he acquainted with its history, with the exception of Grace's slight allusion to it. At length he came to a part of the road which was overhung, or rather altogether covered with long beech trees, whose huge arms met and intertwined with each other across it, filling the arch they made with a solemn darkness even in the noon of day. At night, however, the obscurity was black and palpable; and such upon this occasion was its awful solemnity and stillness, and the sense of insecurity occasioned by the almost supernatural gloom about him, that Woodward could not avoid the idea that it afforded no bad conception of the entrance to the world of darkness and of spirits. He had not proceeded far, however, under this dismal canopy, when an incident occurred which tested his courage severely. As he went along he imagined that he heard the sound of human footsteps near him. This, to be sure, gave him at first no trouble on the score of anything supernatural. The country, however, was, as we have already intimated, very much infested with outlaws and robbers, and although Woodward was well armed, as he had truly said, and was no

coward besides, yet it was upon this view of the matter that he experienced anything like apprehension. He accordingly paused, in order to ascertain whether the footsteps he heard might not have been the echo of his own. When his steps ceased, so also did the others; and when he advanced again so did they. He coughed aloud, but there was no echo; he shouted out "Is there any one there?" but still there was a dead stillness. At length he said again, "Whoever you may be, and especially if your designs be evil and unlawful, you had better beware; I am well armed, and both able and determined to defend myself; if money is your object, pass on, for I have none about me."

Again there was the silence, as there was the darkness of the grave. He now resumed his former pace, and the noise of footsteps, evidently and distinctly different from his own, were once more heard near him. Those that accompanied him fell upon his ear with a light, but strange and chilling sound, that filled him with surprise, and something like awe. In fact, he had never heard anything similar to it before. It was very strange, he thought, for the sounds, though light, were yet as distinct and well-defined as his own. He still held a pistol in each hand, and as he had no means of unravelling this mystery so long as he was inwrapped in such Cimmerian gloom, he resolved to accelerate his pace and get into the light of the moon as soon as he could. He accordingly did so; but the footsteps, although they fell not now so quickly as his own, still seemed to maintain the same distance from him as before. This certainly puzzled him; and he was attempting, if possible, to solve this new difficulty, when he found himself emerging from the darkness, and in a few moments standing in the light of the moon. He immediately looked about him, but except the usual inanimate objects of nature, he could see nothing. Whatever it is, thought he, or, rather, whoever it is, he has thought proper to remain undiscovered in the darkness. I shall now bid him good-night, and proceed on my way home. He accordingly moved on once more, when, to his utter astonishment, he heard the footsteps again, precisely within the same distance of him as before.

"Tut," said he, "I now perceive what the matter with me is. This is a mere hallucination, occasioned by a disordered state of the nerves; and as he spoke he returned his pistols into his breast pockets, where he usually wore them, and once more resumed his journey. There was, however, something in the *sound* of the footsteps—something so hollow—so cold, as it were, and so unearthly, that he could not throw off the unaccountable impression which it made upon him, infidel and sceptic as he was upon all supernatural intimations and appearances. At length, he proceeded, or rather they proceeded, onward until he arrived within sight of what he supposed to be the haunted house. He paused a few moments, and was not now so insensible to its lonely and dismal aspect. It was a two-storied house, and nothing could surpass the spectral appearance of the moon's light as it fell with its pale and death-like lustre upon the windows. He stood contemplating it for some time, when, all at once, he perceived, walking about ten yards in advance of him, the shape of a man dressed in black from top to toe. It was not within the scope of human fortitude to avoid being startled by such a sudden and incomprehensible apparition. Woodward *was* startled; but he soon recovered himself, and after the first shock felt rather satisfied that he had some visible object with which he could make the experiment he projected, viz., to ascertain the nature, whether mortal or otherwise, of the being before him. With this purpose in view, he walked very quickly after him, and as the other did not seem to quicken his pace into a corresponding speed, he took it for granted that he would soon overtake him. In this, however, he was, much to his astonishment, mistaken. His own walk was quick and rapid, whilst that of this incomprehensible figure was slow and solemn, and yet he could not lessen the distance between them a single inch.

"Stop, sir," said Woodward, "whoever or whatever you are—stop, I wish to speak with you; be you mortal or spiritual, I fear you not—only stop."

The being before him, however, walked on at the same slow and solemn pace, but still persisted in maintaining his distance. Woodward was resolute, fearless—a sceptic, an infidel, a materialist—but here was a walking proposition in his presence which he could not solve, and which, up to that point, at least, had set all his theories at defiance. His blood rose—he became annoyed at the strange silence of the being before him, but more still at the mysterious and tardy pace with which it seemed to precede and escape him.

"I will follow it until morning," he said to himself, "or else I shall develop this startling enigma."

At this moment his mysterious fellow-traveller, after having advanced as if there had not been such an individual as Woodward in existence, now stood; he was directly opposite the haunted house, and

"I WILL FOLLOW IT UNTIL MORNING," HE SAID TO HIMSELF, "OR ELSE I WILL DEVELOP THIS STARTLING ENIGMA."
—*Evil Eye; or the Black Spectre*, *Page* 652

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turning round, faced the tantalized and bewildered mortal. The latter looked on him; his countenance was the countenance of the dead—of the sheeted dead, stretched out in the bloodless pallor which lies upon the face of vanished life—of existence that is no more, at least in flesh and blood. Woodward approached him—for the thing had stood, as we have said, and permitted him to come within a few yards from him. His eyes were cold and glassy, and apparently without speculation, like those of a dead man open; yet, notwithstanding this, Woodward felt that they looked at him, if not into him.

"Speak," said he, "speak; who or what are you?"

He received no reply; but in a few seconds the apparition, if it were such, put his hand into his bosom, and, pulling out a dagger, which gleamed with a faint and visionary light, he directed it as if to his (Woodward's) heart. Three times he did this, in an attitude more of warning than of anger, when, at length, he turned and approached the haunted house, at the door of which he disappeared.

Woodward, as the reader must have perceived, was a strong-minded, fearless man, and examined the awful features of this inscrutable being closely.

"This, then," thought he, "is the *Shan-dhinne-dhur*, or the *Black Spectre;* but, be it what it may, I am strongly of opinion that it was present at the bonfire last night, and as I am well armed, I will unquestionably pursue it into the house. Nay, what is more, I suspect that it is in some way or other connected with the outlaw *Shawn-na-Middoque*, who it was, they say, made that amazing leap over the aforesaid bonfire in my own presence."

On that very account, however, he reflected that such an intrusion might be attended with more danger than that to be apprehended from a ghost. He consequently paused for some time before he could decide on following up such a perilous resolution. While he thus stood deliberating upon the prudence of this daring exploit, he heard a variety of noises, and knockings, and rollings, as if of empty barrels, and rattling of chains, all going on inside, whilst the house itself appeared to be dark and still, without smoke from the chimneys, or light in the windows, or any other symptom of being inhabited, unless by those who were producing the wild and extraordinary noises he then heard.

"If I do not see this out," said he, "my account of it will go to add another page to the great volume of superstition. I am armed, not a whit afraid, and *I will* see it out, if human enterprise can effect it."

He immediately entered the door, which he found, somewhat to his surprise, was only laid to, and, after listening for a few moments, resolved to examine the premises closely. In deference to the reader, whose nerves may not be so strong as those of Henry Woodward, and who consequently may entertain a very decided objection to enter a haunted house, especially one in such a lonely and remote situation, we will only say that he remained in it for at least an hour and a half; at the expiration of which time he left it, walked home in a silent and meditative mood, spoke little to his family, who were a good deal surprised at his abstracted manner, and, after sipping a tumbler of punch with his step-father, went rather gloomily to bed.

The next morning at breakfast he looked a good deal paler than they had yet seen him, and for some time his contribution to the family dialogue was rather scanty.

"Harry," said his mother, "what is the matter with you? You are silent, and look pale. Are you unwell?"

"No, ma'am," he replied, "I cannot say that I am. But, by the way, have you not a haunted house in the neighborhood, and is there not an apparition called the Black Man, or the Black Spectre, seen occasionally about the premises?"

"So it is said," replied Lindsay, "but none of this family has ever seen it, although I believe it has undoubtedly been seen by many persons in the neighborhood."

"What is supposed to have been the cause of its appearance?" asked Harry.

"Faith, Harry," replied his brother, "I fear there is nobody here can give you that information. To speak for myself, I never heard its appearance accounted for at all. Perhaps Barney Casey knows. Do you, father?"

"Not I," replied his father; "but as you say, Charley, we had better try Barney. Call him up."

"Perhaps," said Mrs. Lindsay, sharply and disdainfully, "it was the Black Spectre who produced the shower of blood last night?"

"Faith, it's not unlikely," replied her husband, "if he be, as the people think, connected with the devil."

In a couple of minutes Barney entered to know what was wanted.

"Barney," said his master, "can you inform us who or what the *Shan-dhinne-dhur* is, or why he appears in this neighborhood? Damn the fellow; he has that house of mine on my hands this many a long year, for

I cannot get it set. I've had priests and parsons to lay him, and for some time we thought the country was free of him; but it was all to no purpose; he was still sure to return, and no earthly habitation should serve him but that unlucky house of mine. It is very odd that he never began to appear until after my second marriage."

"Sir," replied Barney, "I hard something about it; but I'm not clear on it. To tell you the truth, there's two or three accounts of him; but anyhow, sir, you're in luck for the right one; for if livin' man can give it to you, Bandy Brack, the pedler, is the man. He's now at his breakfast in the kitchen; but I'll have him up."

"Not in the parlor," said his mistress; "a strolling knave like him. Who ordered him his breakfast in the kitchen without my knowledge?" she asked. "The moment I can find out the person that dared to do so, that moment they shall leave my family. Must I keep an open house for every strolling vagabond in the country?"

"If you choose to turn *me* out," replied her husband, "you may try your hand at it. It was I ordered the poor man his breakfast; and, what is more, I desire you instantly to hold your peace."

As he spoke, she saw that one of his determined looks settled upon his countenance—a pretty certain symptom that she had better be guided by his advice.

"Come, Barney," said he, "throw up that window and send the poor man here, until he tells us what he knows about this affair."

The window was accordingly thrown open, and in a few minutes Bandy Brack made his appearance outside, and, on being interrogated on the subject in question, took off his hat, and was about to commence his narrative, when Lindsay said,

"Put on your hat, Bandy; the sun's too hot to be uncovered."

"That's more of it," said his wife; "a fine way to make yourself respected, Lindsay."

"I love to be respected," he replied sternly, "and to deserve respect: but I have no desire to incur the hatred of the poor by oppression and want of charity, like some of my *female* acquaintances."

"Plase your honor," said Bandy, "all that I know about the *Shan-dhinne-thur*, or the *Black Spectre*, as the larned call him, won't require many words to tell you. It's not generally known what I'm goin' to say now. The haunted house, as your honor, maybe, remimbers, was an inn—a carman's inn chiefly—and one night, it seems, there came a stranger to stop in it. He was dressed in black, and when he thought it time to go to bed he called the landlord, Antony McMurt, and placed in his hands a big purse o' goold to keep for him till he should start at daybreak, as he intended, the next morning. Antony—"

"Ay," said Lindsay, interrupting him, "that accounts for the nature of the villain's death. I remember him well, Bandy, although I was only a boy at the time; go on—he was always a dishonest scoundrel it was said—proceed."

"Well *it seems*, Antony, sir, mistook him for a Protestant parson; and as he had a hankerin' afther the goold, he opened a gusset in the man's throat that same night, when the unsuspectin' traveller was sound in that sleep that he never woke from in this world. When the deed was done Antony stripped him of his clothes, and in doing so discovered a silver crucifix upon his breast, and a bravery (breviary) under his head, by which he found that he had murdhered a priest of his own religion in mistake. They say he stabbed him in the jigler vein wid a *middoge*. At all events, the body disappeared, and there never was any inquiry made about it—a good proof that the unfortunate man was a stranger. Well and good, your honor—in the coorse of a short time, *it seems*, the murdhered priest began to appear to him, and haunted him almost every night, until the unfortunate Antony began to get out of his rason, and, *it is said*, that when he appeared to him he always pointed the *middoge* at him, just as if he wished to put it into his heart. Antony then, widout tellin' his own saicret, began to tell everybody that he was doomed to die *a bloody death*; in short, he became unsettled—got fairly beside himself, and afther mopin' about for some months in ordher to avoid the *bloody* death the priest threatened him wid, he went and hanged himself in the very room where he killed the unfortunate priest before."

"I remember when he hanged himself, very well," observed Lindsay, "but d—n the syllable of the robbery and murder of the priest or any body else ever I heard of till the present moment, although there was an inquest held over himself. The man got low-spirited and depressed, because his business failed him, or, rather, because he didn't attend to it; and in one of these moods hanged himself; but by all accounts, Bandy, if he hadn't done the deed for himself the hangman would have done it for him. He was said, I think, to have been connected with some of the outlaws, and to have been a bad boy altogether. I think it is now near fifty years ago since he hanged himself."

"'Tis *said*, sir, that this account comes

from one of his own relations; but there's another account, sir, of the *Shan-dhinne-dhuv* that I don't believe a word of."

"Another—what is that, Bandy?"

"O, bedad, sir," replied Bandy, "it's more than I could venture to tell you *here*."

"Come, come—out with it."

Mrs. Lindsay went over with an inflamed face, and having ordered him to go about his business, slapped down the window with great violence, giving poor Bandy a look of wrath and intimidation that sealed his lips upon the subject of the *other* tradition he alluded to. He was, consequently, glad to escape from the threatening storm which he saw brewing in her countenance, and, consequently, made a very hasty retreat. Barney, who met him in the yard returning to fetch his pack from the kitchen, noticed his perturbation, and asked him what was the matter.

"May the Lord protect me from that woman's eye!" replied the pedler, "if you'd 'a' seen the look she gave me when she thought I was goin' to tell them the *true* story of the *Shan-dhinne-dhuv*."

"And why should she put a sword in her eye against you for that, Bandy?" asked the other.

Bandy looked cautiously about him, and said in a whisper:

"Because it's connected with *her* family, and follows it."

He then proceeded to the kitchen, and having secured his pack, he made as rapid a disappearance as possible from about the premises.

CHAPTER VII.

A Council of Two.—Visit to Beech Grove.—The Herbalist.

Woodward now amused himself by walking and riding about the country and viewing its scenery, most of which he had forgotten during his long absence from home. It was not at all singular in that dark state of popular superstition and ignorance, that the shower of blood should, somehow or another, be associated with him and his detested mother. Of course, the association was vague, and the people knew not how to apply it to their circumstances. As they believed, however, that Mrs. Lindsay possessed the power of overlooking cattle, which was considered an evil gift, and in some mysterious manner connected with the evil spirit, and as they remembered—for superstition, like guilt, always possesses a good memory—that even in his young days, when little more than a child, her son Harry was remarkable for having eyes of a different color, from which circumstance he was even then called *Harry na Suil Gloir*, they naturally inferred that his appearance in the country boded nothing good; that, of course, he had the Evil Eye, as every one whose eyes differed, as his did, had; and that the thunder and lightning, the rain which drowned the bonfires, but, above all, the blood-shower, were indications that the mother and son were to be feared and avoided as much as possible, especially the latter. Others denied that the devil had anything to do with the shower of blood, or the storm which extinguished the fires, and stoutly maintained that it was God himself who had sent them to warn the country against having any intercourse that could possibly be avoided, with them. Then there was the Black Spectre that was said to follow *her* family; and did not every one know that when it appeared three times to any person, it was a certain proof that that person's coffin might be purchased? We all know how rapidly such opinions and colloquies spread, and we need scarcely say that in the course of a fortnight after the night of the bonfires all these matters had been discussed over half the barony. Some, in fact, were for loading him with the heavy burden of his mother's unpopularity; but others, more generous, were for waiting until the people had an opportunity of seeing how he might turn out—whether he would follow in his mother's footsteps, or be guided by the benevolent principles of his step-father and the rest of the family. Owing to these circumstances, need we say, that there was an unusual interest, almost an excitement, felt about him, which nothing could repress. His brother Charles was as well-beloved and as popular as his father, but, then, he excited no particular interest, because he was not suspected to possess the Evil Eye, nor to have any particular connection with the devil.

In this case matters stood, when one day Woodward, having dressed himself with particular care, ordered his horse, saying that he would ride over to Beech Grove and pay a visit to the Goodwins. There were none in the room at the time but Charles and his mother. The former started, and seemed uneasy at this intelligence; and his mother, having considered for a time, said:

"Charles, I wish to speak to Harry."

Charles took the hint, and left the mother and son to the following dialogue:—

"Harry," said she, "you spoke very warmly of that cunning serpent who defrauded you of your inheritance, and all of us

out of our right. May I ask for what purpose you wish to cultivate an intimacy with such a scheming and dishonest crew as that?"

"Faith, mother, to tell you the truth, you don't detest them, nor feel the loss of the property more than I do; but the truth is, that the game I wish to play with them will be a winning one, if I can induce them to hold the cards. I wish to get the property, and as I feel that that can't be done without marrying their milk-and-curd of a daughter, why, it is my intention to marry her accordingly."

"Then you don't marry a wife to be happy with her?"

"In one sense not I—in another I do; I shall make myself happy with her property."

"Indeed, Harry, to tell you the truth, there is very little happiness in married life, and they are only fools that expect it. You see how I am treated by Lindsay and my own children."

"Well, but you provoke them—why disturb yourself with them? Why not pass through life as quietly as you can? Imitate Lindsay."

"What! make a sot of myself—become a fool, as he is?"

"Then, why did you marry him?"

"Because *I* was the fool then, but I have suffered for it. Why, he manages this property as if it wasn't mine—as if I didn't bring it to him. Think of a man who is silly enough to forgive a tenant his gale of rent, provided he makes a poor mouth, and says he is not able to pay it."

"But I see no harm in that either; if the man is not able to pay, how can he? What does Lindsay do but make a virtue of necessity. He cannot skin a flint, can he?"

"That's an ugly comparison," she replied, "and I can't conceive why you make it *to me*. I am afraid, Harry, you have suffered yourself to be prejudiced against the only friend—the only true friend, you have in the house. I can tell you, that although they keep fair faces to you, you are not liked here."

"Very well; if I find that to be true, they will lose more than they'll gain by it."

"They have been striving to secure your influence against me. I know it by your language."

"In the devil's name, how can you know it by my language, mother?"

"You talked about skinning a flint; now, you had that from them with reference to me. It was only the other day that an ill-tongued house-maid of mine, after I had paid her her wages, and 'stopped' for the articles she injured on me, turned round, and called me a skinflint; they have made it a common nickname on me. I'd have torn her eyes out only for Lindsay, who had the assurance to tell me that if he had not interfered I'd have had the worst of it—that I'd come off second best, and such slang; yes, and then added afterwards, that he was sorry he interfered. That's the kind of a husband he is, and that's the life I lead. Now, this property is mine, and I can leave it to any one I please; he hasn't even a life interest in it."

"O," exclaimed the son, in surprise, "is that the case?"

"It is," she replied, "and yet you see how I am treated."

"I was not aware of that, my dear mother," responded worthy Harry. "That alters the case entirely. Why, Lindsay, in these circumstances, ought to put his hands under your feet; so ought they all I think. Well, my dear mother, of one thing I can assure you, no matter how they may treat you, calculate firmly upon my support and protection; make yourself sure of that. But, now, about Miss Milk-and-curds—what do you think of my project?"

"I have been frequently turning it over in my mind, Harry, since the morning you praised her so violently, and I think, as you cannot get the property without the girl, you must only take her with it. The notion of its going into the hands of strangers would drive me mad."

"Well, then, we understand each other; I have your sanction for the courtship."

"You have; but I tell you again, I loathe her as I do poison. I never can forgive her the art with which she wheedled that jo.terheaded old sinner, your uncle, out of twelve hundred a year. Unless it returns to the family, may my bitter malediction fall upon her and it."

"Well, never mind, my dear mother, leave her to me—I shall have the girl and the property—but by hook or crook, the property. I shall ride over there, now, and it will not be my fault, if I don't tip both her and them the saccharine."

"By the way, though, Harry, now that I think of it, I'm afraid you'll have opposition."

"Opposition! How is that?"

"It is said there is a distant relation of theirs, a gentleman named O'Connor, a Ferdora O'Connor, I think, who, it is supposed, is likely to be successful there; but, by the way, are you aware that they are Catholics?"

"As to that, my dear mother, I don't care a fig for her religion; my religion is her

property, or rather will be so when I get it. The other matter, however, is a thing I must look to—I mean the rivalry; but on that, too, we shall put our heads together, and try what can be done. I am not very timid; and the proverb says, you know, a faint heart never won a fair lady."

Our readers may perceive, from the spirit of the above conversation, that the son was worthy of the mother, and the mother of the son. The latter, however, had, at least, some command over his temper, and a great deal of dexterity and penetration besides; whilst the mother, though violent, was clumsy in her resentments, and transparent in her motives. Short as Woodward's residence in the family was, he saw at a glance that the abuse she heaped upon her husband and children was nothing more nor less than deliberate falsehood. This, however, to him was a matter of perfect indifference. He was no great advocate of truth himself, whenever he found that his interests or his passions could be more effectually promoted by falsehood; although he did not disdain even truth whenever it equally served his purpose. In such a case it gave him a reputation for candor under which he could, with more safety, avail himself of his disingenuity and prevarication. He knew, as we said, that his mother's description of the family contained not one atom of truth; and yet he was too dastardly and cunning to defend them against her calumny. The great basis of his character, in fact, was a selfishness, which kept him perpetually indifferent to anything that was good or generous in itself, or outside the circle of his own interests, beyond which he never passed. Now, nothing, on the other hand, could be more adversative to this, than the conduct, temper, and principles of his brother and sister. Charles was an amiable, manly, and generous young fellow, who, with both spirit and independence, was, as a natural consequence, loved and respected by all who knew him; and as for his sweet and affectionate sister, Maria, there was not living a girl more capable of winning attachment, nor more worthy of it when attained; and severely, indeed, was the patience of this admirable brother and sister tried, by the diabolical temper of their violent and savage mother. As for Harry, he had come to the resolution, now that he understood the position of the property, to cultivate his mother's disposition upon such a principle of conduct as would not compromise him with either party. As to their feuds he was perfectly indifferent to them; but now his great object was, to study how to promote his own interests in his own way.

Having reached Beech Grove, he found that unassuming family at home, as they usually were; for, indeed, all their principal enjoyments lay within the quiet range of domestic life. Old Goodwin himself saw him through the parlor window as he approached, and, with ready and sincere kindness, met him in the hall.

"I am very glad to see you, Mr. Woodward," said he. "Allow me to conduct you to the drawing-room, where you will meet Mrs. Goodwin, Alice, and a particular friend of ours. I cannot myself stop long with you, because I am engaged on particular business; but you will not miss an old fellow like me when you have better company. I hope my old friends are all well. Step in, sir. Here is Mr. Woodward, ladies; Mr. Woodward, this gentleman is a friend of ours, Mr. Ferdora O'Connor; Ferdora, this is Mr. Woodward; and now I must leave you to entertain each other; but I shall return, Mr. Woodward, before you go, unless you are in a great hurry. Bridget, see that luncheon is ready; but you must lay it in the front parlor, because I have these tenants about me in the dining-room, as it is so much larger."

"I have already given orders for that," replied his wife. He then hurried out and left them, evidently much gratified by Woodward's visit. O'Connor and the latter having scanned each other by a glance or two, bowed with that extreme air of politeness which is only another name for a want of cordiality. O'Connor was rather a plain-looking young fellow, as to his person and general appearance; but his Milesian face was handsome, and his eye clear and candid, with a dash of determination and fire in it. Very different, indeed, was it from the eye that was scrutinizing him at that moment, with such keenness and penetration. There are such things as antipathies; otherwise why should those two individuals entertain, almost in a moment's time, such a secret and unaccountable disrelish towards each other? Woodward did not love Alice, so that the feeling could not proceed from jealousy; and we will so far throw aside mystery as to say here, that neither did O'Connor; and, we may add still further, that poor, innocent, unassuming Alice was attached to neither of them.

"I hope your brother is well, sir," said O'Connor, anxious to break the ice, and try the stuff Woodward was made of. "I have not seen him for some time."

"O! then, you are acquaintances?" said Woodward.

"We are more, sir," replied O'Connor, "we are friends."

"I hope you are *all* well," interrupted kind-hearted Mrs. Goodwin.

"Quite well, my dear madam," he replied. Then turning to O'Connor: "To be a friend to my brother, sir," he said, "next to finding you a friend and favorite in this family, is the warmest recommendation to me. My long absence from home prevented me from knowing his value until now; but now that I do know him, I say it, perhaps, with too much of the partiality of a brother, I think that any man may feel proud of his friendship; and I say so with the less hesitation, because I am sure he would select no man for his friend who was not worthy of it;" and he bowed courteously as he spoke.

"Faith, sir," replied O'Connor, "you have hit it; I for one am proud of it; but, upon my conscience, he wouldn't be his father's son if he wasn't what he is."

Alice was sewing some embroidery, and seemed to take no notice, if one could judge by her downcast looks, of what they said. At length she said, with a smile:

"As you, Ferdora, have inquired for *your* favorite, I don't see why I should not inquire after *mine;* how is your sister, Mr. Woodward?"

"Indeed, she's the picture of health, Miss Goodwin; but I will not"—he added, with a smile to balance her own—"I will not be answerable for the health of her heart."

Alice gave a low laugh, that had the slightest tincture of malice in it, and glanced at O'Connor, who began to tap his boot with his riding whip.

"She is a good girl as ever lived," said Mrs. Goodwin, "and I hope will never have a heartache that may harm her."

"Heaven knows, madam," replied Woodward, "it is time only that will tell that. Love is a strange and sometimes rather a painful malady."

"Of course you speak from your own experience, Mr. Woodward," replied Alice.

"Then you have had the complaint, sir," said O'Connor, laughing. "I wonder is it like small-pox or measles?"

"How is that, sir?" said Woodward, smiling.

"Why, that if you've had it once you'll never have it a second time."

"Yes, but if I should be ill of it now?" and he glanced at Alice, who blushed.

"Why, in that case," replied O'Connor, "it's in bed you ought to be; no man with an epidemic on him should be permitted to go abroad among his majesty's liege subjects."

"Yes, Ferdora," said Alice, "but I don't think Mr. Woodward's complaint is catching."

"God forbid that the gentleman should die of it, though," replied Ferdora, "for that would be a serious loss to the ladies."

"You exaggerate that calamity, sir," replied Woodward, with the slightest imaginable sneer, "and forget that if *I* die *you* survive me."

"Well, certainly, there *is* consolation in that," said O'Connor, "especially for the ladies, as I said; isn't there, Alley?"

"Certainly," replied Alice; "in making love, Ferdora, you have the prowess of ten men."

"Do *you* speak from experience, *now*, Miss Goodwin?" asked Woodward, rather dryly.

"O! no," replied Alice, "I have only his own word for it."

"*Only* his own word. Miss Goodwin! Do you imply by that, that his own word requires corroboration?"

Alice blushed again, and felt confused.

"I assure you, Mr. Woodward," said O'Connor, "that when *my* word requires corroboration, I always corroborate it myself."

"But, according to Miss Goodwin's account of it, sir, that's not likely to add much to its authenticity."

"Well, Mr. Woodward," said O'Connor, with the greatest suavity of manner, "I'll tell you my method under such circumstances; whenever I meet a gentleman that doubts *my* word, I always make him *eat his own*.

"There's nothing new or wonderful in that," replied the other; "it has been my own practice during life."

"What? to eat your own words!" exclaimed O'Connor, purposely mistaking him; "very windy feeding, faith. Upon my honor and conscience, in that case, your complaint must be nothing else but the colic, and not love at all. Try peppermint wather, Mr. Woodward."

Alice saw at once, but could not account for the fact, that the worthy gentlemen were *cutting at* each other, and the timid girl became insensibly alarmed at the unaccountable sharpness of their brief encounter. She looked with an anxious countenance, first at one, and then at the other, but scarcely knew what to say. Woodward, however, who was better acquainted with the usages of society, and the deference due to the presence of women, than the *brusque*, but somewhat fiery Milesian, now said, with a smile and a bow to that gentleman:

"Sir, I submit; I am vanquished. If you are as successful in love as you are in banter, I should not wish to enter the list against you."

"Faith, sir," replied O'Connor, with a

good-humored laugh, "if your sword is as sharp as your wit, you'd be an ugly customer to meet in a quarrel."

O'Connor, who had been there for some time, now rose to take his leave, at which Alice felt rather satisfied. Indeed, she could not avoid observing that, whatever the cause of it might be, there seemed to exist some secret feeling of dislike between them, which occasioned her no inconsiderable apprehension. O'Connor she knew was kind-hearted and generous, but, at the same time, as quick as gunpowder in taking and resenting an insult. On the other hand, she certainly felt much regret at being subjected to the presence of Woodward, against whom she entertained, as the reader knows, a strong feeling that amounted absolutely to aversion. She could not, however, think of treating him with anything bordering on disrespect, especially in her own house, and she, consequently, was about to say something merely calculated to pass the time. In this, however, she was anticipated by Woodward, who, as he had his suspicions of O'Connor, resolved to sound her on the subject.

"That seems an agreeable young fellow," said he; "somewhat free and easy in his deportment."

"Take care, Mr. Woodward," said her mother, "say nothing harsh against Ferdora, if you wish to keep on good terms with Alley. He's the white-headed boy with *her*."

"I am not surprised at that, madam," he replied, "possessed as he is of such a rare and fortunate quality."

"Pray, what is that, Mr. Woodward?" asked Alice, timidly.

"Why, the faculty of making love with the power of ten men," he replied.

"You must be a very serious man," she replied.

"Serious, Miss Goodwin! Why do you think so?"

"I hope you are not in the habit of receiving a jest as a matter of fact."

"Not," he replied, "if I could satisfy myself that there was no fact in the jest; but, indeed, in this world, Miss Goodwin, it is very difficult to distinguish jest from earnest."

"I am a bad reasoner, Mr. Woodward," she replied.

"But, perhaps, Miss Goodwin, Mr. O'Connor would say that you make up in feeling what you want in logic."

"I hope, sir," replied Alice, with some spirit—for she felt hurt at his last observation—"that I will never feel on any subject until I have reason as well as inclination to support me."

"Ah," said he, "I fear that if you once possess the inclination you will soon supply the reason. But, by the way, talking of your friend and favorite, Mr. O'Connor, I must say I like him very much, and I am not surprised that you do."

"I do, indeed," she replied; "I know of nobody I like better than honest, frank, and generous Ferdora."

"Well, Miss Goodwin, I assure you he shall be a favorite of mine for your sake."

"Indeed, Mr. Woodward, if you knew him, he would become one for his own."

"Have you known him long, may I ask, Miss Goodwin?"

"O dear, yes," said Mrs. Goodwin, who now, finding this a fair opening in the conversation, resolved to have her share of it—"O dear! yes; Alley and he know each other ever since her childhood; he's some three or four years older than she is, to be sure, but that makes little difference."

"And, I suppose, Mrs. Goodwin, their intimacy—perhaps I may say attachment—has the sanction of their respective families?"

"God bless you, sir, to be sure it has—are they not distantly related?"

"That, indeed, is a very usual proceeding among families," observed Woodward; "the boy and girl are thrown together, and desired to look upon each other as destined to become husband and wife; they accordingly do so, fall in love, are married, and soon find themselves—miserable; in fact, these matches seldom turn out well."

"But there is no risk of that here," replied Alice.

"I sincerely hope not, Miss Goodwin. In your case, unless the husband was a fool, or a madman, or a villain, there *must* be happiness. Of course you will be happy with him; need I say," and here he sighed, "that he at least ought to be so with you?"

"Upon my word, Mr. Woodward," replied Alice, smiling, "you are a much cleverer man than I presume your own modesty ever permitted you to suspect."

"I don't understand you," he replied, with a look of embarrassment.

"Why," she proceeded, "here have you, in a few minutes, made up a match between two persons who never were intended to be married at all; you have got the sanction of two families to a union which neither of them even for a moment contemplated. Dear me, sir, may not a lady and gentleman become acquainted without necessarily falling in love?"

"Ah, but, in your case, my dear Miss Goodwin, it would be difficult—impossible I should say—to remain indifferent, if the

gentleman had either taste or sentiment; however, I assure you I am sincerely glad to find that I have been mistaken."

"God bless me, Mr. Woodward," said Mrs. Goodwin, "did you think they were sweethearts?"

"Upon my honor, madam, I did—and I was very sorry for it."

"Mr. Woodward," replied Alice, "don't mistake me; I am inaccessible to flattery."

"I am delighted to hear it," said he, "because I know that for that reason you are not and will not be insensible to truth."

"Unless when it borrows the garb of flattery, and thus causes itself to be suspected."

"In that case," said Woodward, "nothing but good sense, Miss Goodwin, can draw the distinction between them—and now I know that you are possessed of that."

"I hope so, sir," she replied, "and that I will ever continue to observe that distinction. Mamma, I want more thread," she said: "where can I get it?"

"Up stairs, dear, in my work-box."

She then bowed slightly to Woodward and went up to find her thread, but in fact from a wish to put an end to a conversation that she felt to be exceedingly disagreeable. At this moment old Goodwin came in.

"You will excuse me, I trust, Mr. Woodward," said he, "I was down in the dining-room receiving rents for ——." He paused, for, on reflection, he felt that this was a disagreeable topic to allude to; the fact being that he acted as his daughter's agent, and had been on that and the preceding day receiving her rents. "Martha," said he, "what about luncheon? You'll take luncheon with us, Mr. Woodward?"

Woodward bowed, and Mrs. Goodwin was about to leave the room, when he said:

"Perhaps, Mrs. Goodwin, you'd be good enough to remain for a few minutes." Mrs. Goodwin sat down, and he proceeded: "I trust that my arrival home will, under Providence, be the means of reconciling and reuniting two families who never should have been at variance. Not but that I admit, my dear friends,—if you will allow me to call you so,—that the melancholy event of my poor uncle's death, and the unexpected disposition of so large a property, were calculated to try the patience of worldly-minded people—and who is not so in a more or less degree?"

"I don't think any of your family is," replied Goodwin, bluntly, "with one exception."

"O! yes, my mother," replied Woodward, "and I grant it; at least she was so, and acted upon worldly principles; but I think you will admit, at least as Christians you must, that the hour of change and regret may come to every human heart when its errors, and its selfishness, if you will, have been clearly and mildly pointed out. I do not attribute the change that has happily taken place in my dear mother to myself, but to a higher power; although I must admit, as I do with all humility, that I wrought earnestly, in season and out of season, since my return, to bring it about; and, thank heaven, I have succeeded. I come this day as a messenger of peace, to state that she is willing that the families should be reconciled, and a happier and more lasting union effected between them."

"I am delighted to hear it, Mr. Woodward," said Goodwin, much moved; "God knows I am. Blessed be the peace-maker, and you are he; an easy conscience and a light heart must be your reward."

"They must," added his wife, wiping her eyes; "they must and they will."

"Alas!" proceeded Woodward, "how far from Gospel purity is every human motive when it comes to be tried by the Word! I will not conceal from you the state of my heart, nor deny that in accomplishing this thing it was influenced by a certain selfish feeling on my part; in one sense a disinterested selfishness I admit, but in another a selfishness that involves my own happiness. However, I will say no more on that subject at present. It would scarcely be delicate until the reconciliation is fully accomplished; then, indeed, perhaps I may endeavor, with fear and trembling, to make myself understood. Only until then, I beg of you to think well of me, and permit me to consider myself as not unworthy of a humble place in your affections."

Old Goodwin shook him warmly by the hand, and his wife once more had recourse to her pocket-handkerchief. "God bless you, Mr. Woodward!" he exclaimed; "God bless you. I now see your worth, and know it; you already have our good-will and affections, and, what is more, we feel that you deserve them."

"I wish, my dear sir," said the other, "that Miss Goodwin understood me as well as you and her respected mother."

"She does, Mr. Woodward," replied her father; "she does, and she will, too."

"I tremble, however," said Woodward, with a deep sigh; "but I will leave my fate in your hands, or, I should rather say in the hands of Heaven."

Lunch was then announced, and they went down to the front parlor, where it was laid out. On entering the room Woodward was a good deal disappointed to find that Miss Goodwin was not there.

"Will not Miss Goodwin join us?" he asked.

"Certainly," said her father; "Martha, where is she?"

"You know, my dear, she seldom lunches," replied her mother.

"Well, but she will now," said Goodwin; "it is not every day we have Mr. Woodward; let her be sent for. John, find out Miss Goodwin, and say we wish her to join us at luncheon."

John in a few moments returned to say that she had a slight headache, and could not have the pleasure of coming down.

"O, I am very sorry to hear she is unwell," said Woodward, with an appearance of disappointment and chagrin, which he did not wish to conceal; or, to speak the truth, which, in a great measure, he assumed.

After lunch his horse was ordered, and he set out on his way to Rathfillan, meditating upon his visit, and the rather indifferent reception he had got from Alice.

Miss Goodwin, though timid and nervous, was, nevertheless, in many things, a girl of spirit, and possessed a great deal of natural wit and penetration. On that day Woodward exerted himself to the utmost, with a hope of making a favorable impression upon her. He calculated a good deal upon her isolated position and necessary ignorance of life and the world, and in doing so, he calculated, as thousands of self-sufficient libertines, in their estimate of women, have done both before and since. He did not know that there is an intuitive spirit in the female heart which often enables it to discover the true character of the opposite sex; and to discriminate between the real and the assumed with almost infallible accuracy. But, independently of this, there was in Woodward's manner a hardness of outline, and in his conversation an unconscious absence of all reality and truth, together with a cold, studied formality, dry, sharp, and presumptuous, that required no extraordinary penetration to discover; for the worst of it was, that he made himself disagreeably felt, and excited those powers of scrutiny and analysis that are so peculiar to the generality of the other sex. In fact, he sought his way home in anything but an agreeable mood. He thought to have met Alice an ignorant country girl, whom he might play upon; but he found himself completely mistaken, because, fortunately for herself, he had taken her upon one of her strong points. As it was, however, whilst he could not help admiring the pertinence of her replies, neither could he help experiencing something of a bitter feeling against her, because she indulged in them at his own expense; whilst against O'Connor, who bantered him with such spirit and success, and absolutely turned him into ridicule in her presence, he almost entertained a personal resentment. His only hope now was in her parents, who seemed as anxious to entertain his proposals with favor as Alice was to reject them with disdain. As for Alice herself, her opinion of him is a matter with which the reader is already acquainted.

Our hero was about half way home when he overtook a thin, lank old man, who was a rather important character in the eyes of the ignorant people at the period of which we write. He was tall, and so bare of flesh, that when asleep he might pass for the skeleton of a corpse. His eyes were red, cunning, and sinister-looking; his lips thin, and from under the upper one projected a single tooth, long and yellow as saffron. His face was of unusual length, and his parchment cheeks formed two inward curves, occasioned by the want of his back teeth. His breeches were open at the knees; his polar legs were without stockings; but his old brogues were *foddered*, as it is called, with a wisp of straw, to keep his feet warm. His arms were long, even in proportion to his body, and his bony fingers resembled claws rather than anything else we can now remember. They (the claws) were black as ebony, and resembled in length and sharpness those of a cat when she is stretching herself after rising from the hearth. He wore an old *barrad* of the day, the greasy top of which fell down upon the collar of his old cloak, and over his shoulder was a bag which, from its appearance, must have contained something not very weighty, as he walked on without seeming to travel as a man who carried a burden. He had a huge staff in his right hand, the left having a hold of his bag. Woodward at first mistook him for a mendicant, but upon looking at him more closely, he perceived nothing of that watchful and whining cant for alms which marks the character of the professional beggar. The old skeleton walked on, apparently indifferent and independent, and never once put himself into the usual posture of entreaty. This, and the originality of his appearance, excited Woodward's curiosity, and he resolved to speak to him.

"Well, my good old man, what may you be carrying in the bag?"

The man looked at him respectfully, and raising his hand and staff, touched his *barrad*, and replied:

"A few yarribs, your honor."

"Yarribs? What the deuce is that?"

"Why, the yarribs that grow, sir—to cure the people when they are sick."

"O, you mean herbs."

"I do, sir, and I gather them too for the potecars."

"O, then you are what they call a herbalist."

"I believe I am, sir, if you put that word against (to) a man that gethers yarribs."

"Yes, that's what I mean. You sell them to the apothecaries, I suppose?"

"I do a little, sir, but I use the most of them myself. Sorra much the potecars knows about the use o' them; they kill more than they cure wid 'em, and calls them that understands what they're good for rogues and quacks. May the Lord forgive them this day! *Amin, acheernah!* (Amen, O Lord!)"

"And do you administer these herbs to the sick?"

"I do, sir, to the sick of all kinds—man and baste. There's nothing like them, sir, bekaise it was to cure diseases of all kinds that the Lord, blessed be His name! *amin, acheernah!* planted them in the earth for the use of his cratures. Why, sir, will you listen to me now, and mark my words? There never was a complaint that follied either man or baste, brute or bird, but a yarrib grows that 'ud cure it if it was known. When the head's hot wid faver, and the heart low wid care, the yarrib is to be found that will cool the head and rise the heart."

"Don't you think, now," said Woodward, imagining that he would catch him, "that a glass of wine, or, what is better still, a good glass of punch, would raise the heart better than all the herbs in the universe?"

"Lord bless me!" he exclaimed, as if in soliloquy; "the ignorance of the rich and wealthy, and of great people altogether, is unknown! Wine and punch! And what, will you tell me, does wine and punch come from? Doesn't the wine come from the grapes that grow in forrin parts—sich as we have in our hot-houses—and doesn't the whiskey that you make your punch of grow from the honest barley in our own fields? So much for your knowledge of yarribs."

"Why, there you are right, my old friend, I forgot that."

"You forgot it? Tell the truth at once, and say you didn't know it. But may be you did forget it, for troth he'd be a poor crature that didn't know whiskey was made from barley."

He here turned his red satirical eye upon Woodward, with a glance that was strongly indicative of contempt for his general information.

"Well," he proceeded, "the power of yarribs is wondherful,—if it was known to many as it is to me."

"Why, from long practice, I suppose, you must be skilful in the properties of herbs?"

"Well, indeed, you needn't only suppose it, but you may be sartin of it. Have you a good appetite?"

"A particularly good one, I assure you."

"Now, wouldn't you think it strange that I could give you a dose that 'ud keep you on half a male a day for the next three months."

"God forbid," replied Woodward, who, among his other good qualities, was an enormous trencherman, — "God forbid that ever such a dose should go down my throat."

"Would you think, now," he proceeded, with a sinister grin that sent his yellow tusk half an inch out of his mouth, "that if a man was jealous of his wife, or a wife of her husband, I couldn't give either o' them a dose that 'ud cure them?"

"Faith, I dare say you could," replied Woodward; "a dose that would free them from care of all sorts, as well as jealousy."

"I don't mane that," said the skeleton; "ha, ha! you're a funny gentleman, and maybe I—but no—I don't mane that; but widout injurin' a hair in either o' their heads."

"I am not married," said the other, "but I expect to be soon, and when I am I will pay you well for the knowledge of that herb—for my wife, I mean. Where do you live?"

"In Rathfillan, sir. I'm a well-known man there, and for many a long mile about it."

"You must be very useful to the country people hereabouts?"

"Ay," he exclaimed, "you mane to the poor, I suppose, and you're right; but maybe I'm of sarvice to the rich, too. Many a face I save from—I *could* save from shame, I mane—if I liked, and could get well ped for it, too. Some young, extravagant people that have rich ould fathers do be spakin' to me, too; but thin, you know, I have a sowl to be saved, and am a religious man, I hope, and do my duty as sich, and that every one that has a sowl to be saved, may! *Amin, acheernah!*"

"I am glad to find that your sense of duty preserves you against such strong temptations."

"Then, there's another set of men—these outlaws that do be robbin' rich people's houses, and they, too, try to tempt me."

"Why should *they* tempt you?"

"Bekaise the people, now knowin' that they're abroad, keep watch-dogs, blood-hounds, and sich useful animals, that give

the alarm at night, and the robbers wishin', you see, to get *them* out of the way, do be temptin' me about wishin' me to pison them."

"Of course you resist them?"

"Well, I hope I do; but sometimes it's hard to get over them, especially when they plant a *skean* or a *middogue* to one's navel, and swear great oaths that they'll make a scabbard for it of my poor ould *bulg* (belly) —I say, when the thieves do the business that way, it requires a grate dale of the grace o' God to deny them. But what's any Chr'sthen 'idout the grace o' God? May we all have it! *Amin, achevrnah!*"

"Well, when I marry, as I will soon, I'll call upon you; I dare say my wife will get jealous, for I love the ladies, if that's a fault."

Another grin was his first reply to this, after which he said:

"Well, sir, if she does, come to me."

"Where in Rathfillan do you live?"

"O, anybody will tell you; inquire for ould Sol Donnel, the yarrib man, and you'll soon find me out."

"But suppose I shouldn't wish it to be known that I called on you?"

"Eh?" said the old villain, giving him another significant grin that once more projected the fang; "well, maybe you wouldn't. If you want my sarvices, then, come to the cottage that's built agin the church-yard wall, on the north side; and if you don't wish to be seen, why you can come about midnight, when every one's asleep."

"What's this you say your name is?"

"Sol Donnel."

"What do you mean by *Sol?*"

He turned up his red eyes in astonishment, and exclaimed:

"Well, now, to think that a larned man as you must be shouldn't know what Sol means! Well, the ignorance of you great people is unknown. Don't you know—but you don't—oughn't you know, then, that Sol means Solomon, who was the wisest man and the biggest blaggard that ever lived! Faith, if *I* had lived in his day he'd be a poor customer to me, bekaise he had no shame in him; but indeed, the doin's that goes on now in holes and corners among ourselves was no shame in his time. That's a fine bay horse you ride; would you like to have him dappled? A dappled bay, you know, is always a great beauty."

"And *could* you dapple him?"

"Ay, as sure as you ride him."

"Well, I'll think about it and let you know; there's some silver for you, and good-by, honest Solomon."

Woodward then rode on, reflecting on the novel and extraordinary character of this hypocritical old villain, in whose withered and repulsive visage he could not discover a single trace of anything that intimated the existence of sympathy with his kind. As to that, it was a *tabula rasa*, blank of all feelings except those which characterize the hyena and the fox. After he had left him, the old fellow gave a bitter and derisive look after him.

"There you go," said he, "and well I knew you, although you didn't think so. Weren't you pointed out to me the night o' the divil's bonfire, that your mother, they say, got up for you; and didn't I see you since spakin' to that skamin' blaggard, Caterine Collins, my niece, that takes many a penny out o' my hands; and didn't I know that you couldn't be talkin' to her about anything that was good. Troth, you're not your mother's son or you'll be comin' to me as well as her. Bad luck to her! she was near gettin' me into the stocks when I sowld her the dose of oak bark for the sarvants, to draw in their stomachs and shorten their feedin'. My faith, ould Lindsay 'nd have put me in them only for fraid o' bringin' shame upon his wife."*

CHAPTER VIII.

A Healing of the Breach.—A Proposal for Marriage Accepted.

On that evening, when the family were assembled at supper, Mrs. Lindsay, who had had a previous consultation with her son Harry, thought proper to introduce the subject of the projected marriage between him and Alice Goodwin.

"Harry has paid a visit to these neighbors of ours," said she, "these Goodwins, and I think, now that he has come home, it would be only prudent on our part to renew the intimacy that was between us. Not that I like, or ever will like, a bone in one of their bodies; but it's only right that we should foil them at their own weapons, and try to

* Some of our readers may imagine that in the enumeration of the cures which old Sol professed to effect we have drawn too largely upon their credulity, whereas there is scarcely one of them that is not practised, or attempted, in remote and uneducated parts of Ireland, almost down to the present day. We ourselves in early youth saw a man who professed, and was believed to be able, to cure jealousy in either man or woman by a potion; whilst charms for colics, toothaches, taking motes out of the eye, and for producing love, were common among the ignorant people within our own recollection.

get back the property into the hands of *one* of the family at least, if we can, and so prevent it from going to strangers. I am determined to pay them a friendly visit to-morrow.'

"A friendly visit!" exclaimed her husband, with an expression of surprise and indignation on his countenance which he could not conceal; "how can you say a friendly visit, after having just told us that you neither like them, nor ever will like them? not that it was at all necessary for you to assure us of *that*. It is, however, the hypocrisy of the thing on your part that startles and disgusts me."

"Call it prudence, if you please, Lindsay, or worldly wisdom, if you like, after all the best kind of wisdom; and I only wish you had more of it."

"That makes no difference in life," replied her husband, calmly, but severely; "as it is, you have enough, and more than enough for the whole family."

"But has Harry any hopes of success with Alice Goodwin," asked Charles, "because everything depends on *that?*"

"If he had not, you foolish boy, do you think I would be the first to break the ice by going to pay them a visit? The girl, I dare say, will make a very good wife, or if she does not, the property will not be a pound less in value on that account; that's one comfort."

"And is it upon this hollow and treacherous principle that you are about to pay them a friendly visit?" asked her husband, with ill-repressed indignation.

"Lindsay," she replied, sharply, "I perceive you are rife for a quarrel now; but I beg to tell you, sir, that I will neither seek your approbation nor regard your authority. I must manage these people after my own fashion."

"Harry," said his step-father, turning abruptly, and with incredulous surprise to him, "surely it is not possible that you are a party to such a shameful imposture upon this excellent family?"

His brother Charles fastened his eyes upon him as if he would read his heart.

"I am sorry, sir," replied that gentleman, "that you should think it necessary to apply the word imposture to any proceeding of mine. You ought to know my mother's outspoken way, and that her heart is kinder than her language. The fact is, from the first moment I saw that beautiful girl I felt a warm interest in her, and I feel that interest increasing every day. I certainly am very anxious to secure her for her own sake, whilst I candidly admit that I am not wholly indifferent to the property. I am only a common man like others, and not above the world and its influences—who can be that lives in it? My mother, besides, will come to think better of Alice, and all of them, when she shall be enabled to call Alice daughter; won't you, mother?"

The mother, who knew by the sentiments which he had expressed to her before on this subject, that he was now playing a game with the family, did not consider it prudent to contradict him; she consequently replied,—

"I don't know, Harry; I cannot get their trick about the property out of my heart; but, perhaps, if I saw it once more where it ought to be, I *might* change. That's all I can say at present."

"Well, come, Harry," said Lindsay—adverting to what he had just said—"I think you have spoken fairly enough; I do—it's candid; you are not above this world; why should you be?—come, it *is* candid."

"I trust, sir, you will never find me uncandid, either on this or any other subject."

"No; I don't think I shall, Harry. Well, be it so—setting your mother out of the question,—proceed with equal candor in your courtship. I trust you deserve her, and, if so, I hope you may get her."

"If he does not," said Maria, "he will never get such a wife."

"By the way, Harry," asked Charles, "has she given you an intimation of anything like encouragement?"

"Well, I rather think I am not exactly a fool, Charles, nor likely to undertake an enterprise without some prospect of success. I hope you deem me, at least, a candid man."

"Yes; but there is a class of persons who frequently form too high an estimate of themselves, especially in their intercourse with women; and who very often mistake civility for encouragement."

"Very true, Charles—exceedingly just and true; but I hope I am not one of those either; my knowledge of life and the world will prevent me from that, I trust."

"I hope," continued Charles, "that if the girl is adverse to such a connection she will not be harassed or annoyed about it."

"I hope, Charles, I have too much pride to press any proposal that may be disagreeable to her; I rather think I have. But have you, Charles, any reason to suppose that she should not like me?"

"Why, from what you have already hinted, Harry, you ought to be the best judge of that yourself."

"Well, I think so, too. I am not in the habit of walking blindfold into any adventure, especially one so important as this.

Trust to my address, my dear fellow," he added, with a confident smile, "and, believe me, you shall soon see her your sister-in-law."

"And I shall be delighted at it, Harry," said his sister; "so go on and prosper. If you get her you will get a treasure, setting her property out of the question."

"*Her* property!" ejaculated Mrs. Lindsay; "but no matter; we shall see. I can speak sweetly enough when I wish."

"I wish to God you would try it oftener, then," said her husband; "but I trust that during this visit of yours you will not give way to your precious temper and insult them at the outset. Don't tie a knot with your tongue that you can't unravel with your teeth. Be quiet, now; I didn't speak to raise the devil and draw on a tempest—only let us have a glass of punch, till Charley and I drink success to Harry."

The next day Mrs. Lindsay ordered the car, and proceeded to pay her intended visit to the Goodwins. She had arrived pretty near the house, when two of Goodwin's men, who were driving his cows to a grazing field on the other side of the road by which she was approaching, having noticed and recognized her, immediately turned them back and drove them into a paddock enclosed by trees, where they were completely out of her sight.

"Devil blow her, east and west!" said one of them. "What brings her across us now that we have the cattle wid us? and doesn't all the world know that she'd lave them sick and sore wid one glance of her unlucky eye. I hope in God she didn't see them, the thief o' the devil that she is."

"She can't see them now, the cratures," replied the other; "and may the devil knock the light out of her eyes at any rate," he added, "for sure, they say it's the light of hell that's in them."

"Well, when she goes there she'll be able to see her way, and sure that'll be one comfort," replied his companion; "but in the mane time, if anything happens the cows—poor bastes—we'll know the rason of it."

"She must dale wid the devil," said the other, "and I hope she'll be burned for a witch yet; but whisht, here she comes, and may the devil roast her on his toastin' iron the first time he wants a male!"

"Troth, an' he'd find her tough feedin'," said his comrade; "and barrin' he has strong tusks, as I suppose he has, he'd find it no every-day male wid him."

As they spoke, the object of their animadversion appeared, and turned upon them, so naturally, a sinister and sharp look, that it seemed to the men as if she had suspected the subject of their conversation.

"You are Mr. Goodwin's laborers, are you not?"

"We are, ma'am," replied one of them, without, as usual, touching his hat however.

"You ill-mannered boor," she said, "why do you not touch your hat to a lady, when she condescends to speak to you?"

"I always touch my hat to a *lady*, ma'am," replied the man sharply.

"Come here, you other man," said she; "perhaps you are not such an insolent ruffian as this? Can you tell me if Mr. and Mrs. Goodwin are at home?"

"Are you goin' there?" asked the man, making a low bow.

"Yes, I am, my good man," she replied.

"Well, then, ma'am," he added, bowing again, "you'll find that out when you go to the house;" and he made her another bow to wind up the information with all due politeness.

"Barney," said she to the servant, her face inflamed with rage, "drive on. I only wish I had those ruffianly scoundrels to deal with; I would teach them manners to their betters at all events; and you, sirra, why did you not use your whip and chastise them?"

"Faith, ma'am," replied our friend Barney Casey, "it's aisier said than done wid some of us. Why, ma'am, they're the two hardiest and *best* men in the parish; however, here's Pugshy Ruah turnin' out o' the gate, and she'll be able to tell you whether they are at home or not."

"O, that's the woman they say is unlucky," observed his mistress—"*unlucky to meet*, I mean; I have often heard of her; indeed, it may be so, for I believe there are such persons; we shall speak to her, however. My good woman," she said, addressing Pugshy, "allow me to ask, have you been at Mr. Goodwin's?"

Now Pugshy had all the legitimate characteristics of an "unlucky" woman; red-haired, had a game eye—that is to say, she squinted with one of them; Pugshy wore a caubeen hat, like a man; had on neither shoe nor stocking; her huge, brawny arms, uncovered almost to the shoulders, were brown with freckles, as was her face; so that, altogether, she would have made a bad substitute either for the Medicean Venus or the Apollo Belvidere.

"My good woman, allow me to ask if you have been at Mr. Goodwin's."

Pugshy, who knew her well, stood for a moment, and closing the eye with which she did *not* squint, kept the *game* one fixed upon her very steadily for half a minute, and as

she wore the caubeen rather rakishly on one side of her head, her whole figure and expression were something between the frightful and the ludicrous.

"Was I at Misther Goodwin's, is it? Lord love you, ma'am, (and ye need it, *sotto voce*), an' maybe you'd give us a thrifle for the male's mate; it's hard times wid us this weader."

"I have no change; I never bring change out with me."

"You're goin' to Mr. Goodwin's, ma'am?"

"Yes; are he and Mrs. Goodwin at home, can you tell me?"

"They are, ma'am, but you may as well go back again; you'll have no luck *this* day."

"Why so?"

"Why, bekaise you won't; didn't you meet *me?* Who ever has luck that meets me? Nobody ought to know that betther than yourself, for, by all accounts, you're tarred wid the same stick."

"Foolish woman," replied Mrs. Lindsay, "how is it in *your* power to prevent me?"

"No matther," replied the woman; "go an; but mark my words, you'll have your journey for nuttin', whatever it is. Indeed, if I turned back three steps wid you it might be otherwise, but you refused to cross my hand, so you must take your luck," and with a frightful glance from the eye aforesaid, she passed on.

As she drove up to Mr. Goodwin's residence she was met on the steps of the hall-door by that kind-hearted gentleman and his wife, and received with a feeling of gratification which the good people could not disguise.

"I suppose," said Mrs. Lindsay, after they had got seated in the drawing-room, "that you are surprised to see *me* here?"

"We are delighted, say, Mrs. Lindsay," replied Mr. Goodwin—"delighted. Why should ill-will come between neighbors and friends without any just cause on either side? That property ——"

"O, don't talk about that," replied Mrs. Lindsay; "I didn't come to speak about it; let everything connected with it be forgotten; and as proof that I wish it should be so, I came here to-day to renew the intimacy that should subsist between us."

"And, indeed," replied Mrs. Goodwin, "the interruption of that intimacy distressed us very much—more, perhaps, Mrs. Lindsay, than you might feel disposed to give us credit for."

"Well, my dear madam," replied the other, "I am sure you will be glad to hear that I have not only my own inclination, but the sanction and wish of my whole family, in making this friendly visit, with the hope of placing us all upon our former footing. But, to tell you the truth, this might not have been so, were it not for the anxiety of my son Henry, who has returned to us, and whom, I believe, you know."

"We have that pleasure," replied Goodwin; "and from what we have seen of him, we think you have a right to feel proud of such a son."

"So I do, indeed," replied his mother; "he is a good and most amiable young man, without either art or cunning, but truthful and honorable in the highest degree. It is to him we shall all be indebted for this reconciliation; or, perhaps, I might say," she added, with a smile, "to your own daughter Alice."

"Ah! poor Alice," exclaimed her father; "none of us felt the estrangement of the families with so much regret as she did."

"Indeed, Mrs. Lindsay," added his wife, "I can bear witness to that; many a bitter tear it occasioned the poor girl."

"I believe she is a most amiable creature," replied Mrs. Lindsay; "and I believe," she added with a smile, "that there is one particular young gentleman of that opinion as well as myself."

We believe in our souls that the simplest woman in existence, or that ever lived, becomes a deep and thorough diplomatist when engaged in a conversation that involves in the remotest degree any matrimonial speculation for a daughter. Now, Mrs. Goodwin knew as well as the reader does, that Mrs. Lindsay made allusion to her son Harry, the new-comer; but she felt that it was contrary to the spirit of such negotiations to make a direct admission of that feeling; she, accordingly, was of opinion that in order to bring Mrs. Lindsay directly to the point, and to exonerate herself and her husband from ever having entertained the question at all, her best plan was to misunderstand her, and seem to proceed upon a false scent.

"O, indeed, Mrs. Lindsay," she replied, "I am not surprised at that; Charles and Alice were always great favorites with each other."

"Charles!" exclaimed Mrs. Lindsay; "Charles! What could induce you to think of associating Charles and Alice? *He* is unworthy of such an association."

"Bless me," exclaimed Mrs. Goodwin in her turn; "why, I thought you alluded to Charles."

"No," said her neighbor, "I alluded to my eldest son, Harry, to whose good offices in this matter both families are so much indebted. *He* is worthy of any girl, and indeed few girls are worthy of him; but as for

Alice, you know what a favorite she was with me, and I trust now I shall like her even better than ever."

"You are right, Mrs. Lindsay," said Goodwin, "in saying that few women are worthy of your eldest son; he is a most gentlemanly, and evidently a most accomplished young man; his conversation at breakfast here the morning after the storm was so remarkable, both for good sense and good feeling, that I am not surprised at your friendly visit today, Mrs. Lindsay. He was sent, I hope, to introduce a spirit of peace and concord between us, and God forbid that we should repel it; on the contrary, we hail his mediation with delight, and feel deeply indebted to him for placing both families in their original position."

"I trust in a better position," replied his adroit mother; "I trust in a better position, Mr. Goodwin, and a still nearer and dearer connection. It is better, however, to speak out; you know me of old, my dear friends, and that I am blunt and straightforward—as the proverb has it, 'I think what I say, and I say what I think.' This visit, then, is made, as I said, not only by my own wish, but at the express entreaty of my son Harry, and the great delight of the whole family; there is therefore no use in concealing the fact—he is deeply attached to your daughter, Alice, and was from the first moment he saw her; —of course you now understand my mission —which is, in fact, to make a proposal of marriage in his name, and to entreat your favorable consideration of it, as well as your influence in his behalf with Alice herself."

"Well, I declare, Mrs. Lindsay," replied Mrs. Goodwin, (God forgive her!) "you have taken us quite by surprise—you have indeed;—dear me—I'm quite agitated; but he is, indeed, a fine young man—a perfect gentleman in his manners, and if he be as good as he looks—for marriage, God help us, tries us all ——"

"I hope it never tried you much, Martha," replied her husband, smiling.

"No, my dear, I don't say so. Still, when the happiness of one's child is concerned—and such a child as Alice ——"

"But consider, Mrs. Goodwin," replied the ambassadress, who, in fact, was not far from an explosion at what she considered a piece of contemptible vacillation on the part of her neighbor—"consider, Mrs. Goodwin," said she, "that the happiness of *my son* is concerned."

"I know it is," she replied; "but speak to her father, Mrs. Lindsay—he, as such, is the proper person—O, dear me."

"Well, Mr. Goodwin—you have heard what I have said?"

"I have, madam," said he; "but thank God I am not so nervous as my good wife here. I like your son, Harry, very much, from what I have seen of him—and, to be plain with you, I really see no objection to such a match. On the contrary, it will promote peace and good-will between us; and, I have no doubt, will prove a happy event to the parties most concerned."

"O, there is not a doubt of it," exclaimed Mrs. Goodwin, now chiming in with her husband; "no, there can be no doubt of it. O, they will be very happy together, and that will be so delightful. My darling Alice!"—and here she became pathetic, and shed tears copiously—"yes," she added, "we will lose you, my darling, and a lonely house we will have after you, for I suppose they will live in the late Mr. Hamilton's residence, on their own property."

This allusion to the arrangements contemplated in the event of the marriage, redeemed, to a certain degree, the simple-hearted Mrs. Goodwin from the strongest possible contempt on the part of a woman who was never known to shed a tear upon any earthly subject.

"Well, then," proceeded Mrs. Lindsay, "I am to understand that this proposal on the behalf of my son is accepted?"

"So far as I and Mrs. Goodwin are concerned," replied Goodwin, "you are, indeed, Mrs. Lindsay, and so far all is smooth and easy; but, on the other hand, there is Alice —she, you know, is to be consulted."

"O! as for poor Alice," said her mother, "there will be no difficulty with her; whatever I and her father wish her to do, if it be to please us, that she will do."

"I trust," said Mrs. Lindsay, "she has no previous attachment; for that would be unfortunate for herself, poor girl."

"She an attachment!" exclaimed her mother; "no, the poor, timid creature never thought of such a thing."

"It is difficult for parents to know that," replied Mrs. Lindsay; "but where is she?"

"She's gone out," replied her mother, "to take a pleasant jaunt somewhere with a young friend of ours, a Mr. O'Connor; but, indeed, I'm glad she is not here, for if she was, we could not, you know, discuss this matter in her presence."

"That is very true," observed Mrs. Lindsay, dryly; "but perhaps she doesn't regret her absence. As it is, I think you ought to impress upon her that, in the article of marriage, a young and inexperienced girl like her ought to have no will but that of her parents, who are best qualified, from their experience and knowledge of life, to form and direct her principles."

"I do not think," said her father, "that there is anything to be apprehended on her part. She is the most unselfish and disinterested girl that ever existed, and sooner than give her mother or me a pang, I am sure she would make any sacrifice; but at the same time," he added, "if her own happiness were involved in the matter, I should certainly accept no such sacrifice at her hands."

"As to that, Mr. Goodwin," she replied, "I hope we need calculate upon nothing on her part but a willing consent and obedience. At all events, it is but natural that they should be pretty frequently in each other's society, and that my son should have an opportunity of inspiring her with good will towards him, if not a still warmer feeling. The matter being now understood, of course, that is and will be his exclusive privilege."

"Your observations, my dear madam, are but reasonable and natural," replied Goodwin. "Why, indeed, should it be otherwise, considering their contemplated relation to each other? Of course, we shall be delighted to see him here as often as he chooses to come, and so, I am sure, will Alice."

They then separated upon the most cordial terms; and Mrs. Lindsay, having mounted her vehicle, proceeded on her way home. She was, however, far from satisfied at the success of her interview with the Goodwins. So far as the consent of her father and mother went, all was, to be sure, quite as she could have wished it; but then, as to Alice herself, there might exist an insurmountable difficulty. She did not at all relish the fact of that young lady's taking her amusement with Mr. O'Connor, who she knew was of a handsome person and independent circumstances, and very likely to become a formidable rival to her son. As matters stood, however, she resolved to conceal her apprehensions on this point, and to urge Harry to secure, if possible, the property, which both she herself and he had solely in view. As for the girl, each of them looked on her as a cipher in the transaction, whose only value was rated by the broad acres which they could not secure without taking her along with them.

The family were dispersed when she returned home, and she, consequently, reserved the account of her mission until she should meet them in the evening. At length the hour came, and she lost no time in opening the matter at full length, suppressing, at the same time, her own apprehensions of Alice's consent, and her dread of the rivalry on the part of O'Connor.

"Well," said she, "I have seen these people; I have called upon them, as you all know; and, as I said, I have seen them."

"To very little purpose, I am afraid," said her husband; "I don't like your commencement of the report."

"I suppose not," she replied; "but, thank God, it is neither your liking nor disliking that we regard, Lindsay. I have seen them, Harry; and I am glad to say that they are civil people."

"Is it only now you found that out?" asked her husband; "why, they never were anything else, Jenny."

"Well, really," said she, "I shall be forced to ask you to leave the room if you proceed at this rate. Children, will you protect me from the interruption and the studied insults of this man?"

"Father," said Charles, "for Heaven's sake will you allow her to state the result of her visit? We are all very anxious to hear it; none more so than I."

"Please except your elder brother," said Harry, laughing, "whose interest you know, Charley, is most concerned."

"Well, perhaps so," said Charles; "of course, Harry—but proceed, mother, we shan't interrupt you."

"O, go on," said his mother, "go on; discuss the matter among you, I can wait; don't hesitate to interrupt me; your father there has set you that gentlemanly example."

"It must surely be good when it comes," said Harry, with a smile; "but do proceed, my dear mother, and never mind these queer folk; go on at once, and let us know all: we—that is, myself—are prepared for the worst; do proceed, mother."

"Am I at liberty to speak?" said she, and she looked at them with a glance that expressed a very fierce interrogatory. They all nodded, and she resumed:

"Well, I have seen these people, I say; I have made a proposal of marriage between Harry and Alice, and that proposal is——"

She paused, and looked around her with an air of triumph; but whether that look communicated the triumph of success, or that of her inveterate enmity and contempt for them ever since the death of old Hamilton, was as great a secret to them as the Bononian enigma. There was a dead silence, much to her mortification, for she would have given a great deal that her husband had interrupted her just then, and taken her upon the wrong tack.

"Well," she proceeded, "do you all wish to hear it?"

Lindsay put his forefinger on his lips, and nodded to all the rest to do the same.

"Ah, Lindsay," she exclaimed, "you are an ill-minded man; but it matters not so far as *you* are concerned—in three words, Harry, the proposal *is accepted;* yes, accepted, and with gratitu le and thanksgiving."

"And you had no quarrel?" said Lindsay, with astonishment; "nor you didn't let out on them? Well, well!"

"Children, I am addressing myself *to you*, and especially to Harry here, who is most interested; no, I see nothing to prevent us from having back the property and the curds-and-whey along with it."

"Faith, and the curds-and-whey are the best part of it after all," said Lindsay; "but, in the meantime, you might be a little more particular, and give us a touch of your own eloquence and ability in bringing it about."

"What did Alice herself say, mother?" asked Charles; "was she a party to the consent? because, if she was, your triumph, or rather Harry's here, is complete."

"It is complete," replied his mother, having recourse to a dishonest evasion; "the girl and her parents have but one opinion. Indeed, I always did the poor thing the credit to believe that she never was capable of entertaining an opinion of her own, and it now turns out a very fortunate thing for Harry that it is so; but of course he has made an impression upon her."

"As to that, mamma," said Maria, "I don't know—he may, or he may not; but of this I am satisfied, that Alice Goodwin is a girl who *can* form an opinion for herself, and that, whatever that opinion be, she will neither change or abandon it upon slight grounds. I know her well, but if she has consented to marry Harry she will marry him, and that is all that is to be said about it."

"I thought she would," said Harry; "I told you, Charley, that I didn't think I was a fool—didn't I?"

"I know you did, Harry," replied his brother; "but I don't know how—it strikes me that I would rather have any other man's opinion on that subject than your own; however, time will tell."

"It will tell, of course; and if it proves me a fool, I will give you leave to clap the fool's cap on me for life. And now that we have advanced so far and so well, I will go and take one of my evening strolls, in order to meditate on my approaching happiness." And he did so.

The family were not at all surprised at this, even although the period of his walks frequently extended into a protracted hour of the night. Not so the servants, who wondered why Master Harry should walk so much abroad and remain out so late at night, especially considering the unsettled and alarming state of the country, in consequence of the outrages and robberies which were of such frequent occurrence. This, it is true, was startling enough to these simple people; but that which filled them not only with astonishment, but with something like awe, was the indifference with which he was known to traverse haunted places alone and unaccompanied, when the whole country around, except thieves and robbers, witches, and evil spirits, were sound asleep. "What," they asked each other, "could he mean by it?"

"Barney Casey, you that knows a great deal for an unlarned man, tell us what you think of it," said the cook; 'isn't it the world's wondher, that a man that's out at such hours doesn't *see somethin'?* There's Lanty Bawn, and sure they say he saw the *white woman* beyant the end of the long *boreen* on Thursday night last, the Lord save us; eh, Barney?"

Barney immediately assumed the oracle.

"He did," said he; "and what is still more fearful, it's said there was a *black man* along wid her. They say that Lanty seen them both, and that the black man had his arm about the white woman's waist, and was kissin' her at full trot."

The cook crossed herself, and the whole kitchen turned up its eyes at this diabolical piece of courtship.

"Musha, the Lord be about us in the manetime; but bad luck to the ould boy, (a *black man* is always considered the devil, or the *ould boy*, as they call him,) wasn't it a daisant taste he had, to go to kiss a ghost?"

"Why," replied Barney with a grin, "I suppose the ould chap is hard set on that point; who the devil else would kiss him, barrin' some she ghost or other? Some luckless ould maid, I'll go bail, that *gother* a beard while she was here, and the devil now is kissin' it off to get seein' what kind of a face she has. Well, all I can say," he proceeded, "is, that I wish him luck of his employment, for in troth it's an honorable one and he has a right to be proud of it."

"Well, well," said the housemaid, "it's a wondher how any one can walk by themselves at night; wasn't it near the well at the foot of the long hill that goes up to where the Davorens live that they were seen?"

"It was," replied Barney; "at laste they say so."

"And didn't yourself tell me," she proceeded, "that that same lonesome *boreen* is a common walk at night wid Master Harry?"

"And so it is, Nanse," replied Barney; "but as for Misther Harry, I believe it's

purty well known, that by night or by day he may walk where he likes."

"Father of heaven!" they exclaimed in a low, earnest voice; "but *why*, Barney?" they asked in a condensed whisper.

"Why! Why is he called *Harry na Suil Balor* for? Can you tell me that?"

"Why, bekaise his two eyes isn't one color."

"And why arn't they one color? Can you tell me *that?*"

"O, the sorra step farther I can go in that question."

"No," said Barney, full of importance, "I thought not, and what is more, I didn't expect it from you. His mother could tell, though. It's in her family, and there's worse than that in her family."

"Troth, by all accounts," observed the girl, "there never was anything good in her family. But, Barney, achora, will you tell us, if you know, what's the rason of it?"

"If I know?" said Barney, rather offended; "maybe I don't know, and maybe I do, if it came to that. Any body, then, that has two eyes of different colors always has the Evil Eye, or the *Suil Balor*, and has the power of *overlookin';* and, between ourselves, Masther Harry has it. The misthress herself can only overlook *cattle*, bekaise both her eyes is of the one color; but Masther Harry could overlook either man or woman if he wished. And how do you think that comes?"

"The Lord knows," replied the cook, crossing herself; "from no good, at any rate. Troth, I'll get a gospel and a scapular, for, to tell you the truth, I observed that Masther Harry gave me a look the other day that made my flesh creep, by rason that he thought the mutton was overdone."

"O, *you* needn't be afeard," replied Barney; "he can overlook or not, as he plaises; if he does not wish to do so, you're safe enough; but when any one like him that has the power wishes to do it, they could wither you by degrees off o' the airth."

"God be about us! But, Barney, you didn't tell us how it comes, for all that."

"It comes from the fairies. Doesn't every one know that the fairies themselves has the power of overlookin' both cattle and Christians?"

"That's true enough," she replied; "every one, indeed, knows that. Sure, my aunt had a child that died o' the fairies."

"Yes, but Masther Harry can see them."

"What! is it the fairies?"

"Ay, the fairies, but only wid one eye, that piercin' black one of his. No, no; as I said before, he may walk where he likes, both by night and by day; he's safe from everything of the kind; even a ghost daren't lay a finger on him; and as the devil and the fairies are connected, he's safe from *him*, too, in this world at laste; but the Lord pity him when he goes to the next; for there he'll suffer *lalty*."

The truth is, that in those days of witchcraft and apparitions of all kinds, and even in the present, among the ignorant and uneducated of the lower classes, any female seen at night in a lonely place, and supposed to be a spirit, was termed *a white woman*, no matter what the color of her dress may have been, provided it was not black. The same superstition held good when anything in the shape of a man happened to appear under similar circumstances. Terror, and the force of an excited imagination, instantly transformed it into a *black man*, and that black man, of course, was the devil himself. In the case before us, however, our readers, we have no doubt, can give a better guess at the nature of the black man and white woman in question than either the cook, the housemaid, or even Barney himself.

It was late that night when Harry came in. The servants, with whose terrors and superstitions Casey had taken such liberties, now looked upon him as something awful, and, as might be naturally expected, felt a dreadful curiosity with respect to him and his movements. They lay awake on the night in question, with the express purpose of satisfying themselves as to the hour of his return, and as that was between twelve and one, they laid it down as a certain fact that there was something "not right," and beyond the common in his remaining out so late.

CHAPTER IX.

Chase of the White Hare.

"Hark, forward, forward; holla ho!"

The next morning our friend Harry appeared at the breakfast table rather paler than usual, and in one of his most abstracted moods; for it may be said here that the frequent occurrence of such moods had not escaped the observation of his family, especially of his step-father, in whose good grace, it so happened, that he was not improving. One cause of this was his supercilious, or, rather, his contemptuous manner towards his admirable and affectionate brother. He refused to associate with him in his sports or diversions; refused him his confidence, and seldom addressed him, except in that tone of banter which always implies an offensive impression of inferiority and want of re

spect towards the object of it. After breakfast the next morning, his father said to Charles, when the other members of the family had all left the room,—

"Charley, there is something behind that gloom of Harry's which I don't like. Indeed, altogether, he has not improved upon me since his return, and you are aware that I knew nothing of him before. I cannot conceive his object in returning home just now, and, it seems, with no intention of going back. His uncle was the kindest of men to him, and intended to provide for him handsomely. It is not for nothing he would leave such an uncle, and it is not for nothing that such an uncle would part with him, unless there was a screw loose somewhere. I don't wish to press him into an explanation; but he has not offered any, and refuses, of course, to place any confidence in me."

"My dear father," replied the generous brother, "I fear you judge him too harshly. As for these fits of gloom, they may be constitutional; you know my mother has them, and won't speak to one of us sometimes for whole days together. It *is* possible that some quarrel or misunderstanding may have taken place between him and his uncle; but how do you know that his silence on the subject does not proceed from delicacy towards that relative?"

"Well, it may be so; and it is a very kind and generous interpretation which you give of it, Charley. Let that part of the subject pass, then; but, again, regarding this marriage. The principle upon which he and his mother are proceeding is selfish, heartless, and perfidious in the highest degree; and d—— me if I think it would be honorable in me to stand by and see such a villainous game played against so excellent a family—against so lovely and so admirable a girl as Alice Goodwin. It is a union between the kite and the dove, Charley, and it would be base and cowardly in me to see such a union accomplished."

"Father," said Charles, "in *this* matter will you be guided by me? If Alice herself is a consenting party to the match, you have, in my opinion, no right to interfere, at least with *her* affections. If she marries him without stress or compulsion, she does it deliberately, and she shapes her own course and her own fate. In the meantime I advise you to hold back for the present, and wait until her own sentiments are distinctly understood. That can be effected by a private interview with yourself, which you can easily obtain. Let us not be severe on Harry. I rather think he is pressed forward in the matter by my mother, for the sake of the property If his uncle has discarded him, it is not, surely, unreasonable that a young man like him, without a profession or any fixed purpose in life, should wish to secure a wife—and *such* a wife—who will bring back to him the very property which was originally destined for himself in the first instance. Wait, then, at all events, until Alice's conduct in the matter is known. If there be unjustifiable force and pressure upon her, *act;* if not, I think, sir, that, with every respect, your interference would be an unjustifiable intrusion."

"Very well, Charley; I believe you are right; I will be guided by you for the present; I won't interfere; but in the meantime I shall have an eye to their proceedings. I don't think the Goodwins at all mercenary or selfish, but it is quite possible that they may look upon Harry as the heir of his uncle's wealth; and, after all, Charley, nature is nature; *that* may influence them even unconsciously, and yet I am not in a condition to undeceive them."

"Father," said Charles, "all I would suggest is, as I said before, a little patience for the present; wait a while until we learn how Alice herself will act. I am sorry to say that I perceived what I believe to be an equivocation on the part of my mother in her allusion to Alice. I think it will be found by and by that her personal consent has not been given; and, what is more, that she was not present at all during their conversation on the subject. If she was, however, and became a consenting party to the proposal, then I say now, as I said before, you have no right to interfere in the business."

"What keeps him out so late at night? I mean occasionally. He is out two or three nights every week until twelve or one o'clock. Now, you know, in the present state of the country, that it is not safe. *Shawn-na-Middogue* and such scoundrels are abroad, and they might put a bullet through him some night or other.

"He is not at all afraid on that score," replied Charles; "he never goes out in the evening without a case of pistols freshly loaded."

"Well, but it is wrong to subject himself to danger. Where is he gone now?"

"He and Barney Casey have gone out to course; I think they went up towards the mountains."

Such was the fact. Harry was quite enamoured of sport, and, finding dogs, guns, and fishing-rods ready to his hand, he became a regular sportsman—a pursuit in which he found Barney a very able and intelligent assistant, inasmuch as he knew the country, and every spot where game of every

description was to be had. They had traversed a considerable portion of rough mountain land, and killed two or three hares, when the heat of the day became so excessive that they considered it time to rest and take refreshments.

"The sun, Masther Harry, is d—— hot," said Barney; "and now that ould Bet Harramount hasn't been in it for many a long year, we may as well go to that dissolate cabin there above, and shelter ourselves from the hate—not that I'd undhertake to go there by myself; but now that you are wid me I don't care if I take a peep into the inside of it, out of curiosity."

"Why," said Woodward, "what about that cabin?"

"I'll tell you that, sir, when we get into it. It's consarnin' coorsin' too; but nobody ever lived in it since *she* left it."

"Since who left it?"

"Never mind, sir; I'll tell you all about it by and by."

It was certainly a most desolate and miserable hut, and had such an air of loneliness and desertion about it as was calculated to awaken reflections every whit as deep and melancholy as the contemplation of a very palace in ruins, especially to those who, like Barney, knew the history of its last inhabitant. It was far up in the mountains, and not within miles of another human habitation. Its loneliness and desolation alone would not have made it so peculiarly striking and impressive had it been inhabited; but its want of smoke—its still and lifeless appearance—the silence and the solitude around it—the absence of all symptoms of human life—its significant aspect of destitution and poverty, even at the best—all contributed to awaken in the mind that dreamy reflection that would induce the spectator to think that, apart from the strife and bustle of life, it might have existed there for a thousand years. Humble and contemptible in appearance as it was, yet there, as it stood—smokeless, alone, and desolate, as we have said, with no exponent of existence about it—no bird singing, no animal moving, as a token of contiguous life, no tree waving in the breeze, no shrub, even, stirring, but all still as the grave—there, we say, as it stood, afar and apart from the general uproar of the world, and apparently gray with long antiquity, it was a solemn and a melancholy homily upon human life in all its aspects, from the cabin to the palace, and from the palace to the grave. Now, its position and appearance might suggest to a thinking and romantic mind all the reflections to which we have alluded, without any additional accessories; but when the reader is informed that it was supposed to be the abode of crime, the rendezvous of evil spirits, the theatre of unholy incantations, and the temporary abode of the Great Tempter—and when all these facts are taken in connection with its desolate character, he will surely admit that it was calculated to impress the mind of all those who knew the history of its antecedents with awe and dread.

"I have never been in it," said Barney, "and I don't think there's a man or woman in the next three parishes that would enter it alone, even by daylight; but now that you are wid me, I have a terrible curiosity to see it inside."

A curse was thought to hang over it, but that curse, as it happened, was its preservation in the undilapidated state in which it stood.

On entering it, which Barney did not do without previously crossing himself, they were surprised to find it precisely in the same situation in which it had been abandoned. There were one small pot, two stools, an earthen pitcher, a few wooden trenchers lying upon a shelf, an old dusty salt-bag, an ash stick, broken in the middle, and doubled down so as to form a tongs; and gathered up in a corner was a truss of straw, covered with a rug and a thin old blanket, which had constituted a wretched substitute for a bed. That, however, which alarmed Barney most, was an old broomstick with a stump of worn broom attached to the end of it, as it stood in an opposite corner. This constituted the whole furniture of the hut.

"Now, Barney," said Harry, after they had examined it, "out with the brandy and water and the slices of ham, till we refresh ourselves in the first place, and after that I will hear your history of this magnificent mansion."

"O, it isn't the mansion, sir," he replied, "but the woman that lived in it that I have to spake about. God guard us! There in that corner is the very broomstick she used to ride through the air upon!"

"Never mind that now, but ransack that immense shooting-pocket, and produce its contents."

They accordingly sat down, each upon one of the stools, and helped themselves to bread and ham, together with some tolerably copious draughts of brandy and water which they had mixed before leaving home. Woodward, perceiving Barney's anxiety to deliver himself of his narrative, made him take an additional draught by way of encouragement to proceed, which, having very willingly finished the bumper offered him, he did as follows:

"Well, Masther Harry, in the first place, do you believe in the Bible?"

"In the Bible!—ahem—why—yes—certainly, Barney; do you suppose I'm not a Christian?"

"God forbid," replied Barney; "well, the Bible itself isn't thruer than what I'm goin' to tell you—sure all the world for ten miles round knows it."

"Well, but, Barney, I would rather you would let *me* know it in the first place."

"So I will, sir. Well, then, there was a witch-woman, by name one Bet Harramount, and on the surface of God's earth, blessed be his name! there was nothin' undher a bonnet and petticoats so ugly. She was pitted wid the small-pox to that degree that you might hide half a peck of marrowfat paise (peas) in her face widout their being noticed; then the sames (seams) that ran across it were five-foot raspers, every one of them. She had one of the purtiest gooseberry eyes in Europe; and only for the squint in the other, it would have been the ornament of her comely face entirely; but as it was, no human bein' was ever able to decide between them. She had two buck teeth in the front of her mouth that nobody could help admirin'; and, indeed, altogether I don't wondher that the devil fell in consate wid her, for, by all accounts, they say he carries a sweet tooth himself for comely ould women like Bet Harramount. Give the tasty ould chap a wrinkle any day before a dimple, when he promotes them to be witches, as he did her. Sure he was seen kissin' a ghost the other night near Crukanesker well, where the Davorens get their wather from. O, thin, bedad, but Grace Davoren is a beauty all out; and maybe 'tis herself doesn't know it."

"Go on with your story," said Woodward, rather dryly; "proceed."

"Well, sir, there is Bet Harramount's face for you, and the rest of her figure wasn't sich as to disgrace it. She was half bent wid age, wore an ould black bonnet, an ould red cloak, and walked wid a staff that was bent at the top, as it seems every witch must do. Where she came from nobody could ever tell, for she was a black stranger in this part of the country. At all events, she lived in the town below, but *how* she lived nobody could tell either. Everything about her was a riddle; no wondher, considherin' she hardly was ever known to spake to any one, from the lark to the lamb. At length she began to be suspected by many sensible people to be something *not right;* which you know, sir, was only natural. Peter O'Figgins, that was cracked—but then it was only wid dhrink and larnin'—said it; and Katty McTrollop, Lord Bilberry's henwife, was of the same opinion, and from them and others the thing grew and spread until it became right well known that she was nothin' else than a witch, and that the big wart on her neck was nothin' more nor less than the mark the devil had set upon her, to suckle his babies by. From this out, them that had Christian hearts and loved their religion trated the thief as she desarved to be trated. She was hissed and hooted, thank God, wherever she showed her face; but still nobody had courage to lay a hand upon her by rason of her blasphaimin' and cursin', which, they say, used to make the hair stand like wattles upon the heads of them that heard her."

"Had she not a black cat?" asked Woodward; "surely, she ought to have had a familiar."

"No," replied Barney; "the cat she had was a white cat, and the mainin' of its color will appear to you by and by; at any rate, out came the truth. You have heard of the Black Spectre—the *Shan-dhinne-dhuv?*"

"I have," replied the other; "proceed."

"Well, sir, as I said, the truth came out at last; in the coorse of a short time she was watched at night, and seen goin' to the haunted house, where the Spectre lives."

"Did she walk there, or fly upon her broomstick?" asked Woodward, gravely.

"I believe she walked, sir," replied Barney; "but afther that every eye was upon her, and many a time she was seen goin' to the haunted house when she thought *no* eye was upon her. Afther this, of coorse, she disappeared, for, to tell you the truth, the town became too hot for her; and, indeed, this is not surprisin'. Two or three of the neighborin' women miscarried, and several people lost their cattle after she came to the town; and to make a long story short, just as it was made up to throw her into the parson's pond, she disappeared, as I said, exactly as if she had known their intention: and becoorse she did."

"And did they ever find out where she went to?"

"Have patience, sir, for patience, they say, is a virtue. About a month afterwards some of the townspeople came up to the mountains here, to hunt hares, just as we did. Several of them before this had seen a white hare near the very spot we're sittin' in, but sorra dog of any description, either hound, greyhound, or lurcher could blow wind in her tail; even a pair of the Irish bloodhounds were brought, and when they came on her, she flew from them like the wind, and laughed at them, becoorse. Well, sir, the whole country was in a terrible state of alarm about the white hare, for every one knew, of coorse, that she was a witch; and as the cows began, here and there, to fail in

their milk, why, it was a clear case that she sucked them in ordher to supply some imp of the devil that sucked herself. At that time there was a priest in this parish, a very pious man, by name Father McFeen; and as he liked, now and then, to have a dish of hare soup, he kept a famous greyhound, called Koolawn, that was never said to miss a hare by any chance. As I said, some of the townspeople came up here to have a hunt, and as they wished, above all things, to bring the priest's greyhound and the white hare together, they asked the loan of him from his reverence, telling him, at the same time, what they wanted him for. Father McFeen was very proud of his dog, and good right he had, and tould them they should have him with pleasure.

"'But, as he's goin' to try his speed against a witch,' said he, 'I'll venture to say that you'll have as pretty a rnu as ever was seen on the hills.'

"Well, sir, at all events, off they set to the mountains; and sure enough, they weren't long there when they had the best of sport, but no white hare came in their way. Koolawn, however, was kept in the slip the whole day, in the hope of their startin' her, for they didn't wish to have him tired if they should come across her. At last, it was gettin' late, and when they were just on the point of givin' her up, and goin' home, begad she started, and before you'd say Jack Robinson, Koolawn and she were at it. Sich a chase, they say, was never seen. They flew at sich a rate that the people could hardly keep their eyes upon them. The hare went like the wind; but, begad, it was not every evening she had sich a dog as famous Koolawn at her scut. He turned her, and turned her, and every one thought he had her above a dozen of times, but still she turned, and was off from him again. At this rate they went on for long enough, until both began to fail, and to appear nearly run down. At length the gallant Koolawn had her; she gave a squeal that was heard, they say, for miles. He had her, I say, hard and fast by the hip, but it was only for a moment; how she escaped from him nobody knows; but it was thought that he wasn't able, from want of breath, to keep his hoult. To make a long story short, she got off from him, turned up towards the cabin we're sittin' in, Koolawn, game as ever, still close to her; at last she got in, and as the dog was about to spring in afther her, he found the door shut in his face. There now was the proof of it; but wait till you hear what's comin'. The men all ran up here and opened the door, for there was only a latch upon it, and if the hare was in existence, surely they'd find her now. Well, they closed the door at wanst for fraid she'd escape them; but afther sarchin' to no purpose, what do you think they found? No hare, at any rate, but ould Bet Harramount pantin' in the straw there, and covered wid a rug, for she hadn't time to get on the blanket—just as if the life was lavin' her. The sweat, savin' your presence, was pourin' from her; and upon examinin' her more closely, which they did, they found the marks of the dog's teeth in one of her ould hips, which was freshly bleedin'. They were now satisfied, I think, and ——"

"But why did they not seize and carry her before a magistrate?"

"Aisy, Masther Harry; the white cat, all this time, was sittin' at the fireside there, lookin' on very quietly, when the thought struck the men that they'd set the dogs upon it, and so they did, or rather, so they tried to do, but the minute the cat was pointed out to them, they dropped their ears and tails, and made out o' the house, and all the art o' man couldn't get them to come in again. When the men looked at it agin it was four times the size it had been at the beginnin', and, what was still more frightful, it was gettin' bigger and bigger, and fiercer and fiercer lookin', every minute. Begad, the men seein' this took to their heels for the present, wid an intention of comin' the next mornin', wid the priest and the magisthrate, and a strong force to seize upon her, and have her tried and convicted, in ordher that she might be burned."

"And did they come?"

"They did; but of all the storms that ever fell from the heavens, none o' them could aquil the one that come on that night. Thundher, and wind, and lightnin', and hail, and rain, were all at work together, and every one knew at wanst that the devil was *riz* for somethin'. Well, I'm near the end of it. The next mornin' the priest and the magisthrate, and a large body of people from all quarthers, came to make a prisoner of her; but, indeed, wherever she might be herself, they didn't expect to find this light, flimsy hut standin', nor stick nor stone of it together afther such a storm. What was their surprise, then, to see wid their own eyes that not a straw on the roof of it was disturbed any more than if it had been the calmest night that ever came on the earth!"

"But about the witch herself?"

"She was gone; neither hilt nor hair of her was there; nor from that day to this was she ever seen by mortal. It's not hard to guess, however, what became of her. Every one knows that the devil carried her and her imp off in the tempest, either to

some safer place, or else to give her a warm corner below stairs."

"Why, Barney, it must be an awful little house, this."

"You may say that, sir; there's not a man, woman, or child in the barony would come into it by themselves. Every one keeps from it; the very rapparees, and robbers of every description, would take the shelter of a cleft or cave rather than come into it. Here it is, then, as you see, just as she and the devil and his imp left it; no one has laid a hand on it since, nor ever will."

"But why was it not pulled down and levelled at the time?"

"Why, Masther Harry? Dear me, I wondher you ask that. Do you think the people would be mad enough to bring down her vengeance upon themselves or their property, or maybe upon both? and for that matther she may be alive yet."

"Well, then, if she is," replied Woodward, "here goes to set her at defiance;" and as he spoke he tossed bed, straw, rug, blanket, and every miserable article of furniture that the house contained, out at the door.

Barney's hair stood erect upon his head, and he looked aghast.

"Well, Masther Harry," said he, "I'm but a poor man, and I wouldn't take the wealth of the parish and do that. Come away, sir; let us lave it; as I tould you, they say there's a curse upon it, and upon every one that makes or meddles wid it. Some people say it's to stand there till the day of judgment."

Having now refreshed themselves, they left Bet Harramount's cabin, with all its awful associations, behind them, and resumed their sport, which they continued until evening, when, having killed as many hares as they could readily carry, they took a short cut home through the lower fields. By this way they came upon a long, green hill, covered in some places with short furze, and commanding a full view of the haunted house, which lay some four or five hundred yards below them, with its back door lying, as usual, open.

"Let us beat these furze," said Woodward, "and have one run more, if we can, before getting home; it is just the place for a hare."

"With all my heart," replied Barney; "another will complete the half dozen."

They accordingly commenced searching the cover, which they did to no purpose, and were upon the point of giving up all hope of success, when, from the centre of a low, broad clump of furze, out starts a hare, as white almost as snow. Barney for a moment was struck dumb; but at length exerting his voice, for he was some distance from Woodward, he shouted out—

"O, for goodness' sake, hould in the dogs, Masther Harry!"

It was too late, however; the gallant animals, though fatigued by their previous exertions, immediately gave noble chase, and by far the most beautiful and interesting course they had had that day took place upon the broad, clear plain that stretched before them. It was, indeed, to the eye of a sportsman, one of intense and surpassing interest—an interest which, even to Woodward, who only laughed at Barney's story of the witch, was, nevertheless, deepened tenfold by the coincidence between the two circumstances. The swift and mettlesome dogs pushed her hard, and succeeded in turning her several times, when it was observed that she made a point to manage her running so as to approximate to the haunted house—a fact which was not unobserved by Barney, who now, having joined Woodward, exclaimed—

"Mark it, Masther Harry, mark my words, she's alive still, and will be wid the *Shandhinne-dhuv* in spite o' them! Bravo, Sambo! Well done, Snail; ay, Snail, indeed—hillo! by the sweets o' rosin they have her—no, no—but it was a beautiful turn, though; and poor Snail, so tired afther his day's work. Now, Masther Harry, thunder and turf! how beautiful Sambo takes her up. Bravo, Sambo! stretch out, my darlin' that you are! —O, blood, Masther Harry, isn't that beautiful? See how they go neck and neck wid their two noses not six inches from her scut; and dang my buttons but, witch or no witch, she's a thorough bit o' game, too. Come, Bet, don't be asleep, my ould lady; move along, my darlin'—do you feel the breath of your sweetheart at your bottom? Take to your broomstick; you want it."

As he uttered these words the hare turned, —indeed it was time for her—and both dogs shot forward, by the impetus of their flight, so far beyond the point of her turn, that she started off towards the haunted house. She had little time to spare, however, for they were once more gaining on her; but still she approached the house, the dogs nearing her fast. She approached the house, we say; she entered the open door, the dogs within a few yards of her, when, almost in an instant, they came to a standstill, looked into it, but did not enter; and when whistled back to where Woodward and Barney stood, they looked in Barney's eye, not only panting and exhausted, as indeed they were, but terrified also.

"Well, Masther Harry," said he, assuming the air of a man who spoke with authority, "what do you think of *that?*"

"I think you are right," replied Wood-

ward; assuming on his part, for reasons which will be subsequently understood, an impression of sudden conviction. "I think you are right, Barney, and that the Black Spectre and the witch are acquaintances."

"Try her wid a silver bullet," said Barney; "there is nothing else for it. No *dog* can kill her—that's a clear case; but souple as she is, a silver bullet is the only messenger that can overtake her. Bad luck to her, the thief! sure, if she'd turn to God and repint, it isn't codgerin' wid sich company she'd be, and often in danger, besides, of havin' a greyhound's nose at her flank. I hope you're satisfied, Masther Harry?"

"Perfectly, Barney; there can be no doubt about it now. As for my part, I know not what temptation could induce me to enter that haunted house. I see that I was on dangerous ground when I defied the witch in the hut; but I shall take care to be more cautious in future."

They then bent their steps homewards, each sufficiently fatigued and exhausted after the sports of the day to require both food and rest. Woodward went early to bed, but Barney, who was better accustomed to exercise, having dined heartily in the kitchen, could not, for the soul of him, contain within his own bosom the awful and supernatural adventure which had just occurred. He assumed, as before, a very solemn and oracular air; spoke little, however, but that little was deeply abstracted and mysterious. It was evident to the whole kitchen that he was brimful of something, and that that something was of more than ordinary importance.

"Well, Barney, had you and Masther Harry a pleasant day's sport? I see you have brought home five hares," said the cook.

"Hum!" groaned Barney; "but no matther; it's a quare world, Mrs. Malony, and there's strange things in it. Heaven bless me! Heaven bless me, and Heaven bless us all, if it comes to that! Masther Harry said he'd send me down a couple o' glasses of —— O, here comes Biddy wid them; that's a girl, Bid—divil sich a kitchen-maid in Europe!"

Biddy handed him a decanter with about half a pint of stout whiskey in it, a portion of which passed into a goblet, was diluted with water, and drunk off, after which he smacked his lips, but with a melancholy air, and then, looking solemnly and meditatively into the fire, relapsed into silence.

"Did you meet any fairies on your way?" asked Nanse, the housemaid. For about half a minute Barney did not reply; but at length, looking about him, he started—

"Eh? What's that? Who spoke to me?"

"Who spoke to you?" replied Nanse. "Why, I think you're beside yourself—I did."

"What did you say, Nanse? *I am* beside myself."

There was now a sudden cessation in all the culinary operations, a general pause, and a rapid congregating around Barney, who still sat looking solemnly into the fire.

"Why, Barney, there's something strange over you," said the cook. "Heaven help the poor boy; sure, it's a shame to be tormentin' him this way; but in the name of goodness, Barney, and as you have a sowl to be saved, will you tell us all? Stand back, Nanse, and don't be torturin' the poor lad this way, as I said."

"Biddy," said Barney, his mind still wandering, and his eyes still fixed on the fire—"Biddy, darlin', will you hand me that decanther agin; I find I'm not aquil to it. Heaven presarve us! Heaven presarve us! that's it; now hand me the wather, like an angel *out of* heaven, as you are, Bid. Ah, glory be to goodness, but that's refreshin', especially afther sich a day—*sich* a day! O saints above, look down upon us poor sinners, one and all, men and women, wid pity and compassion this night! Here; I'm very wake; let me get to bed; is there any pump wather in the kitchen?"

To describe the pitch to which he had them wound up would be utterly impossible. He sat in the cook's arm-chair, leaning a little back, his feet placed upon the fender, and his eyes, as before, immovably, painfully, and abstractedly fixed upon the embers. He was now the centre of a circle, for they were all crowded about him, wrapped up to the highest possible pitch of curiosity.

"We were talkin' about Masther Harry," said he, "the other night, and I think I tould you something about him; it's like a dhrame to me that I did."

"You did, indeed, Barney," said the cook, coaxingly, "and I hope that what you tould us wasn't true."

"Aye, but about to-day, Barney; somethin' has happened to-day that's troublin' you."

"Who is it said that?" said he, his eyes now closed, as if he were wrapped up in some distressing mystery. "Was it you, Nanse? It's like your voice, achora."

Now, the reader must know that a deadly jealousy lay between Nanse and the cook, *quoad* honest Barney, who, being aware of the fact, kept the hopes and fears of each in such an exact state of equilibrium, that neither of them could, for the life of her, claim

the slightest advantage over the other. The droll varlet had an appetite like a shark, and a strong relish for drink besides, and what between precious tidbits from the cook and borrowing small sums for liquor from Nanse, he contrived to play them off one against the other with great tact.

"I think," said he, his eyes still closed, "that that is Nanse's voice; is it, acushla?"

"It is, Barney, achora," replied Nanse; "but there's something wrong wid you."

"I wish to goodness, Nanse, you'd let the boy alone," said the cook; "when he chooses to spake, he'll spake to them that can undherstand him."

"O, jaminy stars! that's you, I suppose; ha, ha, ha."

"Keep silence," said Barney, "and listen. Nanse, you are right in one sinse, and the cook's right in another; you're both right, but at the present spakin' you're both wrohg. Listen—you all know the *Shan-dinne-dhuv?*"

"Know him! The Lord stand between us and him," replied Nanse; "I hope in God we'll never either know or see him."

"You know," proceeded Barney, "that he keeps the haunted house, and appears in the neighborhood of it?"

"Yes, we know that, achora," replied the cook, sweetly.

"Well, you can't forget Bet Harramount, the witch, that lived for some time in Rathfillan? She that was hunted in the shape of a white hare by pious Father McFeen's famous greyhound, *Koolawn.*"

"Doesn't all the world know it, Barney, avillish?" said Nanse.

"Divil the word she'll let out o' the poor boy's lips," said the cook, with a fair portion of venom. Nanse made no reply, but laughed with a certain description of confidence, as she glanced sneeringly at the cook, who, to say the truth, turned her eyes with a fiery and impulsive look towards the ladle.

"Well," proceeded Barney, "you all know that the divil took her and her imp, the white cat, away on the night of the great storm that took place then?"

"We do! Sure we have heard it a thousand times."

"Very well—I want to show you that Bet Harramount, the white witch, and the *Black Spethre* are sweethearts, and are leadin' a bad life together."

"Heavenly father! Saints above! Blessed Mother!" were ejaculated by the whole kitchen. Barney, in fact, was progressing with great effect.

"O, yez needn't be surprised," he continued, "for it was well known that they had many private meetin's while Bet was livin' in Rathfillan. But it was thought the divil had taken her away from the priest and magisthrate on the night o' the storm, and so he did; and he best knew why. Listen, I say—Masther Harry and I went out this day to coorse hares; we went far up into the mountains, and never pulled bridle till we came to the cabin where the witch lived, the same that *Koolawn* chased her into in the shape of a white hare, after taking a bite out of her—out of the part next her scut. Well, we sat down in the cursed cabin, much against *my* wishes, but *he* would rest nowhere else—*mark* that—so while we were helpin' ourselves to the ham and brandy, I up and tould him the history of Bet Harramount from *a* to *izzard*. 'Well,' said he, 'to show you how little *I* care about her, and that *I* set her at defiance, I'll toss every atom of her beggarly furniture out of the door;' and so he did—but by dad I thought he done it in a jokin' way, as much as to say, *I* can take the liberty where another can't. I knew, becoorse, he was wrong; but that makes no maxim—I'll go on wid my story. On our way home we came to the green fields that lie on this side of the haunted house; a portion of it, on a risin' ground, is covered with furz. Now listen—when we came to it he stood; 'Barney,' says he, 'there's a hare here; give me the dogs, Sambo and Snail; they'll have sich a hunt as they never had yet, and never will have agin.'

"He then closed his eyes, raised his left foot, and dhrew it back three times in the divil's name, pronounced some words that I couldn't understand, and then said to me, 'Now, Barney, go down to that withered furze, and as you go, always keep your left foot foremost; cough three times, then kick the furze with your left foot, and maybe you'll see an old friend o' yours.'

"Well, I did so, and troth I thought there was somethin' over me when I did it; but—what 'ud you think?—out starts *a white hare*, and off went Sambo and Snail after her, full butt. I have seen many a hard run, but the likes o' that I never seen. If they turned her wanst they turned her more than a dozen times; but where do you think she escaped to at last?"

"The Lord knows, Barney; where?"

"As heaven's above us, into the haunted house; and if the dogs were to get a thousand guineas apiece, one of them couldn't be forced into it afther her. They ran with their noses on her very scut, widin five or six yards of it, and when she went into it they stood stock still, and neither man nor sword could get them to go farther. But what do you think Masther Harry said afther he had seen all this? 'Barney,' said he,

'I'm detarmined to spend a night in the haunted house before I'm much ouldher; only keep that to yourself, and don't make a blowing horn of it through the parish.' And what he said to me, I say to you—never breathe a syllable of it to man or mortal. It'll be worse for you if you do. And now, do you remember what Lanty Malony saw the other night? The black man kissin' the white woman. Is it clear to yez now? The *Shan-dhunne-dhuv*—the *Black Specthre*—kissin' Bet Harramount, the white woman. There it is; and now you have it as clear as a, b, c."

Barney then retired to his bed, leaving the denizens of the kitchen in a state which the reader may very well understand.

CHAPTER X.

True Love Defeated.

Mr. and Mrs. Goodwin, in the absence of their daughter, held a very agreeable conversation on the subject of Mrs. Lindsay's visit. Neither Goodwin nor his wife was in the slightest degree selfish, yet, somehow, there crept into their hearts a certain portion of selfishness, which could be traced only to the affection which they felt for Alice. They calculated that Henry Woodward, having been reared and educated by his uncle, would be amply provided for by that wealthy gentleman — who, besides, was childless. This consideration became a strong element in their deliberations and discussions upon the projected match, and they accordingly resolved to win over Alice's consent to it as soon as possible. From the obedience of her disposition, and the natural pliancy of her character with the opinions of others, they concluded the matter as arranged and certain. They forgot, however, that Alice, though a feeble thinker on matters of superstition and others of a minor importance, could sometimes exercise a will of her own, but very seldom, if ever, when opposed to theirs. They knew her love and affection for them, and that she was capable of making any sacrifice that might contribute to their happiness. They had, however, observed of late—indeed for a considerable time past—that she appeared to be in low spirits, and moved about as if there was a pressure of some description in her mind; and when they asked her if she were at ease—which they often did—she only replied by a smile, and asked them in return why she should be otherwise. With this reply they were satisfied, for they knew that upon the general occurrences of life she was almost a mere child, and that, although her health was good, her constitution was naturally delicate, and liable to be affected by many things indifferent in themselves, which girls of a stronger mind and constitution would neither perceive nor feel. The summing up of all was that they apprehended no obstruction to the proposed union from any objection on her part, as soon as she should be made acquainted with their wishes.

In the course of that very evening they introduced the subject to her, with that natural confidence which resulted from their foregone conclusions upon it.

"Alley," said her mother, "I hope you're in good spirits this evening."

"Indifferent enough, mamma; my spirits, you know, are not naturally good."

"And why should they not?" said her mother; "what on earth have you to trouble you?"

"O, mamma," she exclaimed, "you don't know how often I miss my sister;—at night I think I see her, and she looks pale and melancholy, and full of sorrow—just as she did when she felt that her hope of life was gone forever. O, how willingly—how joyfully—would I return her fortune, and if I had ten times as much of my own, along with it, if it could only bring her back to me again!"

"Well, you know, my darling, that can't be done; but cheer up; I have good news for you—news that I am sure will delight you."

"But I don't stand in need of any good news, mamma."

This simple reply proved an unexpected capsize to her mother, who knew not how to proceed; but, in the moment of her embarrassment, looked to her husband for assistance.

"My dear Alice," said her father, "the fact is this—you have achieved a conquest, and there has been a proposal of marriage made for you."

Alice instantly suspected the individual from whom the proposal came, and turned pale as death.

"That does not cheer my spirits, then, papa."

"That may be, my dear Alice," replied her father; "but, in the opinion of your mother and me, it ought."

"From what quarter has it come, papa, may I ask? I am living very lonely and retired here, you know."

"The proposal, then, my dear child, has come from Henry Woodward, this day; and what will surprise you more, through his

mother, too—who has been of late such an inveterate enemy to our family. So far as I have seen of Henry himself, he is everything I could wish for a son-in-law."

"But you have seen very little of him, papa."

"What I *have* seen of him has pleased me very much, Alice."

"How strange," said she musingly, "that father and daughter should draw such different conclusions from the same premises. The very thought of that young man sinks the heart within me. I beg, once for all, that you will never mention his name to me on this subject, and in this light, again. It is not that I hate him—I trust I hate nobody—but I feel an antipathy against him; and what is more, I feel a kind of terror when I even think of him; and an oppression, for which I cannot account, whilst I am in his society."

"This is very strange, Alice," replied her father; "and, I am afraid, rather foolish, too. There is nothing in his face, person, manner, or conversation that, in my opinion, is not calculated to attract any young woman in his own rank of life—at least, I think so."

"Well, but the poor child," said her mother, "knows nothing about love—how could she? Sure, my dear Alley, true love never begins until after marriage. You don't know what a dislike I had to your father, there, whilst our friends on both sides were making up the courtship. They literally dragged me into it."

"Yes, Alley," added her father, smiling, "and they literally dragged *me* into it; and yet, when we came together, Alice, there never was a happier couple in existence."

Alice could not help smiling, but the smile soon passed away. "That may be all very true," she replied, "but in the meantime, you must not press me on this subject. Don't entertain it for a moment. I shall never marry this man. Put an end to it—see his mother, and inform her, without loss of time, of the unalterable determination I have made. Do not palter with them, father—do not, mother; and above all things, don't attempt to sacrifice the happiness of your only daughter. *I* could make any sacrifice for your happiness but this; and if, in obedience to your wishes, I made it, I can tell you that I would soon be *with my sister*. You both know that I am not strong, and that I am incapable of severe struggles. Don't, then, harass me upon this matter."

She here burst into tears, and for a few minutes wept bitterly.

"We must give it up," said her father, looking at Mrs. Goodwin.

"No such thing," replied his wife; "think of our own case, and how happy we have been in spite of ourselves."

"Ay, but we were neither of us fools, Martha; at least you were not, or you would never have suffered yourself to be persuaded into matrimony, as you did at last. There was, it is true, an affected frown upon your brow; but then, again, there was a very sly smile under it. As for me, I would have escaped the match if I could; but no matter, it was all for the best, although neither of us anticipated as much. Alice, my child, think of what we have said to you; reflect upon it. Our object is to make you happy; our experience of life is much greater than yours. Don't reply to us now; we will give you a reasonable time to think of it. Consider that you will add to your mother's happiness and mine by consenting to such an unobjectionable match. This young man will, of course, inherit his uncle's property; he will elevate you in life; he is handsome, accomplished, and evidently knows the world, and you can look up to him as a husband of whom you will have a just right to feel proud. Allow the young man to visit you; study him as closely as you may; but above all things do not cherish an unfounded antipathy against him or any one."

Several interviews took place afterwards between Alice and Henry Woodward; and after each interview her parents sought her opinion of him, and desired to know whether she was beginning to think more favorably of him than she had hitherto done. Still, however, came the same reply. Every interview only increased her repugnance to the match, and her antipathy to the man. At length she consented to allow him one last interview—the last, she asserted, which she would ever afford him on the subject, and he accordingly presented himself to know her final determination. Not that from what came out from their former conversations he had any grounds, as a reasonable man, to expect a change of opinion on her part; but as the property was his object, he resolved to leave nothing undone to overcome her prejudice against him if he could. They were, accordingly, left in the drawing-room to discuss the matter as best they might, but with a hope on the part of her parents that, knowing, as she did, how earnestly their hearts were fixed upon her marriage with him, she might, if only for their sakes, renounce her foolish antipathy, and be prevailed upon, by his ardor and his eloquence, to consent at last.

"Well, Miss Goodwin," said he, when they were left together, "this I understand and what is more, I fear, is to be my day of doom. Heaven grant that it may be a favor

able one, for I am badly prepared to see my hopes blasted, and my affection for you spurned! My happiness, my dear Miss Goodwin—my happiness for life depends upon the result of this interview. I know—but I should not say so—for in this instance I must be guided by hearsay—well, I know from hearsay that your heart is kind and affectionate. Now I believe this; for who can look upon your face and doubt it? Believing this, then, how can you, when you know that the happiness of a man who loves you beyond the power of language to express, is at stake, depends upon your will—how can you, I say, refuse to make that individual—who appreciates all your virtues, as I do—who feels the influence of your extraordinary beauty, as I do—who contemplates *your* future happiness as the great object of his life, as I do—how can you, I say, refuse to make that man happy?"

"Mr. Woodward," she said, "I will not reply to your arguments; I simply wish to ask you, Are you a gentleman?—in other words, a man of integrity and principle?"

"Do you doubt me, Miss Goodwin?" he inquired, as if he felt somewhat hurt.

"It is very difficult, Mr. Woodward," she replied, "to know the heart; I request, however, a direct and a serious answer, for I can assure you that I am about to place the deepest possible confidence in your faith and honor."

"O," he exclaimed, "that is sufficient; in such a case I feel bound to respect your confidence as sacred; do not hesitate to confide in me. Let me perish a thousand times sooner than abuse such a trust. Speak out, Miss Goodwin."

"It is necessary that I should," she replied, "both for your sake and my own. Know, then, that my heart is not at my own disposal; it is engaged to another."

"I can only listen, Miss Goodwin—I can only listen—but—but—excuse me—proceed."

"My heart, as I said, is engaged to another—and that other is your brother Charles."

Woodward fixed his eyes upon her face—already scarlet with blushes, and when she ventured to raise hers upon him, she beheld a countenance sunk apparently in the deepest sorrow.

"Alas! Miss Goodwin," he replied, "you have filled my heart with a double grief. I could resign you—of course it would and must be with the most inexpressible anguish—but to resign you to such a——. O!" he proceeded, shaking his head sorrowfully, "you know not in what a position of torture you place me. You said you believed me to be a gentleman; so I trust—I feel—I am, and what is more, a brother, and an affectionate brother, if I—O, my God, what am I to do? How, knowing what I know of that unfortunate young man, could I ever have expected *this?* In the meantime I thank you for your confidence, Miss Goodwin; I hope it was God himself who inspired you to place it in me, and that it may be the means of your salvation from—but perhaps I am saying too much; he is my brother; excuse me, I am not just now cool and calm enough to say what I would wish, and what you, poor child, neither know nor suspect, and perhaps I shall never mention it; but you must give me time. Of course, under the circumstances you have mentioned, I resign all hopes of *my own* happiness with you; but, so help me Heaven, if I shall resign all hopes of *yours*. I cannot now speak at further length; I am too much surprised, too much agitated, too much shocked at what I have heard; but I shall see you, if you will allow me, to-morrow; and as I cannot become your husband, perhaps I may become your guardian angel. Allow me to see you to-morrow. You have taken me so completely by surprise that I am quite incapable of speaking on this subject, as perhaps—but I know not yet—I must become more cool, and reflect deeply upon what my conduct ought to be. Alas! my dear Miss Goodwin, little you suspect how completely your happiness and misery are in my power. Will you permit me to see you to-morrow?"

"Certainly, sir," replied Alice, "since it seems that you have something of more than ordinary importance to communicate to me—something, which, I suppose, I ought to know. I shall see you."

He then took his leave with an air of deep melancholy and sorrow, and left poor Alice in a state of anxiety very difficult to be described. Her mind became filled with a sudden and unusual alarm; she trembled like an aspen leaf; and when her mother came to ask her the result of the interview, she found her pale as death and in tears.

"Why, Alley, my child," said she, "what is the matter? Why do you look so much alarmed, and why are you in tears? Has the man been rude or offensive to you?"

"No, mamma, he has not; but—but—I am to see him again to morrow, and until then, mamma, do not ask me anything upon the subject of our interview to-day."

Her mother felt rather gratified at this. There was, then, to be *another* interview, and that was a proof that Woodward had not been finally discarded. So far, matters did not seem so disheartening as she had anticipated. She looked upon Alice's agitation,

and the tears she had been shedding, as the result of the constraint which she had put upon her inclination in giving him, she hoped, a favorable reception; and with this impression she went to communicate what she conceived to be the good intelligence to her husband.

Alice, until the next interview took place, passed a wretched time of it. As the reader knows, she was constitutionally timid and easily alarmed, and she consequently anticipated something very distressing in the disclosures which Woodward was about to make. That there was something uncommon and painful in connection with Charles Lindsay to be mentioned, was quite evident from Woodward's language and his unaccountable agitation. He was evidently in earnest; and, from the suddenness with which the confession of her attachment to his brother came upon him, it was impossible, she concluded, that he could have had time to concoct the hints which he threw out. Could she have been mistaken in Charles? And yet, why not? Had he not, as it were, abandoned her ever since the occurrence of the family feud? and why should he have done so unless there had been some reason for it? It was quite clear, she thought, that, whatever revelation Woodward was about to make concerning him, it was one which would occasion himself great pain as his brother, and that nothing but the necessity of saving her from unhappiness could force him to speak out. In fact, her mind was in a tumult; she felt quite nervous—tremulous—afraid of some disclosure that might destroy her hopes and her happiness, and make her wretched for life.

On the next day Woodward made his appearance and found Alice by herself in the drawing-room, as when he left her the day before. His countenance seemed the very exponent of suffering and misery.

"Miss Goodwin," said he, "I have passed a period of the deepest anxiety since I saw you last. You may, indeed, read what I have suffered, and am suffering, in my face, for unfortunately it is a tell-tale upon my heart; but I cannot help that, nor should I wish it to be otherwise. Believe me, however, that it is not for myself that I suffer, but for you, and the prospects of your future happiness. You must look upon my conduct now as perfectly disinterested, for I have no hope. What, then, should that conduct be in me as a generous man, which I trust I am, but to promote *your* happiness as far as I can? and on that I am determined. You say you love my brother; are you certain that your affection is reciprocated?"

"I believe your brother certainly did love me," she replied, with a tremor in her voice, which she could not prevent.

"Just so, my dear Miss Goodwin; that is well expressed—*did* love you; perhaps it may have been so; possessing anything like a heart, I don't see how it could have been otherwise."

"I will thank you, Mr. Woodward, to state what you have to say with as little circumlocution and ambiguity as possible. Take me out of suspense, and let me know the worst. Do not, I entreat you, keep me in a state of uncertainty. Although I have acknowledged my love for your brother, in order to relieve myself from your addresses, which I could not encourage, still I am not without the pride of a woman who respects herself."

"I am aware of that; but before I proceed, allow me to ask, in order that I may see my way the clearer, to what length did the expression of my brother's affection go?"

"It went so far," she replied, blushing, "as an avowal of mutual attachment; indeed, it might be called an engagement; but ever since the death of his cousin, and the estrangement of our families, he seems to have forgotten me. It is very strange; when I was a portionless girl he was ardent and tender, but, ever since this unfortunate property came into my hands, he seems to have joined in the hard and unjust feeling of his family against me. I have certainly met him since at parties, and on other occasions, but we met almost as strangers; he was not the Charles Lindsay whom I had known when I was comparatively a poor girl; he appeared to shrink from me. In the meantime, as I have already confessed to you, he has my heart; and, so long as he has, I cannot encourage the addresses of any other man."

Woodward paused, and looked upon her with well-feigned admiration and sorrow.

"The man is blind," he at length said, "not only to the fascinations of your person and character, but to his own interests. What is he in point of property? Nothing. He has no rich uncle at his back to establish him in life upon a scale, almost, of magnificence. Why, it is since you came into this property that he ought to have urged his suit with greater earnestness. I am speaking now like a man of the world, Miss Goodwin; and I am certain that he would have done so but for one fact, of which I am aware: he has got into a low intrigue with a peasant's daughter, who possesses an influence over him such as I have never witnessed. She certainly is very beautiful, it is said, but of that I cannot speak, as I have not yet

seen her; but I am afraid, Miss Goodwin, from all I hear, that a very little time will disclose her calamity and his guilt. You will now understand what I felt yesterday when you made me acquainted with your pure and virtuous attachment to such a man; what shall I say," he added, rising, and walking indignantly through the room, "to such a profligate?"

"Mr. Woodward," replied Alice, "I can scarcely believe that; you must have been imposed on by some enemy of his. Depend upon it you are. I think I know Charles well—too well to deem him capable of such profligacy; I will not believe it."

"I don't wish you, my dear Miss Goodwin, to believe it; I only wish you to suspend your opinion until time shall convince you. I considered it my duty to mention the fact, and after that to leave you to the exercise of your own judgment."

"I will *not* believe it," replied Alice, "because I place his estrangement to a higher and nobler motive, and one more in accordance with his honorable and generous character. I do believe, Mr. Woodward, that his apparent coldness to me, of late, proceeds from delicacy, and a disinterestedness that is honorable to him; at least I will interpret his conduct in this light until I am perfectly convinced that he is the profligate you describe him. I do not impute, in the disclosure you have made, ungenerous motives to you; because, if you attempted to displace my affections from your brother by groundless slander or deliberate falsehood, you would be a monster, and as such I would look upon you, and will, if it appears that you are maligning him for selfish purposes of your own. I will now tell you to what I impute his apparent estrangement; I impute it to honor, sir—to an honorable pride. He knows now that I am rich; at least comparatively so, and that he is comparatively poor; he hesitates to renew our relations with each other lest I might suspect him of mingling a selfish principle with his affection. That is the conduct of a man of honor; and until the facts you hint at come out broadly, and to public proof, as such I shall continue to consider him. But, Mr. Woodward, I shall not rest here; I shall see him, and give him that to which his previous affection and honorable conduct have entitled him at my hands—that is, an opportunity of making an explanation to myself. But, at all events, I assure you of this fact, that, if I do not marry him, I shall never marry another."

"Great God!" exclaimed Woodward, "what a jewel he has lost. Well, Miss Goodwin, I have nothing further to say; if I am wrong, time will convict me. I have mentioned these matters to you, not on my own account but yours. I have no hope of your affection; and if there were any living man, except myself, to whom I should wish to see you united, it would be my brother Charles—that is, if I thought he was worthy of you. All I ask of you, however, is to wait a little; remain calm and quiet, and time will tell you which of us feels the deepest interest in your happiness. In the meantime, aware of your attachment to him, as I am, I beg you will no longer consider me in any other light than that of a sincere friend. To seduce innocence, indeed—but I will not dwell upon it; the love of woman, they say, is generous and forgiving; I hope yours will be so. But, Miss Goodwin, as I can approach you no longer in the character of a lover, I trust I may be permitted the privilege of visiting the family as a friend and acquaintance. Now that your decision against me is known, it will be contrary to the wishes of our folks at home; especially of my mother, whose temper, as I suppose you are aware, is none of the coolest; you will allow me, then, to visit you, but no longer as claimant for your hand."

"I shall always be happy to see you, Mr. Woodward, but upon that condition."

After he had taken his leave, her parents, anxious to hear the result, came up to the drawing-room, where they found her in a kind of a reverie, from which their appearance startled her.

"Well, Alley," said her mother, smiling, "is everything concluded between you?"

"Yes, mamma," replied Alice, "everything is concluded, and finally, too."

"Did he name the day?" said her father, smiling gravely.

Alice stared at him; then recollecting herself, she replied—

"I thought I told you both that this was a man I could never think of marrying. I don't understand him; he is either very candid or very hypocritical; and I feel it painful, and, besides, unnecessary in me to take the trouble of balancing the character of a person who loses ground in my opinion on every occasion I see him. Of course, I have discarded him, and I know very well that his mother will cast fire and sword between us as she did before; but to do Mr. Woodward justice, he proposes to stand aloof from her resentments, and wishes to visit us as usual."

"Then it's all over between you and him?" said her mother.

"It is; and I never gave you reason to anticipate any other result, mamma."

"No, indeed," said her father, "you never

did, Alice ; but still I think it is generous in him to separate himself from the resentments of that woman, and as a friend we will be always glad to see him."

"I know not how it is," replied Alice ; "but I felt that the expression of his eye, during our last interview, oppressed me excessively ; it was never off me. There was a killing—a malignant influence in it, that thrilled through me with pain ; but, perhaps, I can account for that. As it is, he has asked leave to visit us as usual, and to stand, with respect to me, in the light of a friend only. So far as I am concerned, papa, I could not refuse him a common privilege of civility ; but, to tell you both the truth, I shall always meet him not only with reluctance, but with something almost amounting to fear."

Woodward, now that he had learned his fate, and was aware that his brother stood between him and his expectations, experienced a feeling of vengeance against him and Alice, which he neither could, nor attempted to, restrain. The rage of his mother, too, when she heard that the latter had rejected him, and avowed her attachment to Charles, went beyond all bounds. Her son, however, who possessed a greater restraint upon his feelings, and was master of more profound hypocrisy and cunning, requested her to conceal the attachment of Alice to his brother, as a matter not to be disclosed on any account.

"Leave me to my resources," said he, "and it will go hard or I will so manage Charles as to disentangle him from the consequences of her influence over him. But the families, mother, must not be for the present permitted to visit again. On the contrary, it is better for our purposes that they should not see each other as formerly, nor resume their intimacy. If you suffer your passions to overcome you, even in our own family, the consequence is that you prevent us both from playing our game as we ought, and as we shall do. Leave Charles to me ; I shall make O'Connor of use, too ; but above all things do not breathe a syllable to any one of them of my having been thrown off. I think, as it is, I have damped her ardor for him a little, and if she had not been obstinate and foolishly romantic, I would have extinguished it completely. As it is, I told her to leave the truth of what I mentioned to her respecting him, to time, and if she does I shall rest satisfied. Will you now be guided by me, my dear mother?"

"I will endeavor to do so," she replied ; "but it will be a terrible restraint upon me, and I scarcely know how I shall be able to keep myself calm. I will try, however ; the object is worth it. You know if she dies without issue the property reverts to you."

"Yes, mother, the object *is* worth much more than the paltry sacrifice I ask of you. Keep yourself quiet, then, and we will accomplish our purposes yet. I shall set instruments to work who will ripen our projects, and, I trust, ultimately accomplish them."

"Why, what instruments do you intend to use?"

"I know the girl's disposition and character well. I have learned much concerning her from Casey, who is often there as a suitor for the fair hand of her favorite maid. Casey, however, is a man in whom I can place no confidence ; he is too much attached to the rest of the family, and does not at all relish me. I will make him an unconscious agent of mine, notwithstanding. In the meantime, let nothing appear in your manner that might induce them to suspect the present position of affairs between us. They may come to know it soon enough, and then it will be our business to act with greater energy and decision."

And so it was arranged between this precious mother and son.

Woodward who was quick in the conception of his projects, had them all laid even then ; and in order to work them out with due effect, he resolved to pay a visit to our friend, Sol Donnel, the herb doctor. This hypocritical old villain was uncle to Caterine Collins, the fortune-teller, who had prognosticated to him such agreeable tidings on the night of the bonfire. She, too, was to be made useful, and, so far as money could do it, faithful to his designs—diabolical as they were. He accordingly went one night, about the hour mentioned by Donnel, to the cabin of that worthy man ; and knocking gently at the door, was replied to in a peevish voice, like that of an individual who had been interrupted in the performance of some act of piety and devotion.

"Who is there?" said the voice inside.

"A friend," replied Woodward, in a low, cautious tone ; "a friend, who wishes to speak to you."

"I can't spake to you to-night," replied Sol ; "you're disturbin' me at my prayers."

"But I wish to speak to you on particular business."

"What business? Let me finish my padereens and go to bed like a vile sinner, as I am—God help me. Who are you?"

"I don't intend to tell you that just now, Solomon ; do you wish me to shout it out to you, in order that the whole neighborhood may hear it? I have *private* business with you."

"Well," replied the other, "I think, by your voice and language, you're not a common man, and, aldough it's against my rule to open at this time o' night to any one, still I'll let you in—and sure I must only say my prayers aftherwards. In the manetime it's a sin for you or any one to disturb me at them; if you knew what the value of one siuful sowl is in the sight of God, you wouldn't do it—no, indeed. Wait till I light a candle."

He accordingly lighted a candle, and in the course of a few minutes admitted Woodward to his herbarium. When the latter entered, he looked about him with a curiosity not unnatural under the circumstances. His first sensation, however, was one that affected his oltactory nerves very strongly. A combination of smells, struggling with each other, as it were, for predominance, almost overpowered him. The good and the bad, the pleasant and the oppressive, were here mingled up in one sickening exhalation —for the disagreeable prevailed. The whole cabin was hung about with bunches of herbs, some dry and withered, others fresh and green, giving evidence that they had been only newly gathered. A number of bottles of all descriptions stood on wooden shelves, but without labels, for the old sinner's long practice and great practical memory enabled him to know the contents of every bottle with as much accuracy as if they had been labelled in capitals.

"How the devil can you live and sleep in such a suffocating compound of vile smells as this?" asked Woodward.

The old man glanced at him keenly, and replied,—

"Practice makes masther, sir—I'm used to them; I feel no smell but a good smell; and I sleep sound enough, barrin' when I wake o' one purpose, to think of and repent o' my sins, and of the ungrateful world that is about me; people that don't thank me for doin' them good—God forgive them! *amin acheernah!*"

"Why, now," replied Woodward, "if I had a friend of mine that was unwell—observe me, a *friend* of mine—that stood between me and my own interests, and that I was kind and charitable enough to forget any ill-will against him, and wished to recover him from his illness through the means of your skill and herbs, could you not assist me in such a good and Christian work?"

The old fellow gave him a shrewd look and piercing glance, but immediately replied—

"Why, to be sure, I could; what else is the business of my whole life but to cure my fellow-cratures of their complaints?"

"Yes; I believe you are very fortunate in that way; however, for the present, I don't require your aid, but it is very likely I shall soon. There *is* a friend of mine in poor health, and if he doesn't otherwise recover, I shall probably apply to you; but, then, the party I speak of has such a prejudice against quacks of all sorts, that I fear we must substitute one of your draughts, in a *private way*, for that of the regular doctor. That, however, is not what I came to speak to you about. Is not Caterine Collins, the fortune-teller a niece of yours?"

"She is, sir."

"Where and when could I see her?—but mark me, I don't wish to be seen speaking to her in public."

"Why not?—what's to prevent you from chattin' wid her in an aisy pleasant way in the streets; nobody will obsarve any thing then, or think it strange that a gentleman should have a funny piece o' discoorse wid a fortune-teller."

"I don't know that; observations might be made afterwards."

"But what can she do for you that *I* can't? She's a bad graft to have anything to do wid, and I wouldn't recommend you to put much trust in her."

"Why so?"

"Why, she's nothin' else than a schemer."

Little did old Solomon suspect that he was raising her very highly in the estimation of his visitor by falling foul of her in this manner.

"At all events," said Woodward, "I wish to see her; and, as I said, I came for the express purpose of asking you where and when I could see her—privately, I mean."

"That's what I can't tell you at the present spakin'," replied Solomon. "She has no fixed place of livin', but is here to-day and away to-morrow. God help you, she has travelled over the whole kingdom tellin' fortunes. Sometimes she's a dummy, and spakes to them by signs—sometimes a gypsy —sometimes she's this and sometimes she's that, but not often the same thing long; she's of as many colors as the rainbow. But if you do wish to see her, there's a chance that you may to-morrow. A conjurer has come to town, and he's to open to-morrow, for both town and country, and she'll surely be here, for that's taking the bit out of her mouth."

"A conjurer!"

"Yes, he was here before some time ago, about the night of that bonfire that was put out by the shower o' blood, but somehow he disappeared from the place, and he's now come back."

"A conjurer—well, I shall see the con-

jurer myself to-morrow; but can you give me no more accurate information with respect to your niece?"

"Sarra syllable—as I tould you, she's never two nights in the same place; but, if I should see her, I'll let her know your wishes; and what might I say, sir, that you wanted her to do for you?"

"That's none of your affair, most sagacious Solomon—I wish to speak with her myself, and privately, too; and if you see her, tell her to meet me here to-morrow night about this hour."

"I'll do so; but God forgive you for disturbin' me in my devotions, as you did. It's not often I'd give them up for any one; but sure out of regard for the proprietor o' the town I'd do that, and more for you."

"Here," replied Woodward, putting some silver into his hand, "let that console you; and tell your niece when you see her that I am a good paymaster; and, if I should stand in need of *your* skill, you shall find me so, too. Good-night, and may your prayers be powerful, as I know they come from a Christian heart, honest Solomon."

CHAPTER XI.

A Conjurer's Levee.

We cannot form at this distance of time any adequate notion of the influence which a conjurer of those days exercised over the minds and feelings of the ignorant. It was necessary that he should be, or be supposed at least to be, well versed in judicial astrology, the use of medicine, and consequently able to cast a nativity, or cure any earthly complaint. There is scarcely any grade or species of superstition that is not associated with or founded upon fear. The conjurer, consequently, was both feared and respected; and his character appeared in different phases to the people—each phase adapted to the corresponding character of those with whom he had to deal. The educated of those days, with but few exceptions, believed in astrology, and the possibility of developing the future fate and fortunes of an individual, whenever the hour of his birth and the name of the star or planet under which he was born could be ascertained. The more ignorant class, however, generally associated the character of the conjurer with that of the necromancer or magician, and consequently attributed his predictions to demoniacal influence. Neither were they much mistaken, for they only judged of these impostors as they found them. In nineteen cases out of twenty, the character of the low astrologer, the necromancer, and the quack was associated, and the influence of the stars and the aid of the devil were both considered as giving assurance of supernatural knowledge to the same individual. This unaccountable anxiety to see, as it were, the volume of futurity unrolled, so far as it discloses individual fate, has characterized mankind ever since the world began; and hence, even in the present day, the same anxiety among the ignorant to run after spae-women, fortune-tellers, and gypsies, in order to have their fortunes told through the means of their adroit predictions.

On the following morning the whole town of Rathfillan was in a state of excitement by the rumor that a conjurer had arrived, for the purpose not only of telling all their future fates and fortunes, but of discovering all those who had been guilty of theft, and the places where the stolen property was to be found. This may seem a bold stroke; but when we consider the materials upon which the sagacious conjurer had to work, we need not feel surprised at his frequent success.

The conjurer in question had taken up his residence in the best inn which the little town of Rathfillan afforded. Immediately after his arrival he engaged the beadle, with bell in hand, to proclaim his presence in the town, and the purport of his visit to that part of the country. This was done through the medium of printed handbills, which that officer read and distributed through the crowds who attended him. The bill in question was as follows:

"To the inhabitants of Rathfillan and the adjacent neighborhood, the following important communications are made:—

"Her Zander Vanderpluckem, the celebrated German conjurer, astrologist, and doctor, who has had the honor of predicting the deaths of three kings, five queens, twenty-one princesses, and seven princes, all of royal blood, and in the best possible state of health at the time the predictions were made, and to all of whom he had himself the honor of being medical attendant and state physician, begs to announce his arrival in this town. He is the seventh son of the great and renowned conjurer, Her Zander Vanderhoaxem, who made the stars tremble, and the devil sweat himself to powder in a fit of repentance. His influence over the stars and heavenly bodies is tremendous, and it is a well-known fact throughout the universe that he has them in such a complete state of terror and subjection, that a single comet dare not wag his tail unless by his permission. He travels up and down the milky way one night in

every month, to see that the dairies of the sky are all right, and that that celebrated path be properly lighted; brings down a pail of the milk with him, which he churns into butyrus, an unguent so efficacious that it cures all maladies under the sun, and many that never existed. It can be had at five shillings a spoonful. He can make Ursa Major, or the Great Bear, dance without a leader, and has taught Pisces, or the Fishes, to live out of water—a prodigy never known or heard of before since the creation of terra firma. Such is the power of the great and celebrated Her Vanderpluckem over the stars and planets. But now to come nearer home: he cures all patients of all complaints. No person asking his assistance need ever be sick, unless when they happen to be unwell. His insight into futurity is such that, whenever he looks far into it, he is obliged to shut his eyes. He can tell fortunes, discover hidden wealth to any amount, and create such love between sweethearts as will be sure to end in matrimony. He is complete master of the fairies, and has the whole generation of them under his thumb; and he generally travels with the king of the fairies in his left pocket closed up in a snuffbox. He interprets dreams and visions, and is never mistaken; can foretell whether a child unborn will be a boy or a girl, and can also inform the parents whether it will be brought to the bench or the gallows. He can also foretell backwards, and disclose to the individual anything that shall happen to him or her for the last seven years. His philters, concocted upon the profound science of alchemistic philosophy, have been sought for by persons of the highest distinction, who have always found them to produce the very effects for which they were intended, to wit, mutual affection between the parties, uniformly ending in matrimony and happiness. Devils expelled, ghosts and spirits laid on the shortest notice, and at the most moderate terms. Also, recipes to farmers for good weather or rain, according as they may be wanted.

"(Signed,) Her Zander Vanderpluckem,"
"The Greatest Conjurer, Astrologer, and Doctor in the world."

To describe the effect that this bill, which, by the way, was posted against every dead wall in the town, had upon the people, would be impossible. The inn in which he stopped was, in a short time, crowded with applicants, either for relief or information, according as their ills or wishes came under the respective heads of his advertisement. The room he occupied was upstairs, and he had a door that led into a smaller one, or kind of closet, at the end of it; here sat an old-looking man, dressed in a black coat, black breeches, and black stockings; the very picture of the mysterious individual who had appeared and disappeared so suddenly at the bonfire. He had on a full-bottomed wig, and a long white beard, depending from the lower part of his face, swept his reverend breast. A large book lay open before him, on the pages of which were inscribed cabalistic characters and strange figures. He only admitted those who wished to consult him, singly; for on no occasion did he ever permit two persons at a time to approach him. All the paraphernalia of astrology were exposed upon the same table, at one end of which he sat in an arm-chair, awaiting the commencement of operations. At length a good-looking country-woman, of about forty-five years, made her appearance, and, after a low courtesy, was solemnly motioned to take a seat.

"Well, Mrs. Houlaghan," said he, "how do you do?"

The poor woman got as pale as death. "Heavenly Father," thought she, "how does it happen that he comes to know my name!"

"Mrs. Houlaghan, what can I do for you? not that I need ask, for I could give a very good guess at it;" and this he added with a very sage and solemn visage, precisely as if he knew the whole circumstances.

"Why, your honor," she replied—"but, blessed Father, how did you come to know my name?"

"That's a question," he replied, solemnly, "which you ought not to ask *me*. It is enough that you see I know it. How is your husband, Frank, and how is your daughter, Mary? She's complaining of late—is she not?"

This private knowledge of the family completely overwhelmed her, and she felt unable to speak for some time.

"Do not be in a hurry, Mrs. Houlaghan," said he, mildly; "reflect upon what you are about to say, and take your time."

"It's a ghost, your reverence," she replied—"a ghost that haunts the house."

"Very well, Mrs. Houlaghan; the fee for laying a ghost is five shillings; I will trouble you for that sum; we conjurers have no power until we get money from the party concerned, and then we can work with effect."

The simple woman, in the agitation of the moment, handed him the amount of his demand, and then collected herself to hear the response, and the means of laying the ghost.

"Well, now," said he, "tell me all about this ghost, Mrs. Houlaghan. How long has it been troubling the family?"

"Why, then, ever since Frank lost the use of his sight, now goin' upon five months."

"When does it appear?"

"Why, generally afther twelve at night; and what makes it more strange is, that poor Mary's more afeard o' me than she is of the ghost. She says it appears to her in her bedroom every night; but she knows I'm so timersome that she keeps her door always locked for fraid I'd see it, poor child."

"Does it terrify her?"

"Not a bit; she says it does her no harm on earth, and that it's great company for her when she can't sleep."

"Has Mary many sweethearts?"

"She has two: one o' them rather ould, but wealthy and well to do; her father and myself, wishin' to see her well settled, are doin' all we can to get her consent to marry him."

"Who's the other?"

"One Brine Oge M'Gaveran, a good-lookin' vagabone, no doubt, but not worth a copper."

"Is she fond of him?"

"Troth, to tell you the truth, I'm afeard she is; he has been often seen about the house in the evenin's."

"Well, Mrs. Houlaghan, I will tell you how to lay this ghost."

"God bless you, sir; poor Mary, although she purtends that the ghost is good company for her, is lookin' pale and very quare somehow."

"Well, then, here is the receipt for laying the ghost: Marry her as soon as you possibly can to Brine Oge M'Gaveran—do that and the ghost will never appear again; but if you refuse to do it—I may lay *that* ghost of course—but another ghost, as like it as an egg is to an egg, will haunt your house until she is married to Brine Oge. You have wealth yourselves, and you can make Brine and her comfortable if you wish. She is your only child"—("Blessed Father, think of him knowin' this!")—"and as you are well to do in the world, it's both a sin and a scandal for you to urge a pretty young girl of nineteen to marry an old miserly runt of fifty. You know now how to lay the ghost, Mrs. Houlaghan—and that is what I can do for you; but if you do not marry her to Brine Oge, as I said, another ghost will certainly contrive to haunt you. You may now withdraw."

A farmer, with a very shrewd and comic expression of countenance, next made his appearance, and taking his hat off and laying it on the floor with his staff across it, took his seat, as he had been motioned to do, upon the chair which Mrs. Houlaghan had just vacated.

"Well, my friend," said the conjurer, "what's troubling you?"

"A crock o' butther, your honor."

"How is that? explain yourself."

"Why, sir, a crock o' butther that was stolen from me; and I'm tould for a sartinty that you can discover the thief o' the world that stole it."

"And so I can. Do you suspect anybody?"

"Troth, sir, I can't say—for I live in a very honest neighborhood. The only two thieves that were in it—Charley Folliott and George Austin—were hanged not long ago, and I don't know anybody else in the country side that would stale it."

"What family have you?"

"Three sons, sir."

"How many daughters?"

"One, sir—but she's only a girsha" (a little girl).

"I suppose your sons are very good children to you?"

"Betther never broke bread, sir—all but the youngest."

"What age is he?"

"About nineteen, sir, or goin' an twenty; but he's a heart-scald to me and the family—although he's his mother's pet; the divil can't stand him for dress—and, moreover, he's given to liquor and eard-playin', and is altogether goin' to the bad. Widin the last two or three days he has bought himself a new hat, a new pair o' brogues, and a pair o' span-new breeches—and, upon my conscience, it wasn't from me or mine he got the money to buy them."

The conjurer looked solemnly into his book for some minutes, and then raising his head, fastened his cold, glassy, glittering eyes on the farmer with a glance that filled him with awe.

"I have found it out," said he; "there are two parties to the theft—your wife and your youngest son. Go to the hucksters of the town, and ask them if they will buy any more butter like the last of yours that they bought, and, depend on it, you will find out the truth."

"Then you think, sir, it was my wife and son between them that stole the butter?"

"Not a doubt of it, and if you tell them that *I* said so, they will confess it. You owe me five shillings."

The farmer put his hand in his pocket, and placing the money before him, left the room, satisfied that there was no earthly subject, past, present, or to come, with which the learned conjurer was not acquainted.

The next individual that came before him was a very pretty buxom widow, who, having made the venerable conjurer a courtesy, sat down and immediately burst into tears.

"What is the matter with you, madam?" asked the astrologer, rather surprised at this unaccountable exhibition of the pathetic.

"O, sir, I lost, about fifteen months ago, one of the best husbands that ever broke the world's bread."

Here came another effusion, accompanied with a very distracted blow of the nose.

"That must have been very distressing to you, madam; he must have been extremely fond of such a very pretty wife."

"O sir, he doted alive upon me, as I did upon him—poor, darling old Paul."

"Ah, he was old, was he?"

"Yes, sir, and left me very rich."

"But what do you wish *me* to do for you?"

"Why, sir, he was very fond of money; was, in fact, a—a—kind of miser in his way. My father and mother forced me to marry the dear old man, and I did so to please them; but at the same time he was very kind in his manner to me—indeed, so kind that he allowed me a shilling a month for pocket money."

"Well, but what is your object in coming to me?"

"Why, sir, to ask your opinion on a case of great difficulty."

"Very well, madam; you shall have the best opinion in the known world upon the subject—that is, as soon as I hear it. Speak out without hesitation, and conceal nothing."

"Why, sir, the poor dear man before his death—ah, that ever my darling old Paul should have been taken away from me!—the poor dear man, before his death—ahem—before his death—O, ah,"—here came another effusion—"began to—to—to—get jealous of me with a young man in the neighborhood that—that—I was fond of before I married my dear old Paul."

"Was the young man in question handsome?"

"Indeed, sir, he was, and is, very handsome—and the impudent minxes of the parish are throwing their raps at him in dozens."

"But still you are keeping me in the dark."

"Well, sir, I will tell you my difficulty. When poor dear old Paul was dying, he called me to the bed-side one day, and says to me: 'Biddy,' says he, 'I'm going to die—and you know I am wealthy; but, in the meantime, I won't leave you sixpence.' 'It's not the loss of your money I am thinking of, my darling Paul,' says I, 'but the loss of yourself'—and I kissed him, and cried. 'You didn't often kiss me that way before,' said he—'and I know what you're kissing me for now.' 'No,' I said, 'I did not; because I had no notion then of losing you, my own darling Paul—you don't know how I loved you all along, Paul,' said I; 'kiss me again, jewel.' 'Now,' said he, 'I'm not going to leave you sixpence, and I'll tell you why—I saw young Charley Mulvany, that you were courting before I married you—I saw him, I say, through the windy there, kiss you, with my own eyes, when you thought I was asleep—and you put your arms about his neck and hugged him,' said he. I must be particular, sir, in order that you may understand the difficulty I'm in."

"Proceed, madam," said the conjurer. "If I were young I certainly would envy Charley Mulvany—but proceed."

"Well, sir, I replied to him: 'Paul, dear,' said I, 'that was a kiss of friendship—and the reason of it was, that poor Charley was near crying when he heard that you were going to die and to leave me so lonely.' 'Well,' said he, 'that may be—many a thing may be that's not likely—and that may be one of them. Go and get a prayer-book, and come back here.' Well, sir, I got a book and went back. 'Now,' said he, 'if you swear by the contents of that book that you will never put a ring on man after my death, I'll leave you my property.' 'Ah, God pardon you, Paul, darling,' said I, 'for supposing that I'd ever dream of marrying again'—and I couldn't help kissing him once more and crying over him when I heard what he said. 'Now,' said he, 'kiss the book, and swear that you'll never put a ring on man after my death, and I'll leave you every shilling I'm worth.' God knows it was a trying scene to a loving heart like mine—so I swore that I'd never put a ring on man after his death—and then he altered his will and left me the property on those conditions."

"Proceed, madam," said the conjurer; "I am still in the dark as to the object of your visit."

"Why, sir, it is to know—ahem—O, poor old Paul. God forgive me! it was to know, sir, O ——"

"Don't cry, madam, don't cry."

"It was to know, sir, if I could ever think of—of—you must know, sir, we had no family, and I would not wish that the property should die with me; to know if—if you think I could venture to marry again?"

"This," replied the conjurer, "is a matter of unusual importance and difficulty. In the first place you must hand me a guinea—that is my fee for cases of this kind."

The money was immediately paid, and the conjurer proceeded: "I said it was a case of great difficulty, and so it is, but ——"

"I forgot to mention, sir, that when I went out to get the prayer-book, I found Charley Mulvany in the next room, and he said he had one in his pocket; so that the truth, sir, is, I—I took the oath *upon a book of ballads.* Now," she proceeded, "I have strong reasons for marrying Charley Mulvany; and I wish to know if I can do so without losing the property."

"Make your mind easy on that point," replied the conjurer; "you swore never to put a ring on man, but you did not swear that a man would never put a ring on you. Go home," he continued, "and if you be advised by me, you will marry Charley Mulvany without loss of time."

A man rather advanced in years next came in, and taking his seat, wiped his face and gave a deep groan.

"Well, my friend," said the conjurer, "in what way can I serve you?"

"God knows it's hard to tell that," he replied—"but I'm troubled."

"What troubles you?"

"It's a quare world, sir, altogether."

"There are many strange things in it certainly."

"That's truth, sir; but the saison's favorable, thank God, and there's every prospect of a fine spring for puttin' down the crops."

"You are a farmer, then; but why should you feel troubled about what you call a fine season for putting down the crops?"

The man moved uneasily upon his chair, and seemed at a loss how to proceed; the conjurer looked at him, and waited for a little that he might allow him sufficient time to disclose his difficulties.

"There are a great many troubles in this life, sir, especially in married families."

"There is no doubt of that, my friend," replied the conjurer.

"No, sir, there is not. I am not aisy in my mind, somehow."

"Hundreds of thousands are so, as well as you," replied the other. "I would be glad to see the man who has not *something* to trouble him; but will you allow me to ask you what it is that troubles you?"

"I took her, sir, widout a shift to her back, and a better husband never breathed the breath of life than I have been to her;" and then he paused, and pulling out his handkerchief, shed bitter tears. "I would love her still, if I could, sir; but, then, the thing's impossible."

"O, yes," said the conjurer; "I see you are jealous of her; but will you state upon what grounds?"

"Well, sir, I think I have good grounds for it."

"What description of a woman is your wife, and what age is she?"

"Why, sir, she's about my own age. She was once handsome enough—indeed very handsome when I married her."

"Was the marriage a cordial one between you and her?"

"Why, sir, she was dotin' upon me, as I was upon her?"

"Have you had a family?"

"A fine family, sir, of sons and daughters."

"And how long is it since you began to suspect her?"

"Why, sir, I—I—well, no matther about that; she was always a good wife and a good mother, until—" Here he paused, and again wiped his eyes.

"Until what?"

"Why, sir, until Billy Fulton, the fiddler, came across her."

"Well, and what did Billy Fulton do?"

"He ran away wid my ould woman, sir."

"What age is Billy Fulton?"

"About my own age, sir; but by no means so stout a man; he's a dancin' masther, too, sir; and barrin' his pumps and white cotton stockin's, I dont know what she could see in him; he's a poor light craiture, and walks as if he had a hump on his hip, for he always carries his fiddle undher his skirt. Ay, and what's more, sir, our daughter, Nancy, is gone off wid him."

"The devil she is. Why, did the old dancing-master run off with both of them? How long is it since this elopement took place?"

"Only three days, sir."

"And you wish me to assist you?"

"If you can, sir; and I ought to tell you that the vagabone's son is gone off wid them too."

"O, O," said the conjurer, "that makes the matter worse."

"No, it doesn't, sir, for what makes the matter worse is, that they took away a hundred and thirty pounds of my money along wid 'em."

"Then you wish to know what I can do for you in this business?"

"I do, sir, i' you plaise."

"Were you ever jealous of your wife before?"

"No, not exactly jealous, sir, but a little suspicious or so; I didn't think it safe to let her out much; I thought it no harm to keep my eye on her."

"Now," said the conjurer, "is it not notorious that you are the most jealous—by the way, give me five shillings; I can make no further communications till I am paid; there—thank you—now, is it not notorious

that you are one of the most jealous old scoundrels in the whole country?"

"No, sir, barrin' a little wholesome suspicion."

"Well, sir, go home about your business. Your daughter and the dancing master's son have made a runaway match of it, and your wife, to protect the character of her daughter, has gone with them. You are a miser, too. Go home, now; I have nothing more to say to you, except that you have been yourself a profligate. Look at that book, sir; there it is; the stars have told me so."

"You have got my five shillings, sir; but say what you like, all the wather in the ocean wouldn't wash her clear of the ould dancin'-masther."

In the course of a few minutes a beautiful peasant girl entered the room, her face mantled with blushes, and took her seat on the chair as the others had done, and remained for some time silent, and apparently panting with agitation.

"What is your name, my pretty girl?" asked the conjurer.

"Grace Davoren," replied the girl.

"And what do you wish to know from me, Miss Davoren?"

"O, don't call me miss, sir; I'm but a poor girl."

The conjurer looked into his book for a few minutes, and then, raising his head, and fixing his eyes upon her, replied—

"Yes, I will call you miss, because I have looked into your fate, and I see that there is great good fortune before you."

The young creature blushed again and smiled with something like confidence, but seemed rather at a loss what to say, or how to proceed.

"From your extraordinary beauty you must have a great many admirers, Miss Davoren."

"But only two, sir, that gives me any trouble—one of them is a——"

The conjurer raised his hand as an intimation to her to stop, and after poring once more over the book for some time, proceeded:—

"Yes—one of them is *Shawn-na-Middogue;* but he's an outlaw—and that courtship is at an end now."

"Wid me, it is, sir; but not wid him. The sogers and autorities is out for him and others; but still he keeps watchin' me as close as he can."

"Well, wait till I look into the book of fate again—yes—yes—here is—*a gentleman* over head and ears in love with you."

Poor Grace blushed, then became quite pale. "But, sir," said she, "will the gentleman marry me?"

"To be sure he will marry you; but he cannot for some time."

"But will he save me from disgrace and shame, sir?" she asked, with a death-like face.

"Don't make your mind uneasy on that point;—but wait a moment till I find out his name in the great book of fatality;—yes, I see—his name is Woodward. Don't, however, make your mind uneasy; he will take care of you."

"My mind is very uneasy, sir, and I wish I had never seen him. But I don't know what could make him fall in love wid a poor simple girl like me."

This was said in the coquettish consciousness of the beauty which she knew she possessed, and it was accompanied, too, by a slight smile of self-complacency.

"Do you think I could become a lady, sir?"

"A lady! why, what is to prevent you? You are a lady already. You want nothing but silks and satins, jewels and gold rings, to make you a perfect lady."

"And he has promised all these to me," she replied.

"Yes; but there is one thing you ought to do for your own sake and his—and that is to betray *Shawn-na-Middogue*, if you can; because if you do not, neither your own life, nor that of your lover, Mr. Woodward, will be safe."

"I couldn't do that, sir," replied the girl; "it would be treacherous; and sooner than do so, I'd just as soon he would kill me at wanst—still I would do a great deal to save Mr. Woodward. But will Mr. Woodward marry me, sir? because he said he would—in the coorse of some time."

"And if he said so don't be uneasy; he is a gentleman, and a gentleman, you know, always keeps his word. Don't be alarmed, my pretty girl—your lover will provide for you."

"Am I to pay you anything, sir?" she asked, rising.

"No, my dear, I will take no money from you; but if you wish to save Mr. Woodward from danger, you will enable the soldiers to arrest *Shawn-na-Middogue*. Even you, yourself, are not safe so long as he is at large."

She then took her leave in silence.

It is not to be supposed that among the crowd that was assembled around the inn door there were not a number of waggish characters, who felt strongly inclined to have, if possible, a hearty laugh at the great conjurer. No matter what state of society may exist, or what state of feeling may prevail, there will always be found a class of persons who are exceptions to the

general rule. Whilst the people were chatting in wonder and admiration, not without awe and fear, concerning the extraordinary knowledge and power of the conjurer, a character peculiar to all times and all ages made his appearance, and soon joined them. This was one of those circulating, unsettled vagabonds, whom, like scum, society, whether agitated or not, is always sure to throw on the surface. The comical miscreant no sooner made his appearance than, like Liston, when coming on the stage, he was greeted with a general roar of laughter.

"So," said he, "you have a conjurer above. But wait a while; by the powdhers o' delf Rantin' Rody's the boy will try his mettle. If he can look farther than his nose, I'm the lad will find it out. If he doesn't say I'll be hanged, he knows nothing about his business. I have myself half-a-dozen hangmen engaged to let me down aisy; it's a death I've a great fancy for, and, plaise God, I'm workin' honestly to desarve it. Which of you has a cow to steal? for, by the sweets o' rosin, I'm low in cash, and want a thrifle to support nather; for nather, my boys, must be supported, and it was never my intintion to die for want o' my vittles; aitin' and drinkin' is not very pleasant to most people, I know, but I was born wid a fancy for both."

"Rantin' Rody, in airnest, will you go up and have your fortune tould?"

"But wait," he proceeded; "wait, I say, —wait,—I have it." And as he said so he went at the top of his speed down the street, and disappeared in Sol Donnel's cabin.

"By this and by that," said one of them, "Rantin' Rody will take spunk out of him, if it's in him."

"I think he had better have notin' to do wid him," said an old woman, "for fraid he'd *rise* the devil—Lord guard us! Sure it's the same man that was in this very town the night he was *riz* before, and that the bonfire for Suil Balor (the eye of Balor, or the *Evil Eye*) Woodward was drowned by a shower of blood. Troth I wouldn't be in the same Woodward's coat for the wealth o' the world. As for Rantin' Rody, let him take care of himself. It's never safe to sport wid edged tools, and he'll be apt to find it so, if he attempts to put his tricks upon the conjurer."

In the meantime, while that gentleman was seated above stairs, a female, tall, slim, and considerably advanced in years, entered the room and took her seat. Her face was thin, and red in complexion, especially about the point of a rather long nose, where the color appeared to be considerably deeper in tine.

"Sir," said she, in a sharp tone of voice, "I'm told you can tell fortunes."

"Certainly, madam," he replied, "you have been correctly informed."

"You won't be offended, then, if I wish to ask you a question or two. It's not about myself, but a sister of mine, who is—ahem—what the censorious world is pleased to call an old maid."

"Why did your sister not come herself?" he asked; "I cannot predict anything unless the individual is before me; I must have him or her, as the case may be, under my eye."

"Bless me, sir! I didn't know that; but as I am now here—could you tell me anything about myself?"

"I could tell you many things," replied the conjurer, who read old maid in every line of her face—"many things not very pleasant for you to reflect upon."

"O, but I don't wish to hear anything unpleasant," said she; "tell me something that's agreeable."

"In the first place, I cannot do so," he replied; "I must be guided by truth. You have, for instance, been guilty of great cruelty; and although you are but a young woman, in the very bloom of life——"

Here the lady bowed to him, and simpered —her thin, red nose twisted into a gracious curl, as thanking him for his politeness.

"In the very prime of life, madam—yet you have much to be accountable for, in consequence of your very heartless cruelty to the male sex—you see, madam, and you feel, too, that I speak truth."

The lady put the spectre of an old fan up to her withered visage, and pretended to enact a blush of admission.

"Well, sir," she replied, "I—I—I cannot say but that—indeed I have been charged with—not that it—cruelty—I mean—was ever in my heart; but you must admit, sir, that—that—in fact—where too many press upon a person, it is the more difficult to choose."

"Unquestionably; but you should have made a judicious selection—and that was because you were in no hurry—and indeed you need not be; you have plenty of time before you. Still, there is much blame attached to you—you have defrauded society of its rights. Why, now, you might have been the proud mother of a son or daughter at least five years old by this time, if it had not been for your own obduracy—excuse me."

Up went the skeleton fan again with a wonderfully modest if not an offended simper at the notion of such an insinuation; but, said she in her heart, this is the most gen-

tlemanly conjurer that ever told a fortune; quite a delightful old gentleman; he is really charming; I wish I had met him twenty years ago."

"Well, sir," she replied, "I see there is no use in denying—especially *to you*, who seem to know everything—the truth of the facts you have stated. There was one gentleman in particular whom I rejected—that is, conditionally—rather harshly; and do you know, he took the scarlet-fever soon afterwards and died of a broken-heart."

"Go on, madam," said he; "make a clean breast of it—so shall you enable me to compare the future with the past, and state your coming fortunes more distinctly."

"Another gentleman, sir—a country squire—owes, I fear, his death to my severity; he was a hard drinker, but I gave him a month to reform—which sentence he took so much to heart that he broke his neck in a fox-chase from mere despair. A third individual—a very handsome young man—of whom I must confess I was a little jealous about his flirting with another young lady—felt such remorse that he absolutely ran away with and married her. I know, of course, I am accountable for all these calamities; but it cannot be helped now—my conscience must bear it."

"You should not look back upon these things with too much remorse," replied the conjurer; "forget them—bear a more relenting heart; make some man happy, and marry. Have you no person at present in your eye with whom you could share your charms and your fortune?"

"O, sir, you are complimentary."

"Not at all, madam; speak to me candidly, as you perceive I do to you."

"Well, then," she replied, "there is a young gentleman with whom I should wish to enter into a—a domestic—that is—a matrimonial connection."

"Pray what age is he?"

"Indeed, he is but young, scarce nineteen; but then he is very wild, and I—I—have—indeed I am of too kind a heart, sir. I have supplied his extravagance—for so I must call it—poor boy—but cannot exactly get him to accept a legitimate right over me—I fear he is attached elsewhere—but you know he is young, sir, and not come to his ripe judgment yet. I read your handbill, sir; and if you could furnish me with a—something—ahem—that might enable me to gain, or rather to restore his affections—for I think he was fond of me some few months ago—I would not grudge whatever the payment might be."

"You mean a philter?"

"I believe that is what it is called, sir."

"Well, madam, you shall be supplied with a philter that never fails, on the payment of twenty-one shillings. This, philter, madam, will not only make him fond of you before marriage, but will secure his affections during life, increasing them day by day, so that every month of your lives will be a delicious honeymoon. There is another bottle at the same price; it may not, indeed, be necessary for you, but I can assure you that it has made many families happy where there had been previously but little prospect of happiness; the price is the same—twenty-one shillings."

Up went the spectral fan again, and out came the forty-two shillings, and, with a formal courtesy, the venerable old maid walked away with the two bottles of *aqua pura* in her pocket.

Now came the test for the conjurer's knowledge—the sharp and unexpected trial of his skill and sagacity. After the old maid had taken her leave, possessed of the two bottles, a middle-aged, large-sized woman walked in, and, after making a low courtesy, sat down as she had been desired. The conjurer glanced keenly at her, and something like a smile might be seen to settle upon his features; it was so slight, however, that the good woman did not notice it.

"Pray, what's the object of your visit to me, may I ask?"

"My husband, sir—he runn'd away from me, sure."

"Small blame to him," replied the conjurer. "If I had such a wife I would not remain a single hour in her company."

"And is that the tratement you give a heart-broken and desarced crature like me?"

"Come, what made him run away from you?"

"In regard, sir, of a dislike he took to me."

"That was a proof that the man had some taste."

"Ay, but why hadn't he that taste afore he married me?"

"It was very well that he had it afterwards—better late than never."

"I want you to tell me where he is."

"What family have you?"

"Seven small childre that's now fatherless, I may say."

"What kind of a man was your husband?"

"Why, indeed, as handsome a vagabone as you'd see in a day's travellin'."

"Mention his name; I can tell you nothing till I hear it."

"He's called Rantin' Rody, the thief, and a great schamer he is among the girls."

"Ranting Rody—let me see," and here he

looked very solemnly into his book—"yes; I see—a halter. My good woman, you had better not inquire after him; he was born to be hanged."

"But when will that happen, sir?"

"Your fate and his are so closely united, that, whenever he swings, you will swing. You will both hang together from the same gallows; so that, in point of fact, you need not give yourself much trouble about the time of his suspension, because I see it written here in the book of fate, that the same hangman who swings you off, will swing him off at the same moment. You'll die lovingly together; and when he puts his tongue out at those who will attend his execution, so will you; and when he dances his last jig in their presence, so will you. Are you now satisfied?"

"Troth, and I'm very fond o' the vagabone, although he's the worst friend I ever had. But you won't tell me where he is? and I know why, because, with all your pretended knowledge, the devil a know you know."

"Are you sure of that?"

"Ay, cocksure."

"Then I can tell you that he is sitting on the chair there, opposite me. Go about your business, Rody, and rant elsewhere; you may impose upon others, but not upon a man that can penetrate the secrets of human life as I can. Go now; there is a white wand in the corner,—my conjuring rod,—and if I only touched you with it, I could leave you a cripple and beggar for life. Go, I say, and tell Caterine Collins how much she and you gained by this attempt at disgracing me."

Rody, for it was he, was thunderstruck at this discovery, and, springing to his feet, disappeared.

"Well, Rody," said the crowd. "how did you manage? Did he know you?"

Rody was as white in the face as a sheet. "Let me alone," he replied; "the conjurer above is the devil, and nothin' else. I must get a glass o' whiskey; I'm near faintin'; I'm as wake as a child; my strength's gone. The man, or the devil, or whatsomever he is, knows everything, and, what is worse, he tould me I am to be hanged in earnest."

"Faith, Rody, that required no great knowledge on his part; there's not a man here but could have tould you the same thing, and there's none of us a conjurer."

Rody, however, immediately left them to discuss the matter among themselves, and went, thoroughly crestfallen, to give an account of his mission to Caterine Collins, who had employed him, and to reassume his own clothes, which, indeed, were by no means fresh from the tailor.

The last individual whose interview with the conjurer we shall notice was no other than Harry Woodward, our hero. On entering he took his seat, and looked familiarly at the conjurer.

"Well," said he, "there was no recognition?"

"How could there?" replied the other "you know the thing's impossible; even without my beard, nobody in the town or about it knows my face, and to those who see me in character, they have other things to think of than the perusal of my features."

"The girl was with you?"

"She was, and I feel that, unless we can get *Shawn-na-Middogue* taken off by some means or other, your life will not, cannot, be safe."

"She won't betray him, then? But I need not ask, for I have pressed her upon that matter before."

"She is very right in not doing so," replied the conjurer; "because, if she did, the consequence would be destruction to herself and her family. In addition to this, however, I don't think it's in her power to betray him. He never sleeps more than one night in the same place; and since her recent conduct to him—I mean since her intimacy with you—he would place no confidence in her."

"He certainly is not aware of our intimacy."

"Of course he is not; you would soon know it to your cost if he were. The place of your rendezvous is somewhat too near civilization for him; you should, however, change it; never meet twice in the same place, if you can."

"You are reaping a tolerably good harvest here, I suppose. Do they ever place you in a difficulty?"

"Difficulty! God help you; there is not an individual among them, or throughout the whole parish, with whose persons, circumstances, and characters I am not acquainted; but even if it were not so, I could make them give me unconsciously the very information they want—returned to them, of course, in a new shape. I make them state the facts, and I draw the inferences; nothing is easier; it is a trick that every impostor is master of. How do you proceed with Miss Goodwin?"

"That matter is hopeless by fair means—she's in love with that d——d brother of mine."

"No chance of the property, then?"

"Not as affairs stand at present; we must, however, maintain our intimacy; if so, I won't despair yet."

"But what do you intend to do? If she marries your brother the property goes to him—and you may go whistle."

"I don't give it up, though—I bear a brain still, I think; but the truth is, I have not completed my plan of operations. What I am to do, I know not yet exactly. If I could break off the match between her and my brother, she might probably, through the influence of her parents and other causes, be persuaded into a reluctant marriage with Harry Woodward; time, however, will tell, and I must only work my way through the difficulty as well as I can. I will now leave you, and I don't think I shall be able to see you again for a week to come."

"Before you go let me ask if you know a vagabond called Ranting Rody, who goes about through the country living no one knows how?"

"No, I do not know him; what is he?"

"He's nothing except a paramour of Caterine Collins's, who, you know, is a rival of ours; nobody here knows anything about him, whilst he, it appears, knows every one and everything."

"He would make a good conjurer," replied Woodward, smiling.

"If the fellow could be depended on," replied the other, "he might be useful; in fact, I am of opinion that if he wished he could trace *Shawn-na-Middogue's* haunts. The scoundrel attempted just now to impose upon me in the dress of a woman, and, were it not that I knew him so well, he might have got my beard stripped from my face, and my bones broken besides; but I feel confident that if any one could trace and secure the outlaw, he could—I mean with proper assistance. Think of this."

"I shall find him out," replied Woodward, "and sound him, at all events, and I think through Caterine Collins I may possibly secure him; but we must be cautious. Good-by; I wish you success!"

After which he passed through the crowd, exclaiming,

"A wonderful man—an astonishing man—and a fearful man; that is if he *be* a man, which I very much doubt."

CHAPTER XII.

Fortune-telling.

Ever since the night of the bonfire Woodward's character became involved more or less in a mystery that was peculiar to the time and the superstitions of the period. That he possessed the Evil Eye was whispered about; and what was still more strange, it was not his wish that such rumors should be suppressed. They had not yet, however, reached either Alice Goodwin or her parents. In the meantime the feelings of the two families were once more suspended in a kind of neutral opposition, each awaiting the other to make the first advance. Poor Alice, however, appeared rather declining in health and spirits, for, notwithstanding her firm and generous defence of Charles Lindsay, his brother, to a certain extent, succeeded in shaking her confidence in his attachment. Her parents frequently asked her the cause of her apparent melancholy, but she only gave them evasive replies, and stated that she had not felt herself very well since Henry Woodward's last interview with her.

They now urged her to take exercise—against which, indeed, she always had a constitutional repugnance—and not to sit so much in her own room as she did; and in order to comply with their wishes in this respect, she forced herself to walk a couple of hours each day in the lawn, where she generally read a book, for the purpose, if possible, of overcoming her habitual melancholy. It was upon one of these occasions that she saw the fortune-teller, Caterine Collins, approach her, and as her spirits were unusually depressed for the moment, she felt no inclination to enter into any conversation with her. Naturally courteous, however, and reluctant to give offence, she allowed the woman to advance, especially as she could perceive from the earnestness of her manner that she was anxious to speak with her.

"Well, Caterine," said she, "I hope you are not coming to tell my fortune to-day; I am not in spirits to hear much of the future, be it good or bad. Will you not go up to the house? They will give you something to eat."

"Thank you, Miss Alice, I will go up by and by; but in the manetime, what fortune could any one tell you but good fortune? There's nothin' else before you; and if there is, I'm come to put you on your guard against it, as I will, plaise goodness. I heard what I'm goin' to mention to you on good autority, and, as I know it's true, I think it's but right you should know of it, too."

Alice immediately became agitated; but mingled with that agitation was a natural wish—perhaps it might be a pardonable curiosity, under the circumstances—to hear how what the woman had to disclose could affect herself. Being nervous, restless, and depressed, she was just in the very frame of mind to receive such an impression as might be deeply prejudicial to the ease of her heart—perhaps her happiness, and consequently her health.

"What is it that you think I should know, Caterine?"

Caterine, who looked about her furtively, as if to satisfy herself that there was no one present but themselves, said,—

"Now, Miss Goodwin, everything depends on whether you'll answer me one question truly, and you needn't be afeard to spake the truth to me."

"Is it concerning myself?"

"It is, Miss Goodwin, and another, too, but principally yourself."

"But what right have you, Caterine, to question me upon my own affairs?"

"No right, miss; but I wish to prevent you from harm."

"I thank you for your good wishes, Caterine; but what is it you would say?"

"Is it true, Miss Alice, that you and Mr. Woodward are coortin'?"

"It is *not*, Caterine," replied Alice, uttering the disavowal with a good deal of earnestness; "there is no truth whatsoever in it; nothing can be more false and groundless—I wonder how such a rumor could have got abroad; it certainly could not proceed from Mr. Woodward."

"It did not, indeed, Miss Alice; but it did from his brother, who, it seems, is very fond of him, and said he was glad of it; but indeed, miss, it delights my heart to hear that there is no truth in it. Mr. Woodward, God save us! is no fit husband for any Christian woman."

"Why so?" asked Alice, laboring under some vague sense of alarm.

"Why, Heavenly Father! Miss Alice, sure it's well known he has the Evil Eye; it's in the family upon his mother's side."

"My God!" exclaimed Alice, who became instantly as pale as death, "if that be true, Caterine, it's shocking."

"True," replied Caterine; "did you never observe his eyes?"

"Not particularly."

"Did you remark that they're of different colors? that one of them is as black as the devil's, and the other a gray?"

"I never observed that," replied Alice, who really never had.

"Yes, and I could tell you more than that about him," proceeded Caterine; "they say he's connected wid what's not good. Sure, when they got up a bonfire for him, doesn't all the world know that it was put out by a shower of blood; and that's a proof that he's a favorite wid the devil and the fairies."

"I believe," replied Alice, "that there is no doubt whatsoever about the shower of blood; but I should not consider that fact as proof that he is a favorite with either the devil or the fairies."

"Ay, but you don't know, miss, that *that's* the way *they* have of showin' it. Then, ever since he has come to the country, Bet Harramount, the witch, in the shape of a white hare, is come back to the neighborhood and the *Shaun-dhinne-dhue* is now seen about the Haunted House, oftener than he ever was. It's well known that the white hare plays about Mr. Woodward like a dog, and that she goes into the Haunted House, too, every night."

"And what brought you to tell me all this, Caterine?" asked Alice.

"Why, miss, to put you on your guard; afraid you might get married to a man that, maybe, has sould himself to the devil. It's well known by his father's sarvints that he's out two or three nights in the week, and nobody can tell where he goes."

"Are the servants your authority for that?"

"Indeed they are; Barney Casey knows a great deal about him. Now, Miss Alice, you're on your guard; have nothing to do wid him as a sweetheart; but above all things don't fall out wid him, bekaise, if you did, as sure as I stand here he'd wither you off o' the earth. And above all things again watch his eyes; I mane the black one, but don't seem to do so; and now good-by, miss; I've done my duty to you."

"But about his brother, Caterine? He has not the Evil Eye, I hope?"

"Ah, miss, I could tell you something about him, too. They're a bad graft, these Lindsays; there's Mr. Charles, and it's whispered he's goin' to make a fool of himself and disgrace his family."

"How is that, Caterine?"

"I don't know rightly; I didn't hear the particulars; but I'll be on the watch, and when I can I'll let you know it."

"Take no such trouble, Caterine," said Alice; "I assure you I feel no personal interest whatsoever in any of the family except Miss Lindsay. Leave me, Caterine, leave me; I must finish my book; but I thank you for your good wishes. Go up, and say I desired them to give you your dinner."

Alice soon felt herself obliged to follow; and it was, indeed, with some difficulty she was able to reach the house. Her heart got deadly sick; an extraordinary weakness came over her; she became alarmed, frightened, distressed; her knees tottered under her, and she felt on reaching the hall-door as if she were about to faint. Her imagination became disturbed; a heavy, depressing gloom descended upon her, and darkened her flexible and unresisting spirit, as if it were the forebodings of some terrible calamity.

The diabolical wretch who had just left her took care to perform her base and heartless task with double effect. It was not merely the information she had communicated concerning Woodward that affected her so deeply, although she felt, as it were, in the inmost recesses of her soul, that it was true, but that which went at the moment with greater agony to her heart was the allusion to Charles Lindsay, and the corroboration it afforded to the truth of the charge which Woodward had brought, with so much apparent reluctance, against him—the charge of having neglected and abandoned her for another, and that other a person of low birth, who, by relinquishing her virtue, had contrived to gain such an artful and selfish ascendancy over him. How could she doubt it? Here was a woman ignorant of the communication Woodward had made to her,—ignorant of the vows that had passed between them,—who had heard of his falsehood and profligacy, and who never would have alluded to them had she not been questioned. So far, then, Woodward, she felt, stood without blame with respect to his brother. And how could she suspect Caterine to have been the agent of that gentleman, when she knew now that her object in seeking an interview with herself was to put her on her guard against him? The case was clear and, to her, dreadful as it was clear. She felt herself now, however, in that mood which no sympathy can alleviate or remove. She experienced no wish to communicate her distress to any one, but resolved to preserve the secret in her own bosom. Here, then, was she left to suffer the weight of a twofold affliction—the dread of Woodward, with which Caterine's intelligence had filled her heart, feeble, and timid, and credulous as it was upon any subject of a superstitious tendency—and the still deeper distress which weighed her down in consequence of Charles Lindsay's treachery and dishonor. Alas! poor Alice's heart was not one for struggles, nurtured and bred up, as she had been, in the very wildest spirit of superstition, in all its degrading ramifications. There was something in the imagination and constitution of the poor girl which generated and cherished the superstitions which prevailed in her day. She could not throw them off her mind, but dwelt upon them with a kind of fearful pleasure which we can understand from those which operated upon our own fancies in our youth. These prepare the mind for the reception of a thousand fictions concerning ghosts, witches, fairies, apparitions, and a long catalogue of nonsense, equally disgusting and repugnant to reason and common-sense. It is not surprising, then, that poor Alice's mind on that night was filled with phantasms of the most feverish and excited description. As far as she could, however, she concealed her agitation from her parents, but not so successfully as to prevent them from perceiving that she was laboring under some extraordinary and unaccountable depression. This unfortunately was too true. On that night she experienced a series of such wild and frightful visions as, when she was startled out of them, made her dread to go again to sleep. The white hare, the Black Spectre, but, above all, the fearful expression her alarmed fancy had felt in Woodward's eye, which was riveted upon her, she thought, with a baleful and demoniacal glance, that pierced and prostrated her spirit with its malignant and supernatural power; all these terrible images, with fifty other incoherent chimeras, flitted before the wretched girl's imagination during her feverish slumbers. Towards morning she sank into a somewhat calmer state of rest, but still with occasional and flitting glimpses of the same horrors.

So far the master-spirit had set, at least, a portion of his machinery in motion, in order to work out his purposes; but we shall find that his designs became deeper and blacker as he proceeded in his course.

In a few days Alice became somewhat relieved from the influence of these tumultuous and spectral phantasms which had run riot in her terrified fancy; and this was principally owing to the circumstance of her having prevailed upon one of the maid-servants, a girl named Bessy Mangan, Barney Casey's sweetheart, to sleep privately in her room. The attack had reduced and enfeebled her very much, but still she was slightly improved and somewhat relieved in her spirits. The shock, and the nervous paroxysm that accompanied it, had nearly passed away, and she was now anxious, for the sake of her health, to take as much exercise as she could. Still—still—the two leading thoughts would recur to her—that of Charles's treachery, and the terrible gift of curse possessed by his brother Henry; and once more he heart would sink to the uttermost depths of distress and terror. The supernatural, however, in the course of a little time, prevailed, as it was only reasonable to suppose it would in such a temperament as hers; and as her mind proceeded to struggle with the two impressions, she felt that her dread of Woodward was gradually gaining upon and absorbing the other. Her fear of him, consequently, was deadly; that terrible and malignant eye—notwithstanding its dark brilliancy and awful beauty, alas! too, significant of its power—was constantly before

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——— CUT WHEN HE CAME TO THE DOOR HE PAUSED A MOMENT, TURNING UPON HER ONE LONG, DARK, INEXPLICABLE GAZE.—*Evil Eye*, chap. xii, *p.* 007.

her imagination, gazing upon her with a fixed, determined, and mysterious look, accompanied by a smile of triumph, which deepened its *satanity*, if we may be allowed to coin a word, at every glance. It was not mere antipathy she felt for him now, but dread and horror. How, then, was she to act? She had pledged herself to receive his visits upon one condition, and to permit him to continue a friendly intimacy altogether apart from love. How, then, could she violate her word, or treat him with rudeness, who had always not only treated *her* with courtesy, but expressed an interest in her happiness which she had every reason to believe sincere? Thus was the poor girl entangled with difficulties on every side without possessing any means of releasing herself from them.

In a few days after this she was sitting in the drawing-room when Woodward unexpectedly entered it, and saluted her with great apparent good feeling and politeness. The surprise caused her to become as pale as death; she felt her very limbs relax with weakness, and her breath for a few moments taken away from her; she looked upon him with an expression of alarm and fear which she could not conceal, and it was with some difficulty that she was at length enabled to speak.

"You will excuse me, sir," she said, "for not rising; I am very nervous, and have not been at all well for the last week or upwards."

"Indeed, Miss Goodwin, I am very sorry to hear this; I trust it is only a mere passing indisposition; I think the complaint is general, for my sister has also been ailing much the same way for the last few days. Don't be alarmed, Miss Goodwin, it is nothing, and won't signify. You should mingle more in society; you keep too much alone."

"But I do not relish society; I never mingle in it that I don't feel exhausted and depressed."

"That certainly makes a serious difference; in such a case, then, I imagine society would do you more harm than good. I should not have intruded on you had not your mother requested me to come up and try to raise your spirits—a pleasure which I would gladly enjoy if I could."

"I am much obliged to you, Mr. Woodward," she replied; "I hope a short time will remove this unusual depression, and I must only have a little patience."

"Just so, Miss Goodwin; a little time, as you say, will restore you to yourself."

Now all this was very courteous and kind of Mr. Woodward, and *might* have raised her spirits were it not for the *eye*. From the moment he entered the apartment that dreaded instrument of his power was fixed upon her with a look so concentrated, piercing, and intense, that it gave a character of abstraction to all he said. In other words, she felt as if his language proceeded out of his lips unconsciously, and that some mysterious purport of his heart emanated from his eye. It appeared to her that he was thinking of something secret connected with herself, to which his words bore no reference whatsoever. She neither knew what to do nor what to say under this terrible and permeating gaze; it was in vain she turned away her eyes; she knew—she felt—that his was upon her—that it was drinking up her strength—that, in fact, the evil influence was mingling with and debilitating her frame, and operating upon all her faculties. There was still, however, a worse symptom, and one which gave that gaze a significance that appalled her—this was the smile of triumph which she had seen playing coldly but triumphantly about his lips in her dreams. That smile was the feather to the arrow that pierced her, and that was piercing her at that moment—it was the cold but glittering glance of the rattlesnake, when breaking down by the poison of his eyes the power of resistance in his devoted victim.

"Mr. Woodward," said she, after a long pause, "I am unable to bear an interview—have the goodness to withdraw, and when you go down-stairs send my mother up. Excuse me, sir; but you must perceive how very ill I have got within a few minutes."

"I regret it exceedingly, Miss Goodwin. I had something to mention to you respecting that unfortunate brother of mine; but you are not now in a condition to hear anything unpleasant and distressing; and, indeed, it is better, I think, now that I observe your state of health, that you should not even wish to hear it."

"I never do wish to hear it, sir; but have the goodness to leave me."

"I trust my next visit will find you better. Good-by, Miss Goodwin! I shall send your mother up."

He withdrew very much after the etiquette of a subject leaving a crowned head—that is, nearly backwards; but when he came to the door he paused a moment, turning upon her one long, dark, inexplicable gaze, whilst the muscles of his hard, stony mouth were drawn back with a smile that contained in its expression a spirit that might be considered complacent, but which Alice interpreted as derisive and diabolical.

"Mamma," said she, when her mother joined her, "I am ill, and I know not what to do."

"I know you are not well, my love," replied her mother, "but I hope you're not worse; how do you feel?"

"Quite feeble, utterly without strength, and dreadfully depressed and alarmed."

"Alarmed, Alley! Why, what could alarm you? Does not Mr. Woodward always conduct himself as a gentleman?"

"He does, ma'am; but, nevertheless, I never wish to see him again."

"Why, dear me! Alice, is it reasonable that you should give way to such a prejudice against that gentleman? Indeed I believe you absolutely hate him."

"It is not personal hatred, mother; it is fear and terror. I do not, as I said, hate the man personally, because I must say that he never deserved such a feeling at my hands, but, in the meantime, the sight of him sickens me almost to death. I am not aware that he is or ever was immoral, or guilty of any act that ought to expose him to hatred; but, notwithstanding that, my impression, when conversing with him, is, that I am in the presence of an evil spirit, or of a man who is possessed of one. Mamma, he must be excluded the house, and forbidden to visit here again, otherwise my health will be destroyed, and my very life placed in danger."

"My dear Alice, that is all very strange," replied her mother, now considerably alarmed at her language, but still more so at her appearance; "why, God bless me, child! now that I look at you, you certainly do seem to be in an extraordinary state. You are the color of death, and then you are all trembling! Why is this, I ask again?"

"The presence of that man," she replied, in a faint voice; "his presence simply and solely. That is what has left me as you see me."

"Well, Alice, it is very odd and very strange, and it seems as if there was some mystery in it. I will, however, talk to your father about it, and we will hear what he shall say. In the meantime, raise your spirits, and don't be so easily alarmed. You are naturally nervous and timid, and this is merely a poor, cowardly conceit that has got into your head; but your own good sense will soon show you the folly of yielding to a mere fancy. Amuse yourself on the spinet, and play some brisk music that will cheer your spirits; it is nothing but the spleen."

Woodward, in the meantime, having effected his object, and satisfied himself of his power over Alice, pursued his way home in high spirits. To his utter astonishment, however, he found the family in an uproar, the cause of which we will explain. His mother, whose temper neither she herself nor any other human being, unless her husband, when provoked too far, could keep under anything like decent restraint, had got into a passion, while he, Woodward, was making his visit; and while in a blaze of resentment against the Goodwins she disclosed the secret of his rejection by Alice, and dwelt with bitter indignation upon the attachment she had avowed for Charles—a secret which Henry had most dishonorably intrusted to her, but which, as the reader sees, she had neither temper nor principle to keep.

On entering the house he found his mother and step-father at high feud. The brows of the latter were knit, as was always the case when he found himself bent upon mischief. He was calm, however, which was another bad sign, for in him the old adage was completely reversed, "*After* a storm comes a calm," whilst in his case it uniformly preceded it.

Woodward looked about him with amazement; his step-father was standing with his back to the parlor fire, holding the skirts of his coat divided behind, whilst his wife stood opposite to him, her naturally red face still flaming more deeply with a tornado of indignation.

"And you dare to tell me that you'll consent to Charles's marriage with her?"

"Yes, my dear, I dare to tell you so. You have no objection that she should marry your son Harry there. You forgot or dissembled your scorn and resentment against her, when you thought you could make a catch of her property: a very candid and disinterested proceeding on your part. Well, what's the consequence? That's all knocked up; the girl won't have him, because she is attached to his brother, and because his brother is attached to her. Now, that is just as it ought to be, and, please God, we'll have them married. And I now take the liberty of asking you both to the wedding."

"Lindsay, you're an offensive old dog, sir."

"I might retort the compliment by changing the sex, my dear," he replied, laughing and nodding at her, with a face, from the nose down, rather benevolent than otherwise, but still the knit was between the brows.

"Lindsay, you're an unmanly villain, and a coward to boot, or you wouldn't use such language to a woman."

"Not to a woman; but I'm sometimes forced to do so to a termagant."

"What's the cause of all this?" inquired Woodward; "upon my honor, the language I hear is very surprising, as coming from a

justice of quorum and his lady. Fie! fie! I am ashamed of you both. In what did it originate?"

"Why, the fact is, Harry, she has told us that Alice Goodwin, in the most decided manner, has rejected your addresses, and confided to you an avowal of her attachment to Charles here. Now, when I heard this, I felt highly delighted at it, and said we should have them married, and so we shall. Then your mother, in flaming indignation at this, enacted Vesuvius in a blaze, and there she stands ready for another eruption."

"I wish you were in the bottom of Vesuvius, Lindsay; but you shall not have your way, notwithstanding."

"So I am, my dear, every day in my life. I have a little volcano of my own here, under the very roof with me; and I tell that volcano that I will have my own way in this matter, and that this marriage must take place if Alice is willing; and I'm sure she is, the dear girl."

"Sir," said Woodward, addressing his step-father calmly, "I feel a good deal surprised that a thinking man, of a naturally se late temper as you are ——"

"Yes, Harry, I am so."

"Of such a sedate temper as you are, should not recollect the possibility of my mother, who sometimes takes up impressions hastily, if not erroneously — as the calmest of us too frequently do—of my mother, I say, considerably mistaking and unconsciously misrepresenting the circumstances I mentioned to her."

"But why did you mention them exclusively to her?" asked Charles; "I cannot see your object in concealing them from the rest of the family, especially from those who were most interested in the knowledge of them."

"Simply because I had nothing actually decisive to mention. I principally confined myself to my own inferences, which unfortunately my mother, with her eager habit of snatching at conclusions, in this instance, mistook for facts. I shall satisfy you, Charles, of this, and of other matters besides; but we will require time."

"I assure you, Harry, that if your mother does not keep her temper within some reasonable bounds, either she or I shall leave the house—and I am not likely to be the man to do so."

"This house is mine, Lindsay, and the property is mine—both in my own right; and you and your family may leave it as soon as you like."

"But you forget that I have property enough to support myself and them independently of you."

"Wherever you go, my dear papa," said Maria, bursting into tears, "I will accompany you. I admit it is a painful determination for a daughter to be forced to make against her own mother; but it is one I should have died sooner than come to if she had *ever* treated me as a daughter."

Her good-natured and affectionate father took her in his arms and kissed her.

"My own darling Maria," said he, "I could forgive your mother all her domestic violence and outrage had she acted with the affection of a mother towards you. She has a heart only for one individual, and that is her son Harry, there."

"As for me," said Charles, "wherever my father goes, I, too, my dear Maria, will accompany him."

"You hear that, Harry," said Mrs. Lindsay; "you see now they are in a league—in a conspiracy against your happiness and mine;—but think of their selfishness and cunning—it is the girl's property they want."

"Perish the property," exclaimed Charles indignantly. "I will now mention a fact which I have hitherto never breathed—Alice Goodwin and I were, I may say, betrothed before ever she dreamed of possessing it; and if I held back since that time, I did so from the principles of a man of honor, lest she might imagine that I renewed our intimacy, after the alienation of the families, from mercenary motives."

"You're a fine fellow, Charley," said his father; "you're a fine fellow, and you deserve her and her property, if it was ten times what it is."

"Don't you be disheartened, Harry," said his mother; "I have a better wife in my eye for you—a wife that will bring you connection, and that is Lord Bilberry's niece."

"Yes," said her husband, ironically, "a man with fifty thousand acres of mountain. Faith, Harry, you will be a happy man, and may feed on bilberries all your life; but upon little else, unless you can pick the spare bones of an old maid who has run herself into an asthma in the unsuccessful sport of husband-hunting."

"She will inherit her uncle's property, Lindsay."

"Yes, she will inherit the heather and the bilberries. But go in God's name; work out that project; there is nobody here disposed to hinder you. Only I hope you will ask us to the wedding."

"Mother," said Woodward, affectionately taking her hand and giving it a significant squeeze; "mother, you must excuse me for what I am about to say"—another squeeze, and a glance which *she* very well understood —"upon my honor, mother, I must give my

verdict *for the present*"—another squeeze—"against you. You *must* be kinder to Charles and Maria, and you *must not* treat *my father* with such disrespect and harshness. I wish to become a mediator and pacificator in the family. As for myself, I care not about property; I wish to marry the girl I love. I am not, I trust, a selfish man—God forbid I should; but *for the present*"—another squeeze—"let me entreat you all to forget this little breeze; urge nothing, precipitate nothing; a little time, perhaps, if we have patience to wait, may restore us all, and everything else we are quarrelling about, to peace and happiness. Charles, I wish to have some conversation with you."

"Harry," said Lindsay, "I am glad you have spoken as you did; your words do you credit, and your conduct is manly and honorable."

"I do believe, indeed," said his unsuspecting brother, "that the best thing we could all do would be to put ourselves under his guidance; as for my part I am perfectly willing to do so, Harry. After hearing the good sense you have just uttered, I think you are entitled to every confidence from us all."

"You overrate my abilities, Charles; but not, I hope, the goodness of an affectionate heart that loves you all. Charles, come with me for a few minutes; and, mother, do you also expect a private lecture from me by and by."

"Well," said the mother, "I suppose I must. If I were only spoken to kindly I could feel as kindly; however, let there be an end to this quarrel as the boy says, and I, as well as Charles, shall be guided by his advice."

"Now, Charles," said he, when they had gone to another room, "you know what kind of a woman my mother is; and the truth is, until matters get settled, we will have occasion for a good deal of patience with her; let us, therefore, exercise it. Like most hot-tempered women, she has a bad memory, and wrests the purport of words too frequently to a wrong meaning. In the account she gave you of what occurred between Alice Goodwin and me, she entirely did."

"But what *did* occur between Alice Goodwin and you, Harry?"

"A very few words will tell it. She admitted that there certainly has been an attachment between you and her, but—that—that—I will not exactly repeat her words, although I don't say they were meant offensively; but it amounted to this, that she now filled a different position in the eyes of the world; that she would rather the matter were not renewed; that if her mind had changed, she had good reason for justifying the change; and when I, finding that I had no chance myself, began to plead for you, she hinted to me that, in consequence of the feud that had taken place between the families, and the slanders that my mother had cast upon her honor and principles, she was resolved to have no further connection whatsoever with any one of the blood; her affections were not *now* her own."

"Alas, Harry!" said Charles, "how few can bear the effects of unexpected prosperity. When she and I were both comparatively poor, she was all affection; but now that she has become an heiress, see what a change there is! Well, Harry, if she can be faithless and selfish, I can be both resolute and proud. She shall have no further trouble from me on that subject; only I must say, I don't envy her her conscience."

"Don't be rash, Charles—we should judge of her charitably and generously; I don't think myself she is so much to blame. O'Connor Fardour, or Farther, or whatever you call him——"

"O, Ferdora!"

"Yes, Ferdora; that fellow is at the bottom of it all; he has plied her well during the estrangement, and to some purpose. I never visit them that I don't find him alone with her. He is, besides, both frank and handsome, with a good deal of dash and insinuation in his address and manner, and, besides, a good property, I am told. But, in the meantime, I have a favor to ask of you; that is, if you think you can place confidence in me."

"Every confidence, my dear Harry," said Charles, clasping his hand warmly; "every confidence. As I said before, you shall be my guide and adviser."

"Thank you, Charles. I may make mistakes, but I shall do all for the best. Well, then, will you leave O'Connor to me? If you do, I shall not promise much, because I am not master of future events; but this is all I ask of you—yes, there is one thing more—to hold aloof from her and her family for a time."

"After what you have told me, Harry, that is an unnecessary request now; but as for O'Connor, I think *he* ought to be left to myself."

"And so he shall in due time; but I must place him in a proper position for you first—a thing which you could not do now, nor even attempt to do, without meanness. Are you, then, satisfied to leave this matter in my hands, and to remain quiet until I shall bid you *act?*"

"Perfectly, Harry, perfectly; I shall be guided by you in everything."

"Well, now, Charley, we will have a double triumph soon, I hope. All is not lost that's in danger. The poor girl is surrounded by a clique. Priests have interfered. Her parents, you know, are Catholics; so, you know, is O'Connor. Poor Alice, you know, too, is anything but adamant. And now I will say no more; but in requital for what I *have* said, go and send our patient mild mamma, to me. I really must endeavor to try something with her, in order to save us all from this kind of life she is leading us."

When his mother entered he assumed the superior and man of authority; his countenance exhibited something unpleasant, and in a decisive and rather authoritative tone he said,—

"Mother, will you be pleased to take a seat?"

"You are angry with me, Harry—I know you are; but I could not restrain my feelings, nor keep your secret, when I thought of their insolence in requiting you—*you*, to whom the property would and ought to have come——"

"Pray, ma'am, take a seat."

She sat down—anxious, but already subdued, as was evident by her manner.

"I," proceeded her son, "to whom the property would and ought to have come—and I to whom it *will* come——"

"But are you sure of that?"

"Not, I am afraid, while I have such a mother as you are—a woman in whom I can place no confidence with safety. Why did you betray me to this silly family?"

"Because, as I said before, I could not help it; my temper got the better of me."

"Ay, and I fear it will always get the better of you. I could now give you very agreeable information as to that property and the piece of curds that possesses it; but then, as I said, there is no placing any confidence in a woman of your temper."

"If the property is concerned, Harry, you may depend your life on me. So help me, God, if ever I will betray you again."

"Well, that's a solemn asseveration, and I will depend on it; but if you betray me to this family the property is lost to us and our heirs forever."

"Do not fear me; I have taken the oath."

"Well, then, listen; if you could understand Latin, I would give you a quotation from a line of Virgil—

'Hæret lateri lethalis arundo.'

The girl's doomed—subdued—overcome; I am in the process of killing her."

"Of killing her! My God, how? not by violence, surely—that, you know, would not be safe."

"I know that; no—not by violence, but by the power of this dark eye that you see in my head."

"Heavenly Father! then you possess it?"

"I do; and if I were never to see her again I don't think she could recover; she will merely wither away very gently, and in due time will disappear *without issue*—and then, whose is the property?"

"As to that, you know there can be no doubt about it; there is the will—the stupid will, by which she got it."

"I shall see her again, however—nay, in spite of them I shall see her time after time, and shall give her the Evil Eye, until the scene closes—until I attend her funeral."

"My mind is somewhat at ease," replied his mother; "because I was alarmed lest you should have had recourse to any process that might have brought you within the operation of the law."

"Make your mind easy on that point, my dear mother. No law compels a man to close his eyes; a cat, you know, may look on a king; but of one thing you may be certain—she dies—THE VICTIM IS MINE."

"One thing *is* certain," replied his mother, "that if she and Charles should marry, you are ousted from the property."

"Don't trouble yourself about such a contingency; I have taken steps which I think will prevent that. I speak in a double sense; but if I find, after all, that they are likely to fail, I shall take others still more decisive."

CHAPTER XIII.

Woodward is Discarded from Mr. Goodwin's Family—Other Particulars of Importance.

THE reader sees that Harry Woodward, having ascertained the mutual affection which subsisted between his brother and Alice, resorted to such measures as were likely to place obstructions in the way of their meeting, which neither of them was likely to remove. He felt, now, satisfied that Charles, in consequence of the malignant fabrications which he himself had palmed upon him for truth, would, most assuredly, make no further attempt to renew their former intimacy. When Alice, too, stated to him, that if she married not Charles, whether he proved worthy of her or otherwise, she would never marry another, he felt that she was unconsciously advancing the diabolical plans which he was projecting and attempting to carry into effect. If she died without marriage or without issue, the property, at her death, according to his uncle's will, reverted, as we

have said, to himself. His object, therefore, was to expedite her demise with as little delay as possible, in order that he might become master of the patrimony. With this generous principle for his guide, he made it a point to visit the Goodwins, and to see Alice as often as was compatible with the ordinary usages of society. Had Caterine Collins not put the unsuspecting and timid girl on her guard against the influence of the Evil Eye, as possessed by Woodward, for whom she acted as agent in the business, that poor girl would not have felt anything like what this diabolical piece of information occasioned her to experience. From the moment she heard it her active imagination took the alarm. An unaccountable terror seized upon her; she felt as if some dark doom was impending over her. It was in a peculiar degree the age of superstition; and the terrible influence of the Evil Eye was one not only of the commonest, but the most formidable of them all. The dark, significant, but sinister gaze of Harry Woodward was, she thought, forever upon her. She could not withdraw her imagination from it. It haunted her; it was fixed upon her, accompanied by a dreadful smile of apparent courtesy, but of a malignity which she felt as if it penetrated her whole being, both corporeal and mental. She hurried to bed at night with a hope that sleep might exclude the frightful vision which followed her; but, alas! even sleep was no security to her against its terrors. It was now that in her distempered dreams imagination ran riot. She fled from him, or attempted to fly, but feared that she had not strength for the effort; he followed her, she thought, and when she covered her face with her hands in order to avoid the sight of him, she felt him seizing her by the wrists, and removing her arms in order that he might pour the malignant influence of that terrible eye into her very heart. From these scenes she generally awoke with a shriek, when her maid, Sarah Sullivan, who of late slept in the same room with her, was obliged to come to her assistance, and soothe and sustain her as well as she could. She then lay for hours in such a state of terror and agitation as cannot be described, until near morning, when she generally fell into something like sound sleep. In fact, her waking moments were easy when compared with the persecution which the spirit of that man inflicted on her during her broken and restless slumbers. The dreadful eye, as it rested upon her, seemed as if its powerful but killing expression proceeded from the heart and spirit of some demon who sought to wither her by slow degrees out of life; and she felt that he was succeeding in his murderous and merciless object. It is not to be wondered at, then, that she dreaded the state of sleep more than any other condition of existence in which she could find herself. As night, and the hour of retiring to what ought to have been a refreshing rest returned, her alarms also returned with tenfold terror; and such was her apprehension of those fiend-like and nocturnal visits, that she entreated Sarah Sullivan to sleep with and awaken her the moment she heard her groan or shriek. Our readers may perceive that the innocent girl's tenure of life could not be a long one under such strange and unexampled sufferings.

The state of her health now occasioned her parents to feel the most serious alarm. She herself disclosed to them the fearful intelligence which had been communicated to her in such a friendly spirit by Caterine Collins, to wit, that Harry Woodward possessed the terrible power of the Evil Eye, and that she felt he was attempting to kill her by it; adding, that from the state of her mind and health she feared he had succeeded, and that certainly, if he were permitted to continue his visits, she knew that she could not long survive.

"I remember well," said her father, "that when he was a boy of about six or seven he was called, by way of nickname, *Harry na Suil Gloir;* and, indeed, the common report always has been that his mother possesses the evil eye against cattle, when she wishes to injure any neighbor that doesn't treat her with what she thinks to be proper and becoming respect. If her son Harry has the accursed gift it comes from her blood; they say there is some old story connected with her family that accounts for it, but, as I never heard it, I don't know what it is."

"I agree with you," said his wife; "if he has it at all, he may thank her for it. There is, I fear, some bad principle in her; for surely the fierceness and overbearing spirit of her pride, and the malignant calumnies of her foul and scandalous tongue, can proceed from nothing that's good."

"Well, Martha," observed her husband, "if the devilish and unaccountable hatred which she bears her fellow-creatures is violent, she has the satisfaction of knowing—and well she knows it—that it is returned to her with compound interest; I question if the devil himself is detested with such a venomous feeling as she is. Her own husband and children cannot like a bone in her skin."

"And yet," replied Alice, "you would have made this woman my mother-in-law! Do you think it was from any regard to us

that she came here to propose a marriage between her son and me? No, indeed, dear papa, it was for the purpose of securing the property, which her brother left me, for him who would otherwise have inherited it. And do you imagine for a moment that Harry Woodward himself ever felt one emotion of personal affection for me? If you do you are quite mistaken. I knew and felt all along—even while he was assuming the part of the lover—that he actually hated, not only me, but every one of the family. His object was the property, and so was that of his mother; but I absolve all the other members of the family from any knowledge of, or participation in, their schemes. As it is, if you wish to see yourselves childless you will allow his visits, or, if not, you will never permit his presence under this roof again. I fear, however, that it is now too late—you see that I am already on the brink of the grave, in consequence of the evil influence which the dreadful villain has gained over me, and, indeed," she added, bursting into tears, "I have, at this moment, no hopes of recovery. My strength, both bodily and mental, is gone—I am as weak as an infant, and I see nothing before me but an early grave. I have also other sorrows, but even to you I will not disclose them—perhaps on my bed of death I may."

The last words were scarcely uttered when she fainted. Her parents were dreadfully alarmed—in a moment both were in tears, but they immediately summoned assistance. Sarah Sullivan made her appearance, attended by others of the servants; the usual remedies were applied, and in the course of about ten or twelve minutes she recovered, and was weeping in a paroxysm bordering on despair when Harry Woodward entered the room. This was too much for the unfortunate girl. It seemed like setting the seal of death to her fate. She caught a glimpse of him. There was the malignant, but derisive look—one which he meant to be courteous, but which the bitter feeling within him overshadowed with the gloomy triumph of an evil spirit. She placed her hands over her eyes, gave one loud shriek, and immediately fell into strong convulsions.

"Good heavens!" exclaimed Woodward, "what is the matter with Miss Goodwin? I am sincerely sorry to see this. Is not her health good?"

"Pray, sir," replied her father, "how did you come to obtrude yourself here at such a moment of domestic distress?"

"Why, my dear sir," replied Woodward, "of course you must know that I was ignorant of all this. The hall-door was open, as it generally is, so was the door of this room, and I came in accordingly, as I have been in the habit of doing, to pay my respects to the family."

"Yes," said Mr. Goodwin, "the hall-door is generally open, but it shall not be so in future. Come out of the room, Mr. Woodward; your presence is not required here."

"O, certainly," replied Woodward, "I feel that; and I assure you I would not by any means have intruded had I known that Miss Goodwin was unwell."

"She *is* unwell," responded her father; "very unwell; unwell unto death, I fear. And now, Mr. Woodward," he proceeded, when they had reached the hall, "I beg to state peremptorily and decidedly that all intimacy and intercourse between you and our family must cease from this hour. You visit here no more."

"This is very strange language, Mr. Goodwin," replied the other, "and I think, as between two gentlemen, I am entitled to an explanation. I received the permission of yourself, your lady, and your daughter to visit here. I am not conscious of having done anything unbecoming a gentleman, that could or ought to deprive me of a privilege which I looked upon as an honor."

"Well, then," replied her father, "look into your own conscience, and perhaps you will find the necessary explanation there. I am master of my own house and my own motions, and now I beg you instantly to withdraw, and to consider this your last visit here."

"May I not be permitted to call to-morrow to inquire after Miss Goodwin's health?"

"Assuredly not."

"Nor to send a messenger?"

"By no means; and now, sir, withdraw; I must go in to my daughter, till I see what can be done for her, or whether anything can or not."

Harry Woodward looked upon him steadily for a time, and the old man felt as if his very strength was becoming relaxed; a sense of faintness and terror came over him, and, as Woodward took his departure in silence, the father of Alice began to abandon all hopes of her recovery. He himself felt the effects of the mysterious gaze which Woodward had fastened on him, and entered the room, conscious of the fatal power of the Evil Eye.

Fit after fit succeeded each other for the space of, at least, an hour and a half, after which they ceased, but left her in such a state of weakness and terror that she might be said, at that moment, to hover between life and death. She was carried in her distracted father's arms to bed, and after they

had composed her as well as they could, her father said,—

"My darling child, you may now summon strength and courage; that man, that bad man, will never come under this roof again. I have finally settled the point, and you have nothing further now, nor anything worse, to dread from him. I have given the villain his *nunc dimittis* once and forever, and you will never see him more."

"But I fear, papa," she replied, feebly, "that, as I said before, it is now too late. I feel that he has killed me. I know not how I will pass this night. I dread the hours of sleep above all conditions of my unhappy existence. O, no wonder that the entrance of that man-demon to our house should be heralded by the storms and hurricanes of heaven, and that the terrible fury of the elements, as indicative of the Almighty's anger, should mark his introduction to our family. Then the prodigy which took place when the bonfires were lighted to welcome his accursed return—the shower of blood! O, may God support me, and, above all things, banish him from my dreams! Still, I feel some relief by the knowledge that he is not to come here again. Yes, I feel that it relieves me; but, alas! I fear that even the consciousness of that cannot prevent the awful impression that I think I am near death."

"No, darling," replied her mother, "don't allow that thought to gain upon you. We'll get a fairy-man or a fairy-woman, because they know the best remedies against everything of that kind, when a common leech or chirurgeon can do nothing."

"No," replied her father, "I will allow nothing of the kind under this roof. It's not a safe thing to have dealings with such people. We know that the Church forbids it. Perhaps it's a witch we might stumble on; and would it not be a frightful thing to see one of those who are leagued with the devil bringing their unconsecrated breaths about us this week, as it were, and, perhaps, burned the next? No, we will have a regular physician, who has his own character, as such, to look to and support by his honesty and skill, but none of those withered classes of hell that are a curse to the country."

"Very well," replied Mrs. Goodwin, "have your own way in it. I dare say you are right."

"O, don't bring any fairy-women or fairy-men about me," said Alice. "The very sight of them would take away the little life I have left."

In the meantime Harry Woodward, who had a variety of plans and projects to elaborate, found himself, as every villain of his kind generally does, encompassed by doubt and apprehension of their failure. The reader will understand the condition of his heart and feelings when he advances further in this narrative. Old Lindsay, who was of a manly and generous disposition, felt considerable surprise that all intimacy should have been discontinued between his son Charles and Alice Goodwin. As for the property which she now possessed, he never once thought of it in connection with their former affection for each other. He certainly appreciated the magnanimity and disinterestedness of his son in ceasing to urge his claims after she had become possessed of such a fortune; and it struck him that something must have been wrong, or some evil agency at work, which prevented the Goodwins from re-establishing their former intimacy with Charles whilst they seemed to court that of his brother. Here was something strange, and he could not understand it. One morning, when they were all seated at breakfast, he spoke as follows:—

"I can't," he said, "comprehend the conduct of the Goodwins. Their daughter, if we are to judge from appearances, has discarded her accepted lover, poor Charles, here. Now, this doesn't look well. There seems to be something capricious, perhaps selfish, in it. Still, knowing the goodness of their hearts, as I do, I cannot but feel that there is something like a mystery in it. I had set my heart upon a marriage between Charles and Alice before ever she came into the property bequeathed to her. In this I was not selfish certainly. I looked only to their happiness. Yes, and my mind is still set upon this marriage, and it shall go hard with me or I will accomplish it."

"Father," said Charles, "if you regard or respect me, I entreat of you to abandon any such project. Ferdora O'Connor is now the favorite there. He is rich and I am poor; no, the only favor I ask is that you will never more allude to the subject in my hearing."

"But I will allude to it, and I will demand an explanation besides," replied Lindsay.

"Father," observed Harry, "I trust that no member of this family is capable of an act of unparalleled meanness. I, myself, pleaded my brother's cause with that heartless and deceitful girl in language which could not be mistaken. And what was the consequence? Because I ventured to do so I have been forbidden to visit there again. They told me, without either preface or apology, that they will have no further intercourse with our family. Ferdora O'Connor is the chosen man."

"It is false," said his sister, her eyes

sparkling with indignation as she spoke ; "it is abominably false ; and, father, you are right ; seek an explanation from the Goodwins. I feel certain that there are evil spirits at work."

"I shall, my dear girl," replied her father ; "it is only an act of justice to them. And if the matter be at all practicable, I shall have Charles and her married still."

"Why not think of Harry?" said his wife ; "as the person originally destined to receive the property, he has the strongest claim."

"You are talking now in the selfish and accursed principles of the world," replied Lindsay. "Charles has the claim of her early affection, and I shall urge it."

"Very well," said his wife ; "if you succeed in bringing about a marriage between her and Charles, I will punish both you and him severely."

"As how, madam?" asked her husband.

"Are you aware of one fact, Lindsay?"

"I am aware of one melancholy fact," he replied, sarcastically.

"And, pray, what is it?" she inquired.

"Faith," he replied, "that I am your husband."

"O, yes—just so—that is the way I am treated, children ; you see it and you hear it. But, now, listen to me ; you know, Lindsay, that the property I brought you, as your unfortunate wife, was property in my own right ; you know, too, that by our marriage settlement that property was settled on me, with the right of devising it to any of my children whom I may select for that purpose. Now, I tell you, that if you press this marriage between Charles and Alice Goodwin, I shall take this property into my own hands, shall make my will in favor of Harry, and you and your children may seek a shelter where you can find one."

"Me and *my* children! Why, I believe you think you have no children but Harry here. Well, you may do as you like with your property ; I am not so poor but I and my children can live upon my own. This house and place, I grant you, are yours, and, as for myself, I am willing to leave it to-day ; a life of exclusion and solitude will be better than that which I lead with you."

"Papa," said Maria, throwing her arms about his neck and bursting into tears, "when you go I shall go ; and wherever you may go to, I shall accompany you."

"Father," said Charles, in a choking voice, and grasping his hand as he spoke, "if you leave this house you shall not go alone. Neither I nor Maria shall separate ourselves from you. We will have enough to live on with comfort and decency."

"Mother," said Harry, rising up and approaching her with a face of significant severity ; "mother, you have forced me to say —and heaven knows the pain with which I say it—that I am ashamed of you. Why will you use language that is calculated to alienate from me the affections of a brother and sister whom I love with so much tenderness? I trust you understand me when I tell you now that I identify myself with their feelings and objects, and that no sordid expectation of your property shall ever induce me to take up your quarrel or separate myself from them. Dispose of your property as you wish ; I for one shall not earn it by sacrificing the best affections of the heart, nor by becoming a slave to such a violent and indefensible temper as yours. As for me, I shall not stand in need of your property—I will have enough of my own."

They looked closely at each other ; but that look was sufficient. The cunning mother thoroughly understood the freemason glance of his eye, and exclaimed,—

"Well, I see I am abandoned by *all* my children ; but I will endeavor to bear it. I now leave you to yourselves—to meditate and put in practice whatever plot you please against my happiness. Indeed, I know what a consolation my death would be to you all."

She then withdrew, in accordance with the significant look which Harry gave towards the door.

"Harry," said Lindsay, holding out his hand, "you are not the son of my blood, but I declare to heaven I love you as well as if you were. Your conduct is noble and generous ; ay, and as a natural consequence, disinterested ; there is no base and selfish principle in you, my dear boy ; and I honor and love you as if I were your father in reality."

"Harry," said Maria, kissing him, "I repeat and feel all that dear papa has said."

"And so do I," exclaimed Charles, "and if I ever entertained any other feeling, I fling it to the winds."

"You all overrate me," said Harry ; "but, perhaps, if you were aware of my private remonstrances with my mother upon her unfortunate principles and temper, you would give me more credit even than you do. My object is to produce peace and harmony between you, and if I can succeed in that I shall feel satisfied, let my mother's property go where it may. Of course, you must now be aware that I separate myself from her and her projects, and identify myself, as I said, with you all. Still, there is one request I have to make of you, father, my dear father, for well I may call you so ; and it is that you

will not, as an independent man and a gentleman, attempt to urge this marriage, on which you seem to have set your heart, between Charles and Goodwin's daughter. You are not aware of what I know upon this subject. She and Ferdora O'Connor are about to be married; but I will not mention what I *could* mention until after that ceremony shall have taken place."

"Well," said his sister, "you appear to speak very sincerely, Harry, but I know and feel that there is some mistake somewhere."

"Harry," said Lindsay, "from what has occurred this morning, I shall be guided by you. I will *not* press this marriage, neither shall I stoop to seek an explanation."

"Thank you, sir," replied Harry. "I advise you as I do because I would not wish to see our whole family insulted in your person."

Maria and her brother Charles looked at each other, and seemed to labor under a strange and somewhat mysterious feeling. The confidence, however, with which Harry spoke evidently depressed them, and, as they entertained not the slightest suspicion of his treachery, they left the apartment each with a heavy heart.

Harry, from this time forward, associated more with his brother than he had done, and seemed to take him more into his confidence. He asked him out in all his sporting expeditions; and proposed that they should each procure a shooting dress of the same color and materials, which was accordingly done; and so strongly did they resemble each other, when dressed in them, that in an uncertain light, or at a distance, it was nearly impossible to distinguish the one from the other. In fact, the brothers were now inseparable, Harry's object being to keep Charles as much under his eye and control as possible, from an apprehension that, on cool reflection, he might take it into his head to satisfy himself by a personal interview with Alice Goodwin as to the incomprehensible change which had estranged her affection from him.

Still, although the affection of those brothers seemed to increase, the conduct of Harry was full of mystery. That the confidence he placed in Charles was slight and partial admitted of no doubt. He was in the habit, for instance, of going out after the family had gone to bed, as we have mentioned before; and it was past all doubt that he had been frequently seen accompanied, in his midnight rambles, by what was known in the neighborhood as the *Black Spectre*, or, by the common people, as the *Shan-dhinne-dhuv*, or the dark old man. These facts invested his character, which, in spite of all his plausibility of manner, was unpopular, with something of great dread, as involving on his part some unholy association with the evil and supernatural. This was peculiarly the age of superstition and of a belief in the connection of both men and women with diabolical agencies; for such was the creed of the day.

One evening, about this time, Caterine Collins was on her way home to Rathfillan, when, on crossing a piece of bleak moor adjacent to the town, a powerful young fellow, dressed in the trais, cloak, and barrad of the period, started up from a clump of furze bushes, and addressed her as follows:—

"Caterine," said he, "are you in a hurry?"

"Not particularly," she replied; "but in God's name, Shawn, what brings you here? Are you mad? or what tempts you to come within the jaws of the law that are gaping for you as their appointed victim? Don't you know you are an outlaw?"

"I will answer your first question first," he replied. "What tempted me to come here? Vengeance—deep and deadly vengeance. Vengeance upon the villain who has ruined Grace Davoren. I had intended to take *her* life first; but I am an Irishman, and will not visit upon the head of the innocent girl, whom this incarnate devil has tempted beyond her strength, the crime for which *he* is accountable."

"Well, indeed, Shawn, it would be only serving him right; but, in the meantime, you had better be on your guard; it is said that he fears neither God nor devil, and always goes well armed; so be cautious, and if you take him at all, it must be by treachery."

"No," said the outlaw, indignantly, "I'll never take him or any man by treachery. I know I am an outlaw; but it was the merciless laws of the country, and their injustice to me and mine, that made me so; I resisted them openly and like a man; but, bad as I am supposed to be, I will never stain either my name or my conscience by an act of cowardly treachery. I will meet this dark villain face to face, and take my revenge as a brave man ought. You say he goes well armed, and that is a proof that he feels his own guilt; yes, he goes well armed, you say; so do I, and it will not be the treacherous murderer that he will meet, but the open foe."

"Well," replied Caterine, "that is just like you, Shawn; and it is no wonder that the women were fond of you."

"Yes," said he, "but the girl that was dearer to me a thousand times than my own life has proved faithless, because there is a stain

upon my name — a stain, but no crime, Caterine; a stain made by the law, but no crime. Had her heart been loyal and true, she would have loved me ten times more in consequence of my very disgrace—if disgrace I ought to call it; but instead of that —but wait—O, the villain! Well, I shall meet him, I trust, before long, and then, Caterine, ah, THEN!"

"Well, Shawn, if she has desarted you, I know one that loves you better than ever she did, and that would never desart you, as Grace Davoren has done."

"Ah, Caterine," replied the outlaw, sorrowfully, "I am past that now; my heart is broke—I could never love another. What proof of truth or affection could any other woman give me after the treachery of her who once said she loved me so well? She said, indeed, some time ago, that it was her father forced her to do it, but that was after she had seen *him*, for well I know she often told me a different story before the night of the bonfire and the shower of blood. Well, Caterine, that shower of blood was not sent for nothing. It came as the prophecy of his fate, which, if I have life, will be a bloody one."

"Shawn," replied Caterine, as if she had not paid much attention to his words, "Shawn, dear Shawn, there is one woman who would give her life for your love."

"Ah," said Shawn, "it's aisily said, at all events—aisily said; but who is it Caterine?"

"She is now speaking to you," she returned. "Shawn, you cannot but know that I have long loved you; and I now tell you that I love you still—ay, and a thousand times more than ever Grace Davoren did."

"You!" said Shawn, recoiling with indignation; "is it you, a spy, a fortune-teller, a go-between, and, if all be true, a witch; you, whose life and character would make a modest woman blush to hear them mentioned? Why, the curse of heaven upon you! how dare you think of proposing such a subject to me? Do you think because I'm marked by the laws that my heart has lost anything of its honesty and manhood? Begone, you hardened and unholy vagabond, and leave my sight."

"Is that your language, Shawn?"

"it is; and what other language could any man with but a single spark of honesty and respect for himself use toward you? Begone, I say."

"Yes, I will begone; but perhaps you may live to rue your words: that is all."

"And, perhaps, so may you," he replied. "Leave my sight. You are a disgrace to the name of woman."

She turned upon her heel, and on the instant bent her steps towards Rathfillan House.

"*Shawn-na-Middogue*," she said as she went along, "*you* talk about revenge, but wait till you know what the revenge of an insulted woman is. It is not an aisy thing to know your haunts; but I'll set them upon your trail that will find you out if you were to hide yourself in the bowels of the earth, for the words you used to me this night. *Dar manim*, I will never rest either night or day until I see you swing from a gibbet."

Instead of proceeding to the little town of Rathfillan, she changed her mind and turned her steps to Rathfillan House, the residence, as our readers are aware, of the generous and kind-hearted Mr. Lindsay.

On arriving there she met our old acquaintance, Barney Casey, on the way from the kitchen to the stable. Observing that she was approaching the hall-door with the evident purpose of knocking, and feeling satisfied that her business could be with none of the family except Harry, he resolved to have some conversation with her, in order, if possible, to get a glimpse of its purport. Not, indeed, that he entertained any expectation of such a result, because he knew the craft and secrecy of the woman he had to deal with; but, at all events, he thought that he might still glean something significant even by her equivocations, if not by her very silence. He accordingly turned over and met her.

"Well, Caterine, won't this be a fine night when the moon and stars comes out to show you the road home again afther you manage the affair you're bent on?"

"Why, what am I bent on?" she replied, sharply.

"Why, to build a church to-night, wid the assistance of Mr. Harry Woodward."

"Talk with respect of your masther's stepson," she replied, indignantly.

"And my sweet misthress's son," returned Barney, significantly. "Why, Caterine, I hope you won't lift me till I fall. What did I say disrespectful of him? Faith, I only know that the wondher is how such a devil's scald could have so good and kind-hearted a son," he added, disentangling himself from her suspicions, knowing perfectly well, as he did, that any unfavorable expression he might utter against that vindictive gentleman would most assuredly be communicated to him with comments much stronger than the text. This would only throw him out of Harry's confidence, and deprive him of those opportunities of probably learning, from their casual conversation, some tendency of his mysterious movements, especially at night; for that he was enveloped in mystery was a

fact of which he felt no doubt whatsoever. He accordingly resolved to cancel the consequences even of the equivocal allusion to him which he had made, and which he saw at a glance that Caterine's keen suspicions had interpreted into a bad sense.

"So you see, Katty," he proceeded, "agra-machree that you wor, don't lift me, as I said, till I fall; but what harm is it to be fond of a spree wid a purty girl? Sure it's a good man's case; but I'll tell you more; you must know the misthress's wig took fire this mornin', and she was within an inch of havin' the house in flames. Ah, it's she that blew a regular breeze, threatened to make the masther and the other two take to their travels from about the house and place, and settle the same house and place upon Mr. Harry."

"Well, Barney," said Caterine, deeply interested, "what was the upshot?"

"Why, that Masther Harry—long life to him—parted company wid her on the spot; said he would take part wid the masther and the other two, and tould her to her teeth that he did not care a damn about the property, and that she might leave it as a legacy to ould Nick, who, he said, desarved it better at her hands than he did."

"Well, well," replied Caterine, "I never thought he was such a fool as all that comes to. Devil's cure to him, if she laves it to some one else! that's my compassion for him."

"Well, but, Caterine, what's the news? When will the sky fall, you that knows so much about futurity?"

"The news is anything but good, Barney. The sky will fall some Sunday in the middle of next week, and then for the lark-catching. But tell me, Barney, is Mr. Harry within? because, if he is, I'd thank you to let him know that I wish to see him. I have a bit of favor to ask of him about my uncle Solomon's cabin; the masther's threatnin' to pull it down."

Now, Barney knew the assertion to be a lie, because it was only a day or two previous to the conversation that he had heard Mr. Lindsay express his intention of building the old herbalist a new one. He kept his knowledge of this to himself, however.

"And so you want him to change the masther's mind upon the subject. Faith and you're just in luck after this mornin's skirmish—skirmish! no bedad, but a field day itself; the masther could refuse him nothing. Will I say what you want him for?"

"You may or you may not; but, on second thoughts, I think it will be enough to say simply that I wish to spake to him particularly."

"Very well, Caterine," replied Barney, "I'll tell him so."

In a few minutes Harry joined her on the lawn, where she awaited him, and the following dialogue took place between them:

"Well, Caterine, Casey tells me that you have something particular to say to me."

"And very particular indeed, it is, Mr. Harry."

"Well, then, the sooner we have it the better; pray, what is it?"

"I'm afeard, Mr. Woodward, that unless you have some good body's blessin' about you, your life isn't worth a week's purchase."

"Some good body's blessing!" he replied ironically; "well, never mind that, but let me know the danger, if danger there be; at all events, I am well prepared for it."

"The danger then is this—and terrible it is—that born devil, *Shawn-na-Middogue*, has got hold of what's goin' on between you and Grace Davoren."

"Between *me* and Grace Davoren!" he exclaimed, in a voice of well-feigned astonishment. "You mean my brother Charles. Why, Caterine, that soft-hearted and soft-headed idiot, for I can call him nothing else, has made himself a perfect fool about her, and what is worst of all, I am afraid he will break his engagement with Miss Goodwin, and marry this wench. Me! why, except that he sent me once or twice to meet her, and apologize for his not being able to keep his appointment with her, I know nothing whatsoever of the unfortunate girl, unless that, like a fool, as she is, it seems to me that she is as fond of him as he, the fool, on the other hand, is of her. As for my part, I shall deliver his messages to her no more—and, indeed, it was wrong of me ever to do so."

The moon had now risen, and Caterine, on looking keenly and incredulously into his face, read nothing there but an expression of apparent sincerity and sorrow for the indiscretion and folly of his brother.

"Well," she proceeded, "in spite of all you tell me I say that it does not make your danger the less. It is not your brother but yourself that he suspects, and whether right or wrong, it is upon you that his vengeance will fall."

"Well, but, Caterine," he replied, "could you not see *Shawn-na-Middogue* and remedy that?"

"How, sir?" she replied.

"Why, by telling him the truth," said the far-sighted villain, "that it is my brother, and not I, that was the intriguer with her."

"Is that generous towards your brother,

Mr. Woodward? No, sir; sooner than bring the vengeance of such a person as Shawn upon him, I would have the tongue cut out of my mouth, or the right arm off my body."

"And I, Caterine," he answered, retrieving himself as well as he could; "yes, *I* deserve to have my tongue cut out, and my right arm chopped off, for what I have said. O, no; if there *be* danger let me run the risk, and not poor, good, kind-hearted Charles, who is certainly infatuated by this girl. He is to meet her to-morrow night at nine o'clock, in the little clump of alders below the well, but I shall go in his place—that is, if I can prevail upon him to allow me—and endeavor once for all to put an end to this business: mark that I said, if he will allow me, although I scarcely think he will. Now, good-night, and many thanks for your good wishes towards myself and him. Accept of this, and good-night again." As he spoke he placed some money in her unreluctant hand, and returned on his way home.

CHAPTER XIV.

Shawn-na-Middogue Stabs Charles Lindsay in Mistake for his Brother.

Shawn-na-Middogue, though uneducated, was a young man of no common intellect. That he had been selected to head the outlaws, or rapparees, of that day, was a sufficient proof of this. After parting from Caterine Collins, on whom the severity of his language fell with such bitterness, he began to reflect that he had acted with great indiscretion, to say the least of it. He knew that if there was a woman in the barony who, if she determined on it, could trace him to his most secret haunts, she was that woman. He saw, too, that after she had left him, evidently in deep indignation, she turned her steps towards Rathfillan House, most probably with an intention of communicating to Harry Woodward the strong determinations of vengeance which he had expressed against him. Here, then, by want of temper and common policy, had he created two formidable enemies against himself. This, he felt, was an oversight for which he could scarcely forgive himself. He resolved, if possible, to repair the error he had committed, and, with this object in view, he hung about the place until her return should afford him an opportunity of making such an explanation as might soothe her into good humor and a more friendly feeling towards him. Nay, he even determined to promise her marriage, in order to disarm her resentment and avert the danger which, he knew, was to be apprehended from it. He accordingly stationed himself in the shelter of a ditch, along which he knew she must pass on her way home. He had not long, however, to wait. In the course of half an hour he saw her approach, and as she was passing him he said in a low, confidential voice,—

"Caterine!"

"Who is that?" she asked, but without exhibiting any symptoms of alarm.

"It's me," he replied, "Shawn."

"Well," she replied, "and what is that to me whether it's you or not?"

"I have thought over our discourse a while ago, and I'm sorry for what I've said; —will you let me see you a part of the way home?"

"I can't prevent you from comin'," she replied, "if you're disposed to come—the way is as free to you as to me."

They then proceeded together, and our readers must gather from the incidents which are to follow what the result was of Shawn's policy in his conversation with her on the way. It is enough to say that they parted on the best and most affectionate terms, and that a certain smack, very delicious to the lips of Caterine, was heard before Shawn bade her good-night.

Barney Casey, who suspected there was something in the wind, in consequence of the secret interview which took place between Caterine Collins and Harry, conscious as he felt that it was for no good purpose, watched that worthy gentleman's face with keen but quiet observation, in the hope of being able to draw some inference from its expression. This, however, was a vain task. The face was impassable, inscrutable; no symptom of agitation, alarm, or concealed satisfaction could be read in it, or anything else, in short, but the ordinary expression of the most perfect indifference. Barney knew his man, however, and felt aware, from former observations, of the power which Woodward possessed of disguising his face whenever he wished, even under the influence of the strongest emotions. Accordingly, notwithstanding all this indifference of manner, he felt that it was for no common purpose Caterine Collins sought an interview with him, and with this impression on his mind he resolved to watch his motions closely.

The next day Harry and Charles went out to course, accompanied by Barney himself, who, by the way, observed that the former made a point to bring a case of pistols and a dagger with him, which he concealed so as that they might not be seen. This discovery was the result of Barney's vigilance and sus-

picions, for when Harry was prepared to follow his brother, who went to put the dogs in leash, he said:

"Barney, go and assist Mr. Charles, and I will join you both on the lawn."

Barney accordingly left the room and closed the door after him; but instead of proceeding, as directed, to join Charles, he deliberately put his eye to the key-hole, and saw Harry secrete the pistols and dagger about his person. Each, also, brought his gun at the suggestion of Harry, who said, that although they went out merely to course, yet it was not improbable that they might get a random shot at the grouse or partridge as they went along. Upon all these matters Barney made his comments, although he said nothing upon the subject even to Charles, from whom he scarcely ever concealed a secret. That Harry was brave and intrepid even to rashness he knew; but why he should arm himself with such secrecy and caution occasioned him much conjecture. His intrigue with Grace Davoren was beginning to be suspected. *Shawn-na-Middogue* might have heard of it. Caterine Collins was one of Woodward's agents—at least it was supposed from their frequent interviews that she was, to a certain degree, in his confidence; might not her request, then, to see him on the preceding night proceed from an anxiety, on her part, to warn him against some danger to be apprehended from that fearful freebooter? This was well and correctly reasoned on the part of Barney, and, with those impressions fixed upon his mind, he accompanied the two brothers on the sporting expedition of the day.

We shall not dwell upon their success, which was even better than they had expected. Nothing, however, occurred to render either pistols or dagger necessary; but Barney observed that, on their return home, Harry made it a point to come by the well where he and Grace Davoren were in the habit of meeting, and, having taken his brother aside, he pointed to the little dark clump of alders, which skirted a small grove, and, having whispered something to him which he could not hear, they passed on by the old, broken boreen, which we have described, and reached home loaded with game, but without any particular adventure. Barney's vigilance, however, was still awake, and he made up his mind to ascertain, if possible, why Harry had armed himself, for as yet he had nothing but suspicion on which to rest. He knew that whenever he went out at night or in the evening he always went armed; and this was only natural, for the country was in a dangerous and disturbed state, owing, as the report went, to the outrages against property which were said to have been committed by *Shawn-na-Middogue* and his rapparees. During his sporting excursions in the open day, however, he never knew him to go armed in this manner before, because, on such occasions he had always seen his pistols and dagger hanging against the wall, where he usually kept them. On this occasion, however, Woodward went like a man who felt apprehensive of some premeditated violence on the part of an enemy. Judging, therefore, from what he had seen, as well as from what he conjectured, Barney, as we said, resolved to watch him closely.

In the meantime, the state of poor Alice Goodwin's health was deplorable. The dreadful image of Harry Woodward, or, rather, the frightful power of his satanic spirit, fastened upon her morbid and diseased imagination with such force, that no effort of her reason could shake it off. That dreadful eye was perpetually upon her and before her, both asleep and awake, and, lest she might have any one point on which to rest for comfort, the idea of Charles Lindsay's attachment to Grace Davoren would come over her, only to supersede one misery by introducing another. In this wretched state she was when the calamitous circumstances, which we are about to relate, took place.

Barney Casey was a good deal engaged that evening, for indeed he was a general servant in his master's family, and was expected to put a hand to, and superintend, everything. He was, therefore, out of the way for a time, having gone to Rathfillan on a message for his mistress, whom he cursed in his heart for having sent him. He lost little time, however, in discharging it, and was just on his return when he saw Harry Woodward entering the old boreen we have described; and, as the night was rather dark, he resolved to ascertain—although he truly suspected—the object of this nocturnal adventure. He accordingly dogged him at a safe distance, and, in accordance with his suspicions, he found that Woodward directed his steps to the clump of alders which he had, on their return that day, pointed out to his brother. Here he (Barney) ensconced himself in a close thicket, in order to watch the event. Woodward had not been many minutes there when Grace Davoren joined him. She seemed startled, and surprised, and disappointed, as Casey could perceive by her manner, or rather by the tones of her voice; but, whatever the cause of her disappointment may have been, there was little time left for either remonstrances or explanation on the part of her lover. Whilst addressing her, a young and powerful man

bounded forward, and, brandishing a long dagger—the dreaded middogue—plunged it into his body, and her companion fell with a groan. The act was rapid as lightning, and the moment the work of blood and vengeance had been accomplished, the young fellow bounded away again with the same speed observable in the rapidity of his approach. Grace's screams and shrieks were loud and fearful.

"Murdherin' villain of hell," she shouted after Shawn—for it was he—"you have killed the wrong man—you have murdered the innocent. This is his brother."

Barney was at her side in a moment.

"Heavenly Father!" he exclaimed, shocked and astounded by her words, "what means this? Is it Mr. Charles?"

"O, yes," she replied, not conscious that in the alarm and terror of the moment she had betrayed herself, or rather her paramour—"innocent Mr. Charles I'm afeard is murdhered by that revengeful villain, and now, Barney, what is to be done, and how will we get assistance to bring him home? But, cheerna above! what will become of me!"

"Mr. Charles," said Barney, "is it possible that it is you that is here?"

"I am here, Barney," he replied, with difficulty, "and, I fear, mortally wounded."

"O, God forbid!" replied his humble but faithful friend. "I hope it is not so bad as you think."

"Take this handkerchief," said Charles, "tie it about my breast, and try and stop the blood. I feel myself getting weak."

This Barney proceeded to do, in which operation we shall leave him, assisted by the unfortunate girl who was indirectly the means of bringing this dreadful calamity upon him.

Shawn-na-Middogue was not out of the reach of hearing when Grace shouted after him, having paused to ascertain, if possible, whether he had done his work effectually. That Harry Woodward was Grace's paramour, *he knew*; and that Charles was innocent of that guilt, he also knew. All that Catorine Collins had told him on the preceding night went for nothing, because he felt that Woodward had coined those falsehoods with a view to screen himself from his (Shawn's) vengeance. But in the meantime Grace's words, uttered in the extremity of her terror, assured him that there had been some mistake, and that one brother might have come to explain and apologize for the absence of the other. He consequently crept back within hearing of their conversation, and ascertained with regret the mistake he had committed. Shawn, at night, seldom went unattended by several of his gang, and on this occasion he was accompanied by about a dozen of them. His murderous mistake occasioned him to feel deep sorrow, for he was perfectly well acquainted with the amiable and generous character which Charles bore amongst his father's tenantry. His life had been, not only inoffensive, but benevolent; whilst that of his brother—short as was the time since his return to Rathfillan House—was marked by a very licentious profligacy,—a profligacy which he attempted in vain to conceal. Whilst Grace Davoren and Casey were attempting to staunch the blood which issued from the wound, four men, despatched by Shawn for the purpose, came, as if alarmed by Grace's shrieks, to the scene of the tragedy, and, after having inquired as to the cause of its occurrence, precisely as if they had been ignorant of it, they proposed that the only thing to be done, so as to give him a chance for life, was to carry him home without a moment's delay. He was accordingly raised upon their shoulders, and, with more sympathy than could be expected from such men, was borne to his father's house in apparently a dying state.

It is unnecessary to attempt any description of the alarm which his appearance there created. His father and Maria were distracted; even his mother manifested tokens of unusual sorrow, for after all she *was* his mother; and nothing, indeed, could surpass the sorrow of the whole family. The servants were all in tears, and nothing but sobs and wailings could be heard throughout the house. Harry Woodward himself put his handkerchief to his eyes, and seemed to feel a deep but subdued sorrow. Medical aid was immediately sent for, but such was his precarious condition that no opinion could be formed as to his ultimate recovery.

The next morning the town of Rathfillan, and indeed the parish at large, were in a state of agitation, and tumult, and sorrow, as soon as the melancholy catastrophe had become known. The neighbors and tenants flocked in multitudes to learn the particulars, and ascertain his state. About eleven o'clock Harry mounted his horse, and, in defiance of the interdict that had been laid upon him, proceeded at a rapid pace to Mr. Goodwin's house, in order to disclose—with what object the reader may conjecture—the melancholy event which had happened. He found Goodwin, his wife, and Sarah Sullivan in the parlor, which he had scarcely entered when Mr. Goodwin got up, and, approaching him in a state of great alarm and excitement, exclaimed,—

"Good Heavens, Mr. Woodward! can

this dreadful intelligence which we have heard be true?"

"O, you have heard it, then," replied Woodward. "Alas! yes, it is too true, and my unfortunate brother lies with life barely in him, but without the slightest hope of recovery. As for myself I am in a state of absolute distraction; and were it not that I possess the consciousness of having done everything in my power as a friend and brother to withdraw him from this unfortunate intrigue, I think I should become fairly crazed. Miss Goodwin has for some time past been aware of my deep anxiety upon this very subject, because I deemed it a solemn duty on my part to let her know that he had degraded himself by this low attachment to such a girl, and was consequently utterly unworthy of her affection. I could not see the innocence and purity imposed upon, nor her generous confidence placed on an unworthy object. This, however, is not a time to deal harshly by him. He will not be long with us, and is entitled to nothing but our forbearance and sympathy. Poor fellow! he has paid a heavy and a fatal penalty for his crime. Alas, my brother! cut down in the very prime of life, when there was still time enough for reformation and repentance! O, it is too much!"

He turned towards the window, and, putting his handkerchief to his eyes, did the pathetic with a very good grace.

"But," said Mrs. Goodwin, "what were the exact circumstances under which the deplorable act of vengeance was committed?"

"Alas! the usual thing, Mrs. Goodwin," replied Harry, attempting to clear his throat: "they met last night between nine and ten o'clock, in a clump of alders, near the well from which the inhabitants of the adjoining hamlet fetch their water. The outlaw, *Shawn-na-Middoque*, a rejected lover of the girl's, stung with jealousy and vengeance, surprised them, and stabbed my unfortunate brother, I fear, to death."

"And do you think there is no hope?" she added, with tears in her eyes; "O, if he had only time for repentance!"

"Alas! madam, the medical man who has seen him scarcely holds out any hope: but, as you say, if he had time even to repent, there would be much consolation in that."

"Well," observed Goodwin, his eyes moist with tears, "after this day, I shall never place confidence in man. I did imagine that if ever there was an individual whose heart was the source of honor, truth, generosity, disinterestedness, and affection, your brother Charles was that man. I am confounded, amazed—and the whole thing appears to me like a dream; at all events, thank God, our daughter has had a narrow escape of him."

"Pray, by the way, how is Miss Goodwin?" asked Harry; "I hope she is recovering."

"So far from that," replied her father, "she is sinking fast; in truth we entertain but little hopes of her."

"On the occasion of my last visit here you forbade me your house, Mr. Goodwin," said Woodward; "but perhaps, now that you are aware of the steps I have taken to detach your daughter's affections from an individual whom I knew at the time to be unworthy of them, you may be prevailed on to rescind that stern and painful decree."

Goodwin, who was kind-hearted and placable, seemed rather perplexed, and looked towards his wife, as if to be guided by her decision.

"Well, indeed," she replied, "I don't exactly know; perhaps we will think of it."

"No," replied Sarah Sullivan, who was toasting a thin slice of bread for Alice's breakfast. "No; if you allow this man to come about the place, as God is to judge me, you will both have a hand in your daughter's death. If the devils from hell were to visit here, she might bear it; but at the present moment one look from that man would kill her."

This remonstrance decided them.

"No, Mr. Woodward," said Goodwin, "the truth is, my daughter entertains a strong prejudice against you—in fact, a terror of you—and under these circumstances, and considering, besides, her state of health, we could not think of permitting your visits, at least," he added, "until that prejudice be removed and her health restored—if it ever shall be. We owe you no ill-will, sir; but under the circumstances we cannot, for the present, at least, allow you to visit us."

"Well," replied Woodward, "perhaps—and I sincerely trust—her health will be restored, and her prejudices against me removed, and when better times come about I shall look with anxiety to the privilege of renewing my intimacy with you all."

"Perhaps so," returned Mr. Goodwin, "and then we shall receive your visits with pleasure."

Woodward then shook hands with him and his wife, and wished them a good morning.

On his way home worthy *Sail Balor* began to entertain reflections upon his prospects in life that he felt to be rather agreeable. Here was his brother, whom he had kindly sent to apologize to Grace Davoren for the impossibility from illness of his meeting her accord-

ing to their previous arrangement; yes, we say he feigned illness on that evening, and prevailed on the unsuspecting young man to go in his stead, in order, as he said, to give her the necessary explanations for his absence. Charles undertook this mission the more willingly, as it was his firm intention to remonstrate with the girl on the impropriety of her conduct, in continuing a secret and guilty intrigue, which must end only in her own shame and ruin. But when Harry deputed him upon such a message he anticipated the very event which had occurred, or, rather, a more fatal one still, for, despite his hopes of Alice Goodwin's ill state of health, he entertained strong apprehensions that his stepfather might, by some accidental piece of intelligence, be restored to his original impressions on the relative position in which she and Charles stood. An interview between Mr. Lindsay and her might cancel all he had done; and if every obstruction which he had endeavored to place between their union were removed, her health might recover, their marriage take place, and then what became of his chance for the property? It is true he had managed his plans and speculations with great ability. Substituting Charles, like a villain as he was, in his own affair with Grace Davoren, he contrived to corroborate the falsehood by the tragic incident of the preceding night. Now, if this would not satisfy Alice of the truth of his own falsehood, nothing could. That Charles was the *intrigant* must be clear and palpable from what had happened, and accordingly, after taking a serious review of his own iniquity, he felt, as we said, peculiarly gratified with his prospects. Still, it cannot be denied that an occasional shadow, not proceeding from any consciousness of guilt, but from an apprehension of disappointment, would cast its deep gloom across his spirit. With such terrible states of feeling the machinations of guilt, no matter how successful its progress may be, are from time to time attended; and even in his case the torments of the damned were little short of what he suffered, from a dread of failure, and its natural consequences—an exposure which would bar him out of society. Still, his earnest expectation was that the intelligence of the fate of her lover would, considering her feeble state of health, effectually accomplish his wishes, and with this consoling reflection he rode home.

His great anxiety now was, his alarm lest his brother should recover. On reaching Rathfillan House he proceeded to his bedroom, where he found his sister watching.

"My dear Maria," said he, in a low and most affectionate voice, "is he better?"

"I hope so," she replied, in a voice equally low; "this is the first sleep he has got, and I hope it will remove the fever."

"Well, I will not stop," said he, "but do you watch him carefully, Maria, and see that he is not disturbed."

"O, indeed, Harry, you may rest assured that I shall do so. Poor, dear Charles, what would become of us all if we lost him—and Alice Goodwin, too—O, she would die. Now, go, dear Harry, and leave him to me."

Harry left the room apparently in profound sorrow, and, on going into the parlor, met Barney Casey in the hall.

"Barney," said he, "come into the parlor for a moment. My father is out, and my mother is upstairs. I want to know how this affair happened last night, and how it occurred that you were present at it. It's a bad business, Barney."

"Devil a worser," replied Barney, "especially for poor Mr. Charles. I was fortunately goin' down on my *kalie* to the family of poor disconsolate Granua (Grace), when, on passing the clump of alders, I heard screams and shouts to no end. I ran to the spot I heard the skirls comin' from, and there I found Mr. Charles, lyin' as if dead, and Grace Davoren with her hands clasped like a mad woman over him. The strange men then joined us, and carried him home, and that's all I know about it."

"But, can you understand it, Barney? As for me, I cannot. Did Grace say nothing during her alarm?"

"Divil a syllable," replied Barney, lying without remorse; "she was so thunderstruck with what happened that she could do nothing nor say anything but cry out and scream for the bare life of her. They say she has disappeared from her family, and that nobody knows where she has gone to. I was at her father's to-day, and I know they are searchin' the country for her. It is thought she has made away with herself."

"Poor Charles," exclaimed his brother, "what an unfortunate business it has turned out on both sides! I thought he was attached to Miss Goodwin; but it would appear now that he was deceiving her all along."

"Well, Mr. Harry," replied Barney, dryly, or rather with some severity, "you see what the upshot is; treachery, they say, seldom prospers in the long run, although it may for a while. God forgive them that makes a practice of it. As for Master Charles, I couldn't have dreamt of such a thing."

"Nor I, Barney. I know not what to say. It perplexes me, from whatever point I look at it. At all events, I hope he may recover, and if he does, I trust he will consider what

nas happened as a warning, and act upon better principles. May God forgive him!"

And so ended their dialogue, little, indeed, to the satisfaction of Harry, whom Barney left in complete ignorance of the significant exclamations by which Grace Davoren, in the alarm of the moment, had betrayed her own guilt, by stating that *Shawn-na-Middogue* had stabbed the wrong man.

Sarah Sullivan—poor, thoughtless, but affectionate girl—on repairing with the thin toast to her mistress's bedroom, felt so brimful of the disaster which had befallen Charles, that—now believing in his guilt, as she did, and with a hope of effectually alienating Alice's affections from him—she lost not a moment in communicating the melancholy intelligence to her.

"O, Miss Alice!" she exclaimed, "have you heard what has happened? O, the false and treacherous villain! Who would believe it? To have a beautiful *lady* like you, and take up with sich a vulgar vagabone! However, he has suffered for it. *Shawn-na-Middogue* did for him."

"What do you mean, Sarah?" said her mistress, much alarmed by such a startling preface; "explain yourself. I do not understand you."

"But you soon will, miss. *Shawn-na-Middogue* found Mr. Charles Lindsay and Grace Davoren together last night, and has stabbed him to death; life's only in him; and that's the gentleman that pretended to love you. Devil's cure to the villain!"

She paused. The expression of her mistress's face was awful. A pallor more frightful than that of death, because it was associated with *life*, overspread her countenance. Her eyes became dim and dull; her features in a moment were collapsed, and resembled those of some individual struck by paralysis—they were altogether without meaning. She clasped and unclasped her hands, like one under the influence of strong hysterical agony; she laid herself back in bed, where she had been sitting up expecting her coffee, her eyes closed, for she had not physical strength even to keep them open, and with considerable difficulty she said, in a low and scarcely audible voice,—"My mother!"

Poor Sarah felt and saw the mischief she had done, and, with streaming eyes and loud sobbings, lost not a moment in summoning Mrs. Goodwin. In truth she feared that her mistress lay dying before her, and was immediately tortured with the remorseful impression that the thoughtless and indiscreet communication she had made was the cause of her death. It is unnecessary to describe the terror and alarm of her mother, nor of her father, when he saw her lying as it were between life and dissolution. The physician was immediately sent for, but, notwithstanding all his remedies, until the end of the second day, there appeared no change in her. Towards the close of that day an improvement was perceptible; she was able to speak and take some nourishment, but it was observed that she never once made the slightest allusion to the disaster which had befallen Charles Lindsay. She sank into a habitual silence, and, unless when forced to ask for some of those usual attentions which her illness required, she never ventured to indulge in conversation on any subject whatsoever. One thing, however, struck Sarah Sullivan, which was, that in all her startings, both asleep and awake, and in all her unconscious ejaculations, that which appeared to press upon her most was the unceasing horror of the Evil Eye. The name of Charles Lindsay never escaped her, even in the feverish agitation of her dreams, nor in those exclamations of terror and alarm which she uttered.

"O, save me!—save me from his eye—he is killing me! Yes, Woodward is a devil—he is killing me—save me—save me!"

Well had the villain done his work; and how his web of iniquity was woven out we shall see.

On leaving Barney, that worthy gentleman sought his mother, and thus addressed her:—

"Mother," said he, apparently much moved, "this is a melancholy, and I trust in heaven it may not turn out a fatal, business. I'm afraid poor Charles's case is hopeless."

"O, may God forbid, poor boy!" exclaimed Mrs. Lindsay; "for, although he always joined his father against me, still he was in other respects most obliging to every one, and inoffensive to all."

"I know that, and I am sorry that this jade—and she is a handsome jade, they say—should have gained such a cursed influence over him. That, however, is not the question. We must think of nothing now but his recovery. The strictest attention ought to be paid to him; and as it has occurred to me that there is no female under this roof who understands the management of a sick bed, we ought, under these circumstances, to provide a nurse for him."

"Well, indeed, that is true enough, Harry, and it is very kind and considerate of you to think of it; but who will we get? The women here are very ignorant and stupid."

"I have been making inquiries," he replied, "and I am told there is a woman in Rathfillan, named Collins, niece to a religious herb-

alist or herb doctor, who possesses much experience in that way. It is just such a woman we want."

"Well, then, let her come; do you go and engage her; but see that she will not extort dishonest terms from you, because there is nothing but fraud and knavery among these wretches."

Harry lost little time in securing the services of Caterine Collins, who was that very day established as nurse-tender in Charles Lindsay's sick room.

Alice's illness was now such as left little expectation of her recovery. She was stated, and with good reason, to be in a condition absolutely hopeless; and nothing could exceed the regret and sorrow which were felt for the benevolent and gentle girl. We say *benevolent*, because, since her accession to her newly-acquired property, her charities to the poor and distressed were bountiful and generous, almost beyond belief; and even during her illness she constituted her father as the agent—and a willing one he was—of her beneficence. In fact, the sorrow for her approaching death was deep and general, and the sympathy felt for her parents such as rarely occurs in life.

Of course it is unnecessary to say that these tidings of her hopeless illness did not reach the Lindsays. On the second morning after Harry's visit he asked for a private interview with his mother, which was accorded to him.

"Mother," said he, "you must pay the Goodwins another visit— a visit, mark you, of sympathy and condolence. You forget all the unpleasant circumstances that have occurred between the families. You forget everything but your anxiety for the recovery of poor, dear Alice."

"But," replied his mother, "I do not wish to go. Why should *I* go to express a sympathy which I do not feel? Her death is only a judicial punishment on them for having inveigled your silly old uncle to leave them the property which would have otherwise come to you as the natural heir."

"Mother," said her dutiful son, "you have a nose, and beyond that nose you never yet have been able to look with anything like perspicuity. If you don't visit them, your good-natured noodle of a husband will, and perhaps the result of that visit may cut us out of the property forever. At breakfast this morning you will propose the visit, which, mark you, is to be made in the name and on behalf of all the family. You, consequently, being the deputation on this occasion, both your husband and Maria will not feel themselves called upon to see them. You can, besides, say that her state of health precludes her from seeing any one out of her own family, and thus all risk of an explanation will be avoided. It is best to make everything safe; but that she can't live I know, because I feel that my power and influence are upon her, and that the force of this Evil Eye of mine has killed her. I told you this before, I think."

"Even so," said his mother; "it is only what I have said, a judicial punishment for their villany. Villany, Harry, never prospers."

"Egad, my dear mother," he replied, "I know of nothing so prosperous: look through life and you will see the villain thrive upon his fraud and iniquity, where the honest man—the man of integrity, who binds himself by all the principles of what are called honor and morality—is elbowed out of prosperity by the knave, the swindler, and the hypocrite. O, no, my dear mother, the two worst passports to independence and success in life are truth and honesty."

"Well, Harry, I am a bad logician, and will not dispute it with you; but I am far from well, and I don't think I shall be able to visit them for two or three days at least."

"But, in the meantime, express your intention to do so—on behalf of the family, mark; assume your right as the proprietor of this place, and as its representative, and then your visit will be considered as the visit of the whole family. In the meantime, mark me, the girl is dead. I have accomplished that gratifying event, so that, after all, your visit will be a mere matter of form. When you reach their house you will probably find it the house of death."

"And then," replied his mother, "the twelve hundred a year is yours for life, and the property of your children after you. Thank God!"

That morning at breakfast she expressed her determination to visit the Goodwins, making it, she said, a visit from the family in general; such a visit, she added, as might be proper on their (the Lindsays) part, but yet such an act of neighborhood that, while it manifested sufficient respect for them, would preclude all hopes of any future intercourse between them.

Mr. Lindsay did not relish this much; but as he had no particular wish, in consequence of Charles's illness, to oppose her motives in making the visit, he said she might manage it as she wished—he would not raise a fresh breeze about it. He only felt that he was sincerely sorry for the loss which the Goodwins were about to experience.

CHAPTER XV.

The Banshee.—Disappearance of Grace Davoren.

In the meantime it was certainly an unquestionable fact that Grace Davoren had disappeared, and not even a trace of her could be found. The unfortunate girl, alarmed at the tragic incident of that woful night, and impressed with a belief that Charles Lindsay had been murdered by *Shawn-na-Middogue*, had betaken herself to some place of concealment which no search on behalf of her friends could discover. In fact, her disappearance was involved in a mystery as deep as the alarm and distress it occasioned. But what astonished the public most was the fact that Charles, whose whole life had been untainted by a single act of impropriety, much less of profligacy, should have been discovered in such a heartless and unprincipled intrigue with the daughter of one of his father's tenants, an innocent girl, who, as such, was entitled to protection rather than injury at his hands.

Whilst this tumult was abroad, and the country was in an unusual state of alarm and agitation, Harry Woodward took matters very quietly. That he seemed to feel deeply for the uncertain and dangerous state of his brother, who lay suspended, as it were, between life and death, was evident to every individual of his family. He frequently took Caterine Collins's place, attended him personally, with singular kindness and affection, gave him his drinks and decoctions with his own hand; and, when the surgeon came to make his daily visit, the anxiety he evinced in ascertaining whether there was any chance of his recovery was most affectionate and exemplary. Still, as usual, he was out at night; but the mystery of his whereabouts, while absent, could never be penetrated. On those occasions he always went armed—a fact which he never attempted to conceal. On one of these nights it so happened that Barney Casey was called upon to attend at the wake of a relation, and, as his master's family were apprised of this circumstance, they did not of course expect him home until a late hour. He left the wake, however, earlier than he had proposed to do, for he found it a rather dull affair, and was on his way home when, to his astonishment, or rather to his horror, he saw Harry Woodward—also on his way home—in close conversation with the supernatural being so well known by description as the *Shan-dhinne-dhuv*, or Black Spectre. Now, Barney was half cowardly and half brave—that is to say, had he lived in an enlightened age he would have felt little terror of supernatural appearances; but at the period of our story such was the predominance of a belief in ghosts, fairies, evil spirits, and witches, that he should have been either less or more than man could he have shaken off the prevailing superstitions, and the gross credulity of the times in which he lived. As it was, he knew not what to think. He remembered the character which had been whispered abroad about Harry Woodward, and of his intercourse with supernatural beings—he was known to possess the Evil Eye; and it was generally understood that those who happened to be endowed with that accursed gift were aided in the exercises of it by the powers of darkness and of evil. What, then, was he to do? There probably was an opportunity of solving the mystery which hung around the midnight motions of Woodward. If there was a spirit before him, there was also a human being, in living flesh and blood—an acquaintance, too—an individual whom he personally knew, ready to sustain him, and afford, if necessary, that protection which, under such peculiar circumstances, one fellow-creature has a right to expect from another. Now Barney's way home led him necessarily—and a painful necessity it was—near the Haunted House; and he observed that the place where they stood, for they had ceased walking, was about fifty yards above that much dreaded mansion. He resolved, however, to make the plunge and advance, but deemed it only good manners to give some intimation of his approach. He was now within about twenty yards from them, and made an attempt at a comic song, which, however, quivered off into as dismal and cowardly a ditty as ever proceeded from human lips. Harry and the Spectre, both startled by the voice, turned round to observe his approach, when, to his utter consternation, the *Shan-dhinne-dhuv* sank, as it were, into the earth and disappeared. The hair rose upon Barney's head, and when Woodward called out:

"Who comes there?"

He could scarcely summon voice enough to reply:

"It's me, sir," said he; "Barney Casey."

"Come on, Barney," said Woodward, "come on quickly;" and he had scarcely spoken when Barney joined him.

"Barney," said he, "I am in a state of great terror. I have felt ever since I passed that Haunted House as if there was an evil spirit in my company. The feeling was dreadful, and I am very weak in consequence of it. Give me you arm."

"But did you see nothing, sir?" said Barney; "didn't it become visible to you?"

"No," replied the other; "but I felt as if I was in the presence of a supernatural being, and an evil one, too."

"God protect us, Mr. Harry! then, if you didn't see it I did."

"*You* did!" replied the other, startled; "and pray what was it like?"

"Why, a black ould man, sir; and, by all accounts that ever I could hear of it, it was nothing else than the *Shan-dhinne-dhuv*. For God's sake let us come home, sir, for this, if all they say be true, is unholy and cursed grounnd we're standin' on."

"And where did it disappear?" asked Woodward, leading him by a circuit from the spot where it had vanished.

"Just over there, sir," replied Barney, pointing to the place. "But, in God's name, let us make for home as fast as we can. I'll think every minute an hour till we get safe undher our own roof."

"Barney," said Woodward, solemnly, "I have a request to make of you, and it is this—the common report is, that the spirit in question follows our family—I mean by my mother's side. Now I beg, as you expect my good will and countenance, that, for my sake, and out of respect for the family in general, you will never breathe a syllable of what you have seen this night. It could answer no earthly purpose, and would only send abroad idle and unpleasant rumors throughout the country. Will you promise this?"

"Of course I promise it," replied Barney; "what object could I gain by repeatin' it?"

"None whatsoever. Well, then, be silent on the subject, and let us reach home as soon as we can."

It would be difficult to describe honest Barney's feelings as they went along. He imagined that he felt Harry's arm tremble within his, and when he thought of the reports concerning the evil spirit, and its connection with Mrs. Lindsay's family, his sensations were anything but comfortable. He tossed and tumbled that night for hours in his bed before he was able to sleep, and when he did sleep the *Shan-dhinne-dhuv* rendered his dreams feverish and frightful.

Precisely at this period, before Mrs. Lindsay had recovered from her indisposition, and could pay her intended visit to the Goodwins, a circumstance occurred which suggested to Harry Woodward one of the most remorseless and satanic schemes that ever was concocted in the heart of man. He was in the habit occasionally of going down to the kitchen to indulge in a smoke and a piece of banter with the servants. One evening, whilst thus amusing himself, the conversation turned upon the prevailing superstitions of the day. Ghosts, witches, wizards, astrologers, fairies, leprechauns, and all that could be termed supernatural, or even related to or aided by it, were discussed at considerable length, and with every variety of feeling. Amongst the rest the Banshee was mentioned—a spirit of whose peculiar office and character Woodward, in consequence of his long absence from the country, was completely ignorant.

"The Banshee!" he exclaimed; "what kind of a spirit is that? I have never heard of it."

"Why, sir," replied Barney, who was present, "the Banshee—the Lord prevent us from hearin' her—is always the forerunner of death. She attends only certain families—principally the ould Milesians, and mostly Catholics, too; although, I believe, it's well known that she sometimes attends Protestants whose families have been Catholics or Milesians, until the last of the name disappears. So that, afther all, it seems she's not over-scrupulous about religion."

"But what do you mean by attending families?" asked Woodward; "what description of attendance or service does she render them?"

"Indeed, Mr. Harry," replied Barney, "anything but an agreeable attendance. By goxty, I believe every family she follows would be very glad to dispense with her attendance if they could."

"But that is not answering my question, Casey."

"Why, sir," proceeded Barney, "I'll answer it. Whenever the family that she follows is about to have a death in it, she comes a little time before the death takes place, sits either undher the windy of the sick bed or somewhere near the house, and wails and cries there as if her very heart would break. They say she generally names the name of the party that is to die; but there is no case known of the sick person ever recoverin' afther she has given the warnin' of death."

"It is a strange and wild superstition," observed Woodward.

"But a very true one, sir," replied the cook; "every one knows that a Banshee follows the Goodwin family."

"What! the Goodwins of Beech Grove?" said Harry.

"Yes, sir," returned the cook; "they lost six children, and not one of them ever died that she did not give the warnin'."

"If poor Miss Alice heard it," observed Barney, "and she in the state she's in, she wouldn't live twenty-four hours afther it."

"According to what you say," observed Woodward, "that is, if it follows the family, of course it will give the warning in her case also."

"May God forbid," ejaculated the cook, "for it's herself, the darlin' girl, that 'ud be the bitther loss to the poor and destitute."

This kind ejaculation was fervently echoed by all her fellow-servants; and Harry, having finished his pipe, went to see how his brother's wound was progressing. He found him asleep, and Caterine Collins seated knitting a stocking at his bedside. He beckoned her to the lobby, where, in a low, guarded voice, the following conversation took place between them:

"Caterine, have you not a niece that sings well? Barney Casey mentioned her to me as possessing a fine voice."

"As sweet a voice, sir, as ever came from a woman's lips; but the poor thing is delicate and sickly, and I'm afeard not long for this world."

"Could she imitate a Banshee, do you think?"

"If ever woman could, she could. There's not her aquil at the keene, or Irish cry, livin'; she's the only one can bate myself at it."

"Well, Caterine, if you get her to go to Mr. Goodwin's to-morrow night and imitate the cry of the Banshee, I will reward her and you liberally for it. You are already well aware of my generosity."

"Indeed I am, Mr. Woodward; but if either you or I could insure her the wealth of Europe, we couldn't prevail on her to go by herself at night. Except by moonlight she wouldn't venture to cross the street of Rathfillan. As to her, you may put that out of the question. She's very handy, however, about a sick bed, and I might contrive, undher some excuse or other, to get her to take my place for a day or so. But here's your father. We will talk about it again."

She then returned to the sick room, and Harry met Mr. Lindsay on the stairs going up to inquire after Charles.

"Don't go up, sir," said he; "the poor fellow, thank God, is asleep, and the less noise about him the better."

Both then returned to the parlor.

About eleven o'clock the next night Sarah Sullivan was sitting by the bedside of her mistress, who was then, fortunately for herself, enjoying, what was very rare with her, an undisturbed sleep after the terror and agitation of the day, when a low, but earnest and sorrowful wailing was heard, immediately, she thought, under the window. It rose and fell alternately, and at the close of every division of the cry it pronounced the name of Alice Goodwin in tones of the most pathetic lamentation and woe. The natural heat and warmth seemed to depart out of the poor girl's body; she felt like an icicle, and the cold perspiration ran in torrents from her face.

"My darling misthress," thought she, "it's all over with you at last. There is the sign—the Baushee—and it is well for yourself that you don't hear it, because it would be the death of you at once. However, if I committed one mistake about Misther Charles's misfortune, I will not commit another. You shall never hear of this from me."

The cry was then heard more distant and indistinct, but still loaded with the same mournful expression of death and sorrow; but in a little time it died away in the distance, and was then heard no more.

Sarah, though she had judiciously resolved to keep this awful intimation a secret from Miss Goodwin, considered it her duty to disclose it to her parents. We shall not dwell, however, upon the scene which occurred on the occasion. A belief in the existence and office of the Banshee was, at the period of which we write, almost universally held by the peasantry, and even about half a century ago it was one of the strongest dogmas of popular superstition. After the grief of the parents had somewhat subsided at this dreadful intelligence, Mr. Goodwin asked Sarah Sullivan if his daughter had heard the wail of this prophetic spirit of death; and on her answering in the negative, he enjoined her never to breathe a syllable of the circumstance to her; but she told him she had come to that conclusion herself, as she felt certain, she said, that the knowledge of it would occasion her mistress's almost immediate death.

"At all events," said her master; "by the doctor's advice we shall leave this place to-morrow morning; he says if she has any chance it will be in a change of air, of society, and of scenery. Everything here has associations and recollections that are painful, and even horrible to her. If she is capable of bearing an easy journey we shall set out for the Spa of Ballyspellan, in the county of Kilkenny. He thinks the waters of that famous spring may prove beneficial to her. If the Banshee, then, is anxious to fulfil its mission it must follow us. They say it always pays three visits, but as yet it has paid us only one."

Mrs. Lindsay had now recovered from her slight indisposition, and resolved to pay the last formal visit to the Goodwins,—a visit which was to close all future intercourse between the families; and our readers are not ignorant of her motives for this, nor how completely and willingly she was the agent of her son Harry's designs. She went in all her pomp, dressed in satins and brocades,

and attended by Barney Casey in full livery. Her own old family carriage had been swept of its dust and cobwebs, and put into requisition on this important occasion. At length they reached Beech Grove, and knocked at the door, which was opened by our old friend, Tom Kennedy.

"My good man," she asked, "are the family at home?"

"No, ma'am."

"What! not at home, and Miss Goodwin so ill?—dying, I am told. Perhaps, in consequence of her health, they do not wish to see strangers. Go and say that Mrs. Lindsay, of Rathfillan House, is here."

"Ma'am, they are not at home; they have left Beech Grove for some time."

"Left Beech Grove!" she exclaimed; "and pray where are they gone to? I thought Miss Goodwin was not able to be removed."

"It was do or die with her," replied Tom. "The doctor said there was but one last chance—change of air, and absence from dangerous neighbors."

"But you did not tell me where they are gone to."

"I did not, ma'am, and for the best reason in life—because I don't know."

"You don't know! Why, is it possible they made a secret of such a matter?"

"Quite possible, ma'am, and to the back o' that they swore every one of us upon the seven gospels never to tell any individual, man or woman, where they went to."

"But did they not tell yourselves?"

"Devil a syllable, ma'am."

"And why, then, did they swear you to secrecy?"

"Why, of course, ma'am, to make us keep the secret."

"But why swear you, I ask again, to keep a secret which you did not know?"

"Why, ma'am, because they knew that in that case there was little danger of our committin' parjury; and because every saicret which one does *not* know is sure to be kept."

She looked keenly at him, and added, "I'm inclined to think, sirrah, that you are impertinent."

"Very likely, ma'am," replied Tom, with great gravity. "I've a strong notion of that myself. My father before me was impertinent, and his last dying words to me were, 'Tom, I lay it as a last injunction upon you to keep up the principles of our family, and always to show nothing but impertinence to those who don't deserve respect.'"

With a face scarlet from indignation she immediately ordered her carriage home, but before it had arrived there the intelligence from another source had reached the family, together with the fact that the Banshee had been heard by Mr. Goodwin's servants under Miss Alice's window. Such, indeed, was the fact; and the report of the circumstance had spread through half the parish before the hour of noon next day.

The removal of Alice sank heavily upon the heart of Harry Woodward; it seemed to him as if she had gone out of his grasp, and from under the influence of his eye, for, by whatever means he might accomplish it, he was resolved to keep the deadly power of that eye upon her. He had calculated upon the voice and prophetic wail of the Banshee as being fatal in her then state of health; or was it this ominous and supernatural foreboding of her dissolution that caused them to fly from the place? He reasoned, as the reader may perceive, upon the principle of the Banshee being, according to the superstitious notions entertained of her, a real supernatural visitant, and not the unscrupulous and diabolical imitation of her by Caterine Collins. Still he thought it barely possible that the change of air and the waters of the celebrated spring might recover her, notwithstanding all his inhuman anticipations. His brother, also, according to the surgeon's last report, afforded hopes of convalescence. A kind of terror came over him that his plans might fail, because he felt almost certain that if Alice and his brother both recovered, Mr. Lindsay might, or rather *would*, mount his old hobby, and insist on having them married, in the teeth of all opposition on the part of either himself or his mother. This was a gloomy prospect for him, and one which he could not contemplate without falling back upon still darker schemes.

After the night on which Barney Casey had seen him and the Black Spectre together we need scarcely say that he watched Barney closely, nor that Barney watched him with as keen a vigilance. Whatever Woodward may have actually felt upon the subject of the apparition, Barney was certainly undecided as to its reality; or if there existed any bias at all, it was in favor of that reality. Why did Woodward's arm tremble, and why did the man, who was supposed ignorant of fear, exhibit so much terror and agitation on the occasion? Still, on the other hand, there appeared to be a conversation, as it were, between them, and a familiarity of manner considerably at variance with Woodward's version of the circumstances. Be this as it might, he felt it to be a subject on which he could, by no process of reasoning, come to anything like a definite conclusion.

Woodward now determined to consult his mother as to the plan of their future opera

tions. The absence of Alice, and the possible chance of her recovery, rendered it necessary that some new series of projects should be adopted; but although several had occurred to him, he had not yet come to a definite resolution respecting the selection he would make. With this view he and his conscientious mother closeted themselves in her room, and discussed the state of affairs in the following dialogue:

"Mother," said he, "this escape of Miss Curds-and-whey is an untoward business. What, after all, if she should recover?"

"Recover!" exclaimed the lady; "why, did you not assure me that such an event was impossible—that you were killing her, and that she must die?"

"So I still think; but so long as the notion of her recovery exists, even only as a dream, so certainly ought we to provide against such a calamity."

"Ah! Harry," she exclaimed, "you may well term it a calamity, for such indeed it would be to you."

"Well, but what do you think ought to be done, my dear mother? I am anxious to have both your advice and opinion upon our future proceedings. Suppose change of air—the waters of that damned brimstone spring, and above all things, the confidence she will derive from the consciousness that she is removed from me and out of my reach—suppose, I say, that all these circumstances should produce a beneficial effect upon her, then how do I stand?"

"Why, with very little hope of the property," she replied; "and then what tenacity of life she has! Why, there are very few girls who would not have been dead long ago, if they had gone through half what she has suffered. Well, you wish to ask me how I would advise you to act?"

"Of course I do."

"Well, then, you have heard the old proverb: It is good to have two strings to one's bow. We shall set all consideration of her aside for a time, and turn our attention to another object."

"What or who is that, mother?"

"You remember I mentioned some time ago the names of a neighboring nobleman and his niece, who lives with him. The man I allude to *was* Lord Bilberry, but *is* now Earl of Cockletown. He was raised to this rank for some services he rendered the government against the tories, who had been devastating the country, and also against some turbulent papists who were supposed to have privately encouraged them in their outrages against Protestant life and property. He was a daring and intrepid man when in his prime of life, and appeared to seek danger for its own sake. He is now an old man, although a young peer, and was always considered eccentric, which he is to the present day. Some people look upon him as a fool, and others as a knave; but in balancing his claims to each, it has never yet been determined on which side the scale would sink. He is the proprietor of a little fishing village on the coast, and on this account he assumed the title of Cockletown; and when he built himself a mansion, as they term it, he would have it called by no other name than that of Cockle Hall. It is true he laughs at the thing himself, and considers it a good joke."

"And so it is," replied her son; "but what about the lady, his niece?"

"Why, she is a rather interesting person."

"Ahem! *person!*"

"Yes, about thirty-four or so; but she will inherit his property."

"And have you any notion of what *that* may amount to?" asked her calculating son.

"I could not exactly say," she replied; "but I believe it is handsome. A great deal of it is mountain, but they say there are large portions of it capable of being reclaimed."

"But how can the estate go to her?"

"Simply because there is no other heir," replied his mother; "they are the last of the family. It is not entailed."

"Thirty-four!" ruminated Woodward. "Well, I have seen very fine girls at thirty-four; but in personal appearance and manner what is she like?"

"Why, perhaps a critical eye might not call her handsome; but the general opinion on that point is in her favor. Her manners are agreeable, so are her features; but it is said that she is fastidious in her lovers, and has rejected many. It is true most of them were fortune-hunters, and deserved no better success."

"But what do you call *me*, mother?"

"Surely not a fortune-hunter, Harry. Is not there your granduncle's large property who is a bachelor, and you are his favorite."

"But don't you know, mother, that, as respects my granduncle, I have confided that secret to you already?"

"I know no such thing, you fool," she replied, looking at him with an expression in her odious eyes which could not be described; "I am altogether ignorant of that fact; but is there not the twelve hundred per annum which reverts to you on the demise of that dying girl?"

"True, my dear mother, true; you are

right. I am a fool. Of course I never told you the secret of my disinheritance by the old scoundrel."

"Ah, Harry, I fear you played your cards badly there. You knew he was religious, and yet you should become a seducer; but why make free with his money?"

"Why? Why, because he kept me upon the tight curb; but, as these matters are known only to ourselves, I see you are right. I am still to be considered his favorite—his heir—and am here only on a visit."

"Well, but, Harry, he must have dealt liberally with you on your departure from him?"

"He! Don't you know I was obliged to fly?—to take French leave, I assure you. I reached Rathfillan House with not more than twenty pounds in my pocket."

"But how does it happen that you always appear to have plenty of money?"

"My dear mother, there is a secret there; but it is one which even you shall *not* know, —or come, you *shall* know it. Did you ever hear of a certain supernatural being which follows your family, which supernatural being is known by the name of the Black Spectre, or some such denomination which I cannot remember?"

"I don't wish to hear it named," replied his mother, deeply agitated. "It resembles the Banshee, and never appears to any one of our family except as a precursor of his death by violence."

Woodward started for a moment, and could not avoid being struck at the coincidence of the same mission having been assigned to the two spirits, and he reflected, with an impression that was anything but agreeable, upon his damnable suggestion of having had recourse to the vile agency of Caterine Collins in enacting the said Banshee, for the purpose of giving the last fatal blow to the almost dying Alice Goodwin. He felt, and he had reason to feel, that there was a mystery about the Black Spectre, which, for the life of him, he could not fathom. He was, however, a firm and resolute man, and after a moment or two's thought he declined to make any further disclosure on the subject, but reverted to the general topic of their conversation.

"Well, mother," said he, "after all, your speculation may not be a bad one; but pray, what is the lady's name?"

"Riddle—Miss Riddle. She is of the Clan-Riddle family, a close relation to the Nethersides of Middletown."

"And a devilish enigmatical name it is," replied her son, "as is that of all her connections."

"Yes, but they were always close and prudent people, who kept their opinions to themselves, and wrought their way in the world with great success, and without giving offence to any party. If you marry her, Harry, I would advise you to enter public life, recommend yourself to the powers that be, and, my word for it, you stand a great chance of having the title of Cockletown revived in your person."

"Well, although the title is a ridiculous one, I should have no objection to it, notwithstanding; but there will certainly arise some difficulty when we come to the marriage settlements. There will be sharp lawyers there, whom we cannot impose upon; and you know, mother, I am without any ostensible property."

"Yes, but we can calculate upon the death of cunning Alice, who, by her undue and flagitious influence over your uncle, left you so."

"Ay, but such a calculation would never do either with her uncle or the lawyers. I think we have nothing to fall back upon, mother, but your own property. If you settle that upon me everything will go right."

"And leave myself depending upon Lindsay? No, no," replied this selfish and penurious woman; "never, Harry—never, never; you must wait until I die for that. But I can tell you what we can do; let us enter upon the negotiation—let us say for the time being that you have twelve hundred a-year, and, while the business is proceeding, what is there to prevent you from going to recruit your health at Ballyspellan, and kill out Alice Goodwin there, as well as if she remained at home? By this plan, before the negotiations are closed, you will be able to meet Miss Riddle with twelve hundred a-year at your back. Alice Goodwin! O, how I hate and detest her—ay, as I do hell!"

"The plan," replied her son, "is an excellent one. We will commence operations with Lord Cockletown and Miss Riddle, in the first place; and having opened negotiations, as you say, I shall become unwell, and go for a short time to try what efficacy the waters of Ballyspellan may have on *my* health—or rather on my fortunes."

"We shall visit them to-morrow," said the mother.

"So be it," replied the son; and to this resolution they came, which closed the above interesting dialogue between them. We say interesting, for if it has not been such to the reader, it was so at least to themselves.

CHAPTER XVI.

A House of Sorrow.—After which follows a Courting Scene.

The deep sorrow and desolation of spirit introduced by the profligate destroyer into the humble abode of peace and innocence is an awful thing to contemplate. In our chapter headed "The Wake of a Murderer" we have attempted to give a picture of it. The age, indeed, was one of licentiousness and profligacy. The reigning monarch, Charles the Second, of infamous memory, had set the iniquitous example to his subjects, and surrounded his court by an aristocratic crew, who had scarcely anything to recommend them but their imitation of his vices, and this was always a passport to his favor, whilst virtue, morality, and honor were excluded with contempt and derision. In fact, the corrupt atmosphere of his court carried its contagion throughout the empire, until the seduction of female innocence became the fashion of the day, and no man could consider himself entitled to a becoming position in society who had not distinguished himself by half a dozen criminal intrigues either with the wives or daughters of his acquaintances. When we contemplate for a moment the contrast between the abandoned court of that royal profligate, and that under which we have the happiness to live—the one, a sty of infamy, licentiousness, and corruption; the other, a well, undefiled of purity, virtue, and honor, to whose clear and unadulterated waters nothing equivocal, or even questionable, dares to approach, much less the base or the tainted—we say that, on instituting this comparison and contrast, the secret of that love and affectionate veneration which we bear to our pure and highminded Queen, and the pride which we feel in the noble example which she and her Royal Consort have set us, requires no illustration whatsoever. The affection and gratitude of her people are only the meed due to *her* virtues and to *his*. We need not apologize to our readers for this striking contrast. The period and the subject of our narrative, as well as the melancholy scene to which we are about to introduce the reader, rendered it an impossibility to avoid it.

We now proceed to the humble homestead of Torley Davoren; a homestead which we have already described as the humble abode of peace and happiness. Barney Casey, who felt anxious to know from the parents of Grace Davoren whether any trace or tidings of her had been heard of, went to pay the heart-broken family a visit for that purpose. On entering, he found the father seated at his humble hearth, unshaven, and altogether a man careless and negligent of his appearance. He sat with his hands clasped before him, and his heavy eyes fixed on the embers of the peat fire which smouldered on the hearth. The mother was at her distaff, and so were the other two females—to wit, her grandmother and Grace's sister. But the mother! gracious heaven, what a spirit of distress and misery breathed from those hopeless and agonizing features! There was not only natural sorrow there, occasioned by the disappearance of her daughter, but the shame which resulted from her fall and her infamy; and though last not least, the terrible apprehension that the hapless girl had rushed by suicidal means into the presence of an offended God, "unanointed, unaneled," with all her sins upon her head. Her clothes were hanging from the branches of a large burdock* against the wall, and from time to time the father cast his eyes upon them with a look in which might be read the hollow but terrible expression of despair.

Honest Barney felt his heart deeply moved by all this, and, sooth to say, his natural cheerfulness and lightness of spirit completely abandoned him at the contemplation of the awful anguish which pressed them down. There is nothing which makes such a coward of the heart as the influence of such a scene. He felt that he stood within a circle of misery, and that it was a solemn and serious task even to enter into conversation with them. But, as he had come to make friendly inquiries about the unfortunate girl, he forced himself to break this pitiable but terrible silence of despair.

"I know," said he, with a diffident and melancholy spirit, "that it is painful to you all to make the inquiries that I wish to make; but still let me ask you if you have got any account of *her?*"

The mother's heart had been bursting—pent up as it were—and this allusion to her withdrew the floodgates of its sorrow; she spread out her arms, and rising up approached her husband, and throwing them about his neck, exclaimed, in tones of the most penetrating grief,—

"O, Torley, Torley, my husband, was she not our dearest and our best?"

The husband embraced her with a flood of tears.

"She was," said he, "she was." But im-

* The branches of the burdock, when it is cut, trimmed, and seasoned, are used by the humble classes to hang their clothes upon. They grow upwards towards the top of the stalk, and, in consequence of this, are capable of sustaining the heaviest garment.

mediately looking upon her sister Dora, he said, "Dora, come here—bring Dora to me," and his wife went over and brought her to him.

"O, Dora dear," said he, "I love you. But, darling, I never loved you as I loved *her*."

"But was *I* ever jealous of that, father?" replied Dora, with tears. "Didn't we all love her? and did any one of you love her more than myself? Wasn't she the pride of the whole family? But I didn't care about her disgrace, father, if we had her back with us. She might repent; and if she did, every one would forgive their favorite—for sure she was every one's favorite; and above all, God would forgive her."

"I loved her as the core of my heart," said the grandmother; "but you spoiled her yourselves, and indulged her too much in dress and everything she wished for. Had you given her less of her own way, and kept her more from dances and merry-makings, it might be better for yourselves and her to-day; still, I grant you, it was hard to do it—for who, *mavrone*, could refuse *her* anything? O! God sees my heart how I pity you, her father, and you, too, her mother, above all. But, Torley, dear, if we only had her—if we only had her back again safe with us—then what darling Dora says might be true, and her repentance would wash away her shame—for every one loved her, so that they wouldn't judge her harshly."

"I can bear witness to that," said Barney; "as it is, every one pities her, and but very few blame her. It is all set down to her innocence and want of experience, ay, and her youthful years. No; if you could only find her, the shame in regard of what I've said would not be laid heavily upon her by the people."

"O," exclaimed her father, starting up, "O, *Granua, Granua*, my heart's life! where are you from us? Was not your voice the music of our hearth? Did not your light laugh keep us cheerful and happy? But where are you now? O, will no one bring me back my daughter? Where is my child? she that was the light—the breakin' of the summer mornin' amongst us! But wait; they say the villain is recoverin' that destroyed her—well—he may recover from the blow of *Shawn-na-Middogue*, but he will get a blow from me that he won't recover from. I will imitate Morrissy—and will welcome his fate."

"Aisy, Torley," said Casey; "hould in a little. You are spakin' now of Masther Charles?"

"I am, the villain! warn't they found together?"

"I have one question to ask you," proceeded Barney, "and it is this—when did you see or spake with *Shawn-na-Middogue?*"

"Not since that unfortunate night."

"Well, all I can tell you is this—that Masther Charles had as much to do with the ruin of your daughter as the king of Jernsalem. Take my word for that. He is not the stuff that such a villain is made of, but I suspect who is."

"And who do you suspect, Barney?"

"I say I only suspect; but, so long as it is only suspicion, I will mention no names. It wouldn't be right; and for that reason I will wait until I have betther information. But, after all," he proceeded, "maybe nothing wrong has happened."

The mother shook her head: "I know to the contrairy," she replied, "and intended on that very night to bring her to an account about her appearance, but I never had the opportunity."

The father here wrung his hands, and his groans were dreadful.

"Could you see *Shawn-na-Middogue?*" asked Barney.

"No," replied Davoren: "he, too, has disappeared; and although he is hunted like a bag-fox, nobody can find either hilt or hair of him."

"Might it not be possible that she is with him?" he asked again.

"No, Barney," replied her mother, "we know Shawn too well for that. He knows how we loved her, and what we would suffer by her absence. Shawn, though driven to be an outlaw, has a kind heart, and would never allow us to suffer what we are sufferin' on her account. O, no! we know Shawn too well for that."

"Well," replied Barney, meditatively, there's one thing I'm inclined to think: that whoever was the means of bringing shame and disgrace upon poor *Granua* will get a touch of his middogue that won't fail as the first did. Shawn now knows his man, and, with the help of God, I hope he won't miss his next blow. I must now go; and before I do, let me tell you that, as I said before, Masther Charles is as innocent of the shame brought upon poor *Granua* as the king of Jerusalem."

There is a feeling of deep but silent sorrow which weighs down the spirit after the death of some beloved individual who is taken away from among the family circle. It broods upon, and casts a shadow of the most profound gloom over the bereaved heart; but let a person who knew the deceased, and is capable of feeling a sincere and friendly sympathy for the survivors, enter into this circle of sorrow; let him or her dwell upon

the memory of the departed; then that silent and pent-up grief bursts out, and the clamor of lamentation is loud and vehement. It was so upon this occasion. When Barney rose to take his departure, a low murmur of grief assailed his ears; it gradually became more loud; it increased; it burst into irrepressible violence—they wept aloud; they flew to her clothes, which hung, as we said, motionless upon the stalk of burdock against the wall; they kissed them over and over again; and it was not until Barney, now deeply affected, succeeded in moderating their sorrow, that these strong and impassioned paroxysms were checked and subdued into something like reasonable grief. Having consoled and pacified them as far as it was in his power, he then took his departure under a feeling of deep regret that no account of the unfortunate girl had been obtained.

The next day Mrs. Lindsay and Harry prepared to pay the important visit. As before, the old family carriage was furbished up, and the lady once more enveloped in her brocades and satins. Harry, too, made it a point to appear in his best and most becoming habiliments; and, truth to tell, an exceedingly handsome and well-made young fellow he was. The dress of the day displayed his manly and well-proportioned limbs to the best advantage, whilst his silver-hilted sword, in addition to the general richness of his costume, gave him the manner and appearance of an accomplished cavalier. Barney's livery was also put a second time into requisition, and the coachman's cocked hat was freshly crimped for the occasion.

"Is it true, mother?" inquired Harry, as they went along, "that this old noodle has built his residence as much after the shape of a cockle-shell as was possible to be accomplished?"

"Perfectly true, as you will see," she replied.

"But what could put such a ridiculous absurdity into his head?"

"Because he thought of the name before the house was built, and he got it built simply to suit the name. 'There is no use,' said he, 'in calling it Cockle Hall unless it resembles a cockle;' and, indeed, when you see it, you will admit the resemblance."

"Egad," said her son, "I never dreamed that fate was likely to cramp me in a cockle-shell. I dare say there is a touch of sublimity about it. The associations are in favor of it."

"No," replied his mother, "but it has plenty of comfort and convenience about it. The plan was his own, and he contrived to make it, notwithstanding its ludicrous shape, one of the most agreeable residences in the country. He is a blunt humorist, who drinks a good deal, and instead of feeling offence at his manner, which is rather rough, you will please him best by answering him exactly in his own spirit."

"I am glad you gave me this hint," said her son; "I like that sort of thing, and it will go hard if I don't give him as good as he brings."

"In that case," replied the mother, "the chances will be ten to one in your favor. Seem, above all things, to like his manner, because the old fool is vain of it, and nothing gratifies him so much."

"But about the niece? What is the cue there, mother?"

"The cue of a gentleman, Harry—of a well-bred and respectful gentleman. You may humor the old fellow to the top of his bent; but when you become the gentleman with her, she will not misinterpret your manner with her uncle, but will look upon the transition as a mark of deference to herself. And now you have your instructions: be careful and act upon them. Miss Riddle is a girl of sense, and, they say, of feeling; and it is on this account, I believe, that she is so critical in scrutinizing the conduct and intellect of her lovers. So there is my last hint."

"Many thanks, my dear mother; it will, I think, be my own fault if I fail with either uncle or niece, supported as I shall be by your eloquent advocacy."

On arriving at Cockle Hall, Harry, on looking out of the carriage window, took it for granted that his mother had been absolutely bantering him. "Cockle Hall!" he exclaimed: "why, curse the hall I see here, good, bad, or indifferent. What did you mean, mother? Were you only jesting?"

"Keep quiet," she replied, "and above all things don't seem surprised at the appearance of the place. Look precisely as if you had been in it ever since it was built."

The appearance of Cockle Hall was, indeed, as his mother had very properly informed him, ludicrous in the extreme. It was built on a surface hollowed out of a high bank, or elevation, with which the roof of it was on a level. It was, of course, circular and flat, and the roof drooped, or slanted off towards the rear, precisely in imitation of a cockle-shell. There was, however, a complete *deceptio visus* in it. To the eye, in consequence of the peculiarity of its position, it appeared to be very low, which, in point of fact, was not exactly the case, for it consisted of two stories, and had comfortable and extensive apartments. There was a paved space wide enough for two carriages to pass

each other, which separated it from the embankment that surrounded it. Altogether, when taken in connection with the original idea of its construction, it was a difficult thing to look at it without mirth. On entering the drawing-room, which Harry did alone—for his mother, having seen Miss Riddle in the parlor, entered it in order to have a preliminary chat with her—her son found a person inside dressed in a pair of red plush breeches, white stockings a good deal soiled, a yellow long-flapped waistcoat, and a wig, with a cue to it which extended down the whole length of his back,—evidently a servant in dirty livery. There was something *degagée* and rather impudent in his manner and appearance, which Harry considered as in good keeping with all he had heard of this eccentric nobleman. Like master like man, thought he.

"Well," said the servant, looking hardly at him, "what do you want?"

"You be cursed," replied Harry; "don't be impertinent; do you think I'm about to disclose my business to you, you despicable menial? Why don't you get your stockings washed? But if you wish to know what I want, I want your master."

The butler, footman, or whatever he might have been, fixed a keen look upon him, accompanied by a grin of derision that made the visitor's gorge rise a good deal.

"My master," said the other, "is not under this roof. What do you think of that?"

"You mean the old cockle is not in his shell, then," replied Harry.

"Come," said the other, with a chuckle of enjoyment, "curse me, but that's good. Who are you?—what are you? You are in good feathers—only give an account of yourself."

Harry was a keen observer, but was considerably aided by what he had heard from his mother. The rich rings, however, which he saw sparkling on the fingers of what he had conceived to be the butler or footman, at once satisfied him that he was then addressing the worthy nobleman himself. In the meantime, having made this discovery, he resolved to act the farce out.

"Why should I give an account of myself to you, you cursed old sot?—you drink, sirrah: I can read it in your face."

"I say, give an account of yourself; what's your business here?"

"Come, then," replied Harry, "as you appear to be a comical old scoundrel, I don't care, for the joke's sake, if I do. I am coming to court Miss Riddle, ridiculous old Cockletown's niece."

"Why are you coming to court her?"

"Because I understand she will have a good fortune after old Cockle takes his departure."

"Eh, confound me, but that's odd; why, you are a devilish queer fellow. Did you ever see Lord Cockletown?"

"Not I," replied Harry; "nor I don't care a curse whether I do or not, provided I had his niece secure."

"Did you ever see the niece?"

"Don't annoy me, sirrah. No, I didn't; neither do I care if I never did, provided I secure old Cockle's money and property. If it could be so managed, I would prefer being married to her in the dark."

The old peer walked two or three times through the room in a kind of good-humored perplexity, raising his wig and scratching his head under it, and surveying Woodward from time to time with a serio-comic expression.

"Of course you are a profligate, for that is the order of the day?"

"Why, of course I am," replied Harry.

"Any intrigues—eh?"

"Indeed," replied the other, pulling a long face, "I am ashamed to answer you on that subject. Intrigues! I regret to say only half a dozen yet, but my prospects in that direction are good."

"Have you fought? Did you ever commit murder?"

"It can scarcely be called by that name. It was in tavern brawls; one was a rascally cockleman, and the other a rascally oysterman."

"How did you manage the oysterman? With a knife, eh?"

"No, sirrah; with my sword I did him open."

"Have you any expectation of being hanged?"

"Why, according to the life I have led, I think there is every probability that I may reach that honorable position."

The old peer could bear this no longer. He burst out into a loud laugh, which lasted upwards of two minutes.

"Faith," said Harry, "if you had such a prospect before you, I don't think you would consider it such a laughing matter."

"Curse you, sir, do you know who I am?"

"Curse yourself, sir," replied the other, "no, I don't; how should I, when I never saw you before?"

"Sir, *I* am Lord Cockletown."

"And, sir, I am Harry Woodward, son—favorite son—to Mrs. Lindsay of Rathfillan House."

"What! are you a son of that old fagot?"

"Her favorite son, as I said; that old fagot, sir, is my mother."

"Ay, but who was your father?" asked his lordship, with a grin, "for that's the rub."

"That *is* the rub," said Woodward, laughing; "how the devil can I tell?"

"Good again," said his lordship; "confound me but you are a queer one. I tell you what, I like you."

"I don't care a curse whether you do or not, provided your niece does."

"Are you the fellow that has been abroad, and returned home lately?"

"I am the very *fellow*," replied Woodward, with a ludicrous and good-humored emphasis upon the word *fellow*.

"There was a bonfire made for you on your return?"

"There was, my lord."

"And there fell a shower of blood upon that occasion?"

"Not a doubt of it, my lord."

"Well, you are a strange fellow altogether. I have not for a long time met a man so much after my own heart."

"That is because our dispositions resemble each other. If I had the chance of a peerage, I would be as original as your lordship in the selection of my title; but I trust I shall be gratified in that, too; because, if I marry your niece, I will enter into public life, make myself not only a useful, but a famous man, and, of course, the title of Cockletown will be revived in my person, and will not perish with you. No, my lord, should I marry your niece, your title shall descend with your blood, and there is something to console you."

"Come," said the old peer, "shake hands. Have you a capacity for public business?"

"I was born for it, my lord. I feel that fact; besides, I have a generous ambition to distinguish myself."

"Well," said the peer, "we will talk all that over in a few days. But don't you admit that I am an eccentric old fellow?"

"And doesn't your lordship admit that I am an eccentric young fellow?"

"Ay, but, harkee, Mr. Woodward," said the peer, "I always sleep with one eye open."

"And I," replied Harry, "sleep with both eyes open."

"Come, confound me, that beats me, you must get on in life, and I will consider your pretensions to my niece."

At this moment his mother and Miss Riddle entered the drawing-room, which, notwithstanding the comical shape of the mansion, was spacious, and admirably furnished. Miss Riddle's Christian name was Thomasina; but her eccentric uncle never called her by any other appellation than Tom, and occasionally Tommy.

"Mrs. Lindsay, uncle," said the girl, introducing her.

"Eh? Mrs. Lindsay! O! how do you do, Mrs. Lindsay? How is that unfortunate devil, your husband?"

Now Mrs. Lindsay was one of those women who, whenever there was a selfish object in view, could not only suppress her feelings, but exhibit a class of them in direct opposition to those she actually felt.

"Why unfortunate, my lord?" she asked, smiling.

"Why, because I am told he plays second fiddle at home, and a devilish deal out of tune too, in general. You play first, ma'am; but they say, notwithstanding, that there's a plentiful lack of harmony in your concerts."

"Ah," she replied, "your lordship must still have your joke, I perceive; but, at all events, I am glad to see you in such spirits."

"Well, you may thank your son for that. I say, Tom," he added, addressing his niece, "he's a devilish good fellow; a queer chap, and I like him. Woodward, this is Tom Riddle, my niece. This scamp, Tom, is that woman's son, Mr. Woodward. He's an accomplished youth: I'll be hanged if he isn't. I asked him how many intrigues he has had, and he replied, with a dolorous face, only half a dozen yet. He only committed two murders, he says; and when I asked him if he thought there was any probability of his being hanged, he replied that, from a review of his past life, and what he contemplated in the future, he had little doubt of it."

Harry Woodward was indeed, a most consummate tactician. From the moment Miss Riddle entered the room, his air and manner became that of a most polished gentleman; and after bowing to her when introduced, he cast, from time to time, a glance at her, which told her, by its significance, that he had only been gratifying her uncle by playing into his whims and eccentricities. In the meantime the heart of Mrs. Lindsay bounded with delight at the progress which she saw, by the complacent spirit of the old peer, honest and adroit Harry had made in his good opinion.

"Miss Riddle," said he, "his lordship and I have been bantering each other; but although I considered myself what I may term an able hand at it, yet I find I am no match for him."

"Well, not exactly, I believe," replied his lordship; "but, notwithstanding, you are one of the best I have met."

"Why, my lord," replied Woodward, "I like the thing; and, indeed, I never knew any one fond of it who did not possess a

good heart and a candid disposition; so, you see, my lord, there is a compliment for each of us."

"Yes, Woodward, and we both deserve it."

"I trust Mr. Woodward," observed his niece, "that you don't practise your abilities as a banterer upon our sex."

"Never! Miss Riddle; that would be ungenerous and unmanly. There is nothing due to your sex but respect, and that, you know, is incompatible with banter. The wit that could wantonly sport with the modesty of woman degenerates into impudence and insult;" and he accompanied the words with a low and graceful bow.

This young fellow, thought Miss Riddle, is a gentleman.

"Yes, but, Mr. Woodward, we sometimes require a bantering; and, what is more, a remonstrance. We are not perfect, and surely it is not the part of a friend to overlook our foibles or our errors."

"True, Miss Riddle, but it is not by bantering they will be reclaimed. A friendly remonstrance, delicately conveyed, is one thing, but the buffoonery of a banter is another."

"What's that?" said the peer, "buffoonery! I deny it, sir, there is no buffoonery in banter."

"Not, my lord, when it occurs between gentlemen," replied Woodward, "but you know, with the ladies it is a different thing."

"Ay, well, that's not bad; a proper distinction. I tell you what, Woodward, you are a clever fellow; and I'm not sure but I'll advocate your cause with Tom there. Tom, he tells me he is coming to court you, and he says he doesn't care a fig about either of us, provided he could secure your fortune. Ay, and, what's more, he says that if you and he are married, he hopes it will be in the dark. What do you think of that now?"

Miss Riddle did not blush, nor affect a burst of indignation, but she said what pleased both Woodward and his mother far better.

"Well, uncle," she replied, calmly, "even if he did say so, I believe he only expressed in words what most, if not all, of my former lovers actually felt, but were too cautious to acknowledge."

"I trust, Miss Riddle," said Harry, smiling graciously, "that I am neither so silly nor so stupid as to defend a jest by anything like a serious apology. You will also be pleased to recollect that, as an argument for my success, I admitted two murders, half a dozen intrigues, and the lively prospect of being hanged. The deuce is in it, if these are not strong qualifications in a lover, especially in a lover of yours, Miss Riddle."

The reader sees that the peer was anything but a match for Woodward, who contrived, and with perfect success, to turn all his jocular attacks to his own account.

Miss Riddle smiled, for the truth was that Harry began to rise rapidly in her good opinion. His sprightliness was gentlemanly and agreeable, and he contrived, besides, to assume the look and air of a man who only indulged in it in compliment to her uncle, and, of course, indirectly to herself, with whom, it was but natural, he should hope to make him an advocate. Still the expression of his countenance, as he managed it, appeared to her to be that of a profound and serious thinker—one whose feelings, when engaged, were likely to retain a strong hold of his heart. That he should model his features into such an expression is by no means strange, when we reflect with what success hypocrisy can stamp upon them all those traits of character for which she wishes to get credit from the world.

"Come, Tom," said his lordship, "it's time for luncheon; we can't allow our friends to go without refreshments. I say, Woodward, I'm a hospitable old fellow; did you ever know that before?"

"I have often heard it, my lord," replied the other, "and I hope to have still better proof of it." This was uttered with a significant, but respectful glance, at the niece, who was by no means displeased at it.

"Ay! ay!" said his lordship, laughing, "the proof of the pudding is in the eating. Well, you shall have an opportunity, and soon, too; you appear to be a blunt, honest fellow; and hang me but I like you."

Miss Riddle now went out to order in the refreshments, but not without feeling it strange how her uncle and herself should each contemplate Woodward's character in so different a light—the uncle looking upon him as a blunt, honest fellow, whilst to her he appeared as a man of sense, and a perfect gentleman. Such, however, was the depth of his hypocrisy, that he succeeded at once in pleasing both, and in deceiving both.

"Well, Woodward, what do you think of Tom?" asked his lordship.

"Why, my lord, that she is an admirable and lovely girl."

"Well, you are right, sir; Tom is an admirable girl, and loves her old uncle as if he was her father, or maybe a great deal better; she will have all I am worth when I pop off, so there's something for you to think upon."

"No man, my lord, capable of appreciating her could think of anything but herself."

"What! not of her property?"

"Property, my lord, is a very secondary subject when taken into consideration with the merits of the lady herself. I am no enemy to property, and I admit its importance as an element of happiness when reasonably applied, but I am neither sordid nor selfish; and I know how little, after all, it contributes to domestic enjoyment, unless accompanied by those virtues which constitute the charm of connubial life."

"Confound me but you must have got that out of a book, Woodward."

"Out of the best book, my lord—the book of life and observation."

"Why, curse it, you are talking philosophy, though."

"Only common sense, my lord."

His lordship, who was walking to and fro in the room, turned abruptly round, looked keenly at him, and then, addressing Mrs. Lindsay, said,—

"Why, upon my soul, Mrs. Lindsay, we must try and do something with this fellow; he'll be lost to the world if we don't. Come, I say, we must make a public man of him."

"To become a public man is his own ambition, my lord," replied Mrs. Lindsay; "and although I am his mother, and may feel prejudiced in his favor, still I agree with your lordship that it is a pity to see such abilities as his unemployed."

"Well, madam, we shall consider of it. What do you think, Woodward, if we made a bailiff of you?"

At this moment Miss Riddle entered the room just in time to hear the question.

"The very thing, my lord; and the first capture I should make would be Miss Riddle, your fair niece here."

"Curse me, but the fellow's a cat," said the peer, laughing. "Throw him as you will, he always falls upon his legs. What do you think, Tom? Curse me but your suitor here talked philosophy in your absence."

"Only common sense, Miss Riddle," said Harry. "Philosophy, it is said, excludes feeling; but that is not a charge which I ever heard brought against common sense."

"I am an enemy neither to philosophy nor common sense," replied his niece, "because I think neither of them incompatible with feeling; but I certainly prefer common sense."

"There's luncheon announced," said the peer, rubbing his hands, "and that's a devilish deal more comfortable than either of them. Come, Mrs. Lindsay; Woodward, take Tom with you."

They then descended to the dining-room, where the conversation was lively and amusing, the humorous old peer furnishing the greater proportion of the mirth.

"Mrs. Lindsay," said he, as they were preparing to go, "I hope, after all, that this clever son of yours is not a fortune-hunter."

"He need not be so, my lord," replied his mother, "and neither is he. He himself will have a handsome property."

"*Will* have. I would rather you wouldn't speak in the future tense, though. Woodward," he added, addressing that gentleman, "remember that I told you that I sleep with one eye open."

"If you have any doubts, my lord, on this subject," replied Woodward, "you may imitate me: sleep with both open."

"Ay, as the hares do, and devil a bit they're the better for it; but, in the meantime, what property have you, or will you have? There is nothing like coming to the point."

"My lord," replied Woodward, "I respect Miss Riddle too much to enter upon such a topic in her presence. You must excuse me, then, for the present; but if you wish for precise information on the subject, I refer you to my mother, who will, upon a future occasion—and I trust it will be soon—afford you every satisfaction on this matter."

"Well," replied his lordship, "that is fair enough—a little vague, indeed—but no matter, your mother and I will talk about it. In the meantime you are a devilish clever fellow, and, as I said, I like you; but still I will suffer no fortune-hunter to saddle himself upon my property. I repeat it, I sleep with one eye open. I will be happy to see you soon, Mr. Woodward; but remember I will be determined on this subject altogether by the feelings of my niece Tom here."

"I have already said, my lord," replied Woodward, "that, except as a rational element in domestic happiness, I am indifferent to the consideration or influence of property. The prevailing motives with me are the personal charms, the character, and the well-known virtues of your niece. It is painful to me to say even this in her presence, but your lordship has forced it from me. However, I trust that Miss Riddle understands and will pardon me."

"Mr. Woodward," she observed, "you have said nothing unbecoming a gentleman; nothing certainly but that which you could not avoid saying."

After the usual forms of salutation at parting, Harry and his mother entered the old carriage and proceeded on their way home.

"Well, Harry," said his mother, "what do you think?"

"A hit," he replied; "a hit with both,

but especially with the niece, who certainly is a fine girl. If there is to be any opposition, it will be with that comical old buffoon, her uncle. He says he sleeps with one eye open, and I believe it. You told me it could not be determined whether he was more fool or knave; but, from all I have seen of him, the devil a bit of fool I can perceive, but, on the contrary, a great deal of the knave. Take my word for it, old Cockletown is not to be imposed upon."

"Is there no likelihood of that wretch, Alice Goodwin, dying?" said his mother.

"That is a case I must take in hand," returned the son. "I shall go to Ballyspellan and put an end to her. After that we can meet old Cockletown with courage. I feel that I am a favorite with his niece, and she, you must have perceived, is a favorite with him, and can manage him as she wishes, and that is one great point gained—indeed, the greatest."

"No," replied his mother, "the greatest is the death of Alice Goodwin."

"Be quiet," said her worthy son; "that shall be accomplished."

CHAPTER XVII.

Description of the Original Tory.—Their Manner of Swearing.

We have introduced an Irish outlaw, or tory, in the person of *Shawn-na-Middogue*, and, as it may be necessary to afford the reader a clearer insight into this subject, we shall give a short sketch of the character and habits of the wild and lawless class to which he belonged. The first description of those savage banditti that has come down to us with a distinct and characteristic designation, is known as that of the wild band of tories who overran the South and West of Ireland both before the Revolution and after it. The actual signification of the word *tory*, though now, and for a long time, the appellative of a political party, is scarcely known except to the Irish scholar and historian. The term proceeds from the Irish noun *tour*, a pursuit, a chase; and from that comes its cognate, *toiree*, a person chased, or pursued —thereby meaning an *outlaw*, from the fact that the individuals to whom it was first applied were such as had, by their murders and robberies, occasioned themselves to be put beyond the protection of all laws, and, consequently, were considered outlaws, or *tories*, and liable to be shot down without the intervention of judge or jury, as they often were, wherever they could be seen or apprehended. We believe the word first assumed its distinct character in the wars of Cromwell, as applied to the wild freebooters of Ireland.

Tory-hunting was at one time absolutely a pastime in Ireland, in consequence of this desperate body of people having proved the common enemy of every class, without reference to either religious or political distinction. We all remember the old nursery song, which, however simple, is very significant, and affords us an excellent illustration of their unfortunate condition, and the places of their usual retreat.

"I'll tell you a story about Johnny Magrory,
Who went *to the wood* and shot a tory;
I'll tell you another about his brother,
Who went *to the wood* and shot another."

From this it is evident that the tories of the time of Cromwell and Charles the Second were but the lineal descendants of the thievish wood kernes mentioned by Spenser, or at least the inheritors of their habits. Defoe attributes the establishment of the word in England to the infamous Titus Oates.

"There was a meeting," says he "(at which I was present), in the city, upon the occasion of the discovery of some attempt to stifle the evidence of the witnesses (about the Popish plot), and tampering with Bedlow and Stephen Dugdale. Among the discourse Mr. Bedlow said 'he had letters from Ireland; that there were some tories to be brought over hither, who were privately to murder Dr. Oates and the said Bedlow.' The doctor, whose zeal was very hot, could never hear any man after this talk against the plot, or against the witnesses, but he thought he was one of the tories, and called almost every man who opposed him in his discourse a tory—till at last the word became popular."

Hume's account of it is not very much different from this.

"The court party," says he, "reproached their antagonists with their affinity to the fanatical conventiclers of Scotland, who were known by the name of Whigs.* The country party found a resemblance between the courtiers and the Popish banditti in Ireland, on whom the appellation of tory was affixed. And after this manner these foolish terms of reproach came into public and general use."

It is evident, from Irish history, that the

* The word *whig* is taken from the fact, that in Scotland it was applied to milk that had become *sour;* and to this day milk that has lost its sweetness is termed by the Scotch, and their descendants in the north of Ireland, *whigged milk.*

original tories, politically speaking, belonged to no party whatever. They were simply thieves, robbers, and murderers on their own account. Every man's hand was against them, and certainly their hands were against every man. The fact is, that in consequence of the predatory nature of Irish warfare, which plundered, burned, and devastated as it went along, it was impossible that thousands of the wretched Irish should not themselves be driven by the most cruel necessity, for the preservation of their lives and of those of their families, to become thieves and plunderers in absolute self-defence. Their habitations, such as they were, having been destroyed and laid in ruins, they were necessarily driven to seek shelter in the woods, caves, and other fastnesses of the country, from which they issued forth in desperate hordes, armed as well as they could, to rob and to plunder for the very means of life. Goaded by hunger and distress of every kind, those formidable and ferocious "wood kernes" only paid the country back, by inflicting on it that plunder and devastation which they had received at its hands. Neither is it surprising that they should make no distinction in their depredations, because they experienced, to their cost, that no "hosting," on either or any side, ever made a distinction with them. Whatever hand was uppermost, whether in the sanguinary struggles of their rival chiefs, or in those between the Irish and English, or Anglo-Irish, the result was the same to them. If they were not robbed or burned out to-day, they might be to-morrow; and under such circumstances to what purpose could they be expected to exercise industrious or laborious habits, when they knew that they might go to bed in comfort at night, and rise up beggars in the morning? It is easy to see, then, that it was the lawless and turbulent state of the country that reduced them to such a mode of life, and drove them to make reprisals upon the property of others, in the absence of any safe or systematic way of living. There is no doubt that a principle of revenge and retaliation animated their proceedings, and that they stood accountable for acts of great cruelty and murder, as well as of robbery. The consequence necessarily was, that they felt themselves beyond the protection of all law, and fearfully distinct in the ferocity of their character from the more civilized population of the country, which waged an exterminating warfare against them under the sanction and by the assistance of whatever government existed.

It was about the year 1689 that they began to assume or to be characterized by a different designation—we mean that of rapparees; so called, it is said, from the fact of their using the half pike or short rapier, although, for our part, we are inclined to think that they were so termed from the word *rapio*, to plunder, which strikes us as the most appropriate and obvious. At all events it is enough to say that the *tories* were absorbed in the rapparees, and their name in Ireland and Great Britain, except as a political class, was forgotten and lost in that of the rapparees, who long survived them.

Barney Casey was, as the reader must have perceived, a young fellow of good sense and very acute observation. He had been, since an early period of his youth, domesticated in the family of Mr. Lindsay, who respected him highly for his attachment and integrity. He had a brother, however, who, with his many good qualities, was idle and headstrong. His name was Michael, and, sooth to say, the wild charm of a freebooter's life, in addition to his own indisposition to labor for his living, were more than the weak materials of his character could resist. He consequently joined *Shawn-na-Middogue* and his gang, and preferred the dangerous and licentious life of a robber and plunderer to that of honesty and labor—precisely as many men connected with a seafaring life prefer the habits of the smuggler or the pirate to those of the more honorable or legitimate profession. Poor Barney exerted all his influence with his brother with a hope of rescuing him from the society and habits of his dissolute companions, but to no purpose. It was a life of danger and excitement—of plans and projects, and changes, and chases, and unexpected encounters—of retaliation, and, occasionally, the most dreadful revenge. Such, however, was the state of society at that time, that those persons who had connected themselves with these desperate outlaws were by no means afraid to pay occasional visits to their own relatives, and from time to time to hold communication with them. Nay, not only was this the fact, but, what is still more strange, many persons who were related to individuals connected with this daring and unmanageable class were in the habit of attending their nightly meetings, sometimes for the purpose of preventing a robbery, or of *setting* a family whom they wished to suffer.

One night, during this period of our narrative, Barney's brother contrived to have a secret interview with him for the purpose of communicating some information to him which had reached his ears from *Shawn-na-Middogue*, to the effect that Caterine Collins had admitted to him (Shawn), upon his promise of marrying her—a promise made

only for the purpose of getting into her confidence, and making her useful as an agent to his designs—that she knew, she said, that it was not his brother Charles who had brought unfortunate Grace Davoren to ruin, but Harry Woodward, and, she added, when it was too late, she suspected something from his manner, of his intention to send Charles, on that disastrous night, in his stead. But Shawn, who knew Caterine and her connections well, recommended Michael Casey to apprise his brother that he could not keep too sharp an eye upon the movements of both, but, above all things, to try and induce him to *set* Woodward in such a way that he could repair the blow upon him, which, in mistake, he had dealt to his innocent brother. Now, although Barney almost detested Woodward, yet he was incapable of abetting Shawn's designs upon *Sail Balor*.

"No," said he to his brother, "I would die first. It is true I do not like a bone in his body, but I will never lend myself to such a cowardly act as that; besides, from all I know of Shawn, I did not think he would stoop to murder."

"Ay, but think of our companions," replied his brother, "and think too, of what a notion *they* have of it. Shawn, however, is a different man from most, if not all, of them —and he says he was urged on by a fit of fury when he found the man, that he thought the destroyer of Grace Davoren, speaking to her in such a lonely and suspicious place. It was his intention to have bidden him to stand on his guard and defend himself, but jealousy and revenge overcame him at the moment, and he struck the blow. Thank God that it failed; but you may take my word that the next won't—because Shawn now swears, that without preface or apology, or one moment's warning, he will stab him to the heart wherever he can meet him."

"It's a bad life," replied Barney, "that Shawn's leading; but, poor fellow, he and his reaved hard treatment—their house and place torn down and laid in ruins, and instead of protection from government, they found themselves proclaimed outlaws. What could he and they do? But, Michael, it was a different thing with you. Our family were comfortable—too much so, indeed, for you; you got idle habits and a distaste for work, and so, rather than settle down to industry, you should join them."

"Ay, and so would you, if you knew the life we lead."

"That might be," replied his brother, "if I didn't happen to think of the death you die."

"As to that," said Michael, "we have all made up our minds; shooting and hanging will get nothing out of us but the death-laugh at our enemies."

"Ay, enemies of your own making," said Barney; "but as to the death-laugh on the gallows, remember that that is at your own expense. It will be what we call on the wrong side of the mouth, I think. But in regard of these nightly meetings of yours, I would have no objection to see one of them. Do you think I would be allowed to join you for an hour or two, that I might hear and see what you say and do?"

"You may, Barney; but you know it isn't every one that would get that privilege; but in ordher to make sure, I'll spake to Shawn about it. Leave is light, they say; and as he knows you're not likely to turn a spy upon our hands, I'm certain he won't have any objection."

"When and where will you meet next?" asked Barney.

"On the very spot where Shawn struck his middogue into the body of Masther Charles," replied his brother. "Shawn has some oath of revenge to make against Woodward, because he suspects that the villain knows where poor Granua Davoren is."

"Well, on that subject he may take his own coorse," replied Barney; "but as for me, Michael, I neither care nor will think of the murdher of a fellow-crature, no matther how wicked he may be, especially when I know that it is planned for him. As a man and a Christian, I cannot lend myself to it, and of coorse—but this is between ourselves —I will put Mr. Woodward on his guard."

Those were noble sentiments, considering the wild and licentious period of which we write, and the dreadfully low estimate at which human life was then held.

"Act as you like," replied Michael; "but this I can tell you, and this I *do* tell you, that if, for the safety of this villain, you take a single step that may bring *Shawn-na-Middogue* into danger, if you were my brother ten times over I will not prevent him—Shawn I mean—from letting loose his vengeance upon you. No, nor upon Rathfillan House and all that it contains, you among the number."

"I will do nothing," replied Barney, firmly, "to bring Shawn or any of you into danger; but as sure as I have a Christian soul to be saved, and my life in my body, I will, as I said, put Mr. Harry Woodward upon his guard against him. So now, if you think it proper to let me be present at your meeting, knowing what you know, I will go, but not otherwise."

"I feel, Barney," said his brother, "that my mind is much hardened of late by the society I keep. I remember when I thought

murder as horrible a thing as you do, but now it is not so. The planning and the plotting of it is considered only as a good joke among us."

"But why don't you have them, then?" said Barney. "The pious principles of our father and mother were never such as they practise and preach among you. Why don't you have them, I say?"

"Don't you know," replied Michael, "that *that* step would be my death warrant? Once we join them we must remain with them, let what may happen. No man having them, unless he gets clear of the country altogether, may expect more than a week's lease of life; in general not so much. They look upon him as a man that has been a spy among them, and who has left them to make his peace, and gain a fortune from government for betraying them; and you know how often it has happened."

"It is too true, Michael," replied his brother, "for unfortunately it so happens that, whether for good or evil, Irishmen can never be got to stand by each other. Ay, it is true—too true. In the meantime call on me to-morrow with liberty from Shawn to attend your meeting, and we will both go there together."

"Very well," replied his brother, "I will do so."

The next night was one of tolerably clear moonlight; and about the hour of twelve or one o'clock some twenty or twenty-five outlaws were assembled immediately adjoining the spot where Charles Lindsay was so severely and dangerously wounded. The appearance of those men was singular and striking. Their garbs, we need scarcely inform our readers, were different from those of the present day. Many—nay, most, if not all of them, were bitter enemies to the law, which rendered it penal for them to wear their glibs, and in consequence most of those present had them in full perfection around their heads, over which was worn the barrad or Irish cap, which, however, was then beginning to fall into desuetude. There was scarcely a man of them on whose countenance was not stamped the expression of care, inward sufferiug, and, as it would seem, the recollection of some grief or sorrow which had befallen themselves or their families. There was something, consequently, determined and utterly reckless in their faces, which denoted them to be men who had set at defiance both the world and its laws. They all wore the *truis*, the brogue, and beneath the cloaks which covered them were concealed the celebrated Irish skean or middogue, so that at the first glance they presented the appearance of men who were in a peaceful garb and unarmed. The persons of some of them were powerful and admirably symmetrical, as could be guessed from their well-defined outlines. They arranged themselves in a kind of circle around *Shawn-na-Middogue*, who stood in the centre as their chief and leader. A spectator, however, could not avoid observing that, owing to the peculiarity of their costume, which, in consequence of their exclusion from society, not to mention the poverty and hardship which they were obliged to suffer, their appearance as a body was wild and almost savage. In their countenances was blended a twofold expression, composed of ferocity and despair. They felt themselves excommunicated, whether justly or not, from the world and its institutions, and knew too well that society, and the laws by which it is regulated and protected, were hunting them like beasts of prey for their destruction. Perhaps they deserved it, and this consideration may still more strongly account for their fierce and relentless-looking aspect. There is, in the meantime, no doubt that, however wild, ferocious, and savage they may have appeared, the strong and terrible hand of injustice and oppression had much, too much, to do with the crimes which they had committed, and which drove them out of the pale of civilized life. Altogether the spectacle of their appearance there on that night was a melancholy, as well as a fearful one, and ought to teach statesmen that it is not by oppressive laws that the heart of man can be improved, but that, on the contrary, when those who project and enact them come to reap the harvest of their policy, they uniformly find it one of violence and crime. So it has been since the world began, and so it will be so long as it lasts, unless a more genial and humane principle of legislation shall become the general system of managing, and consequently, of improving society.

"Now, my friends," said *Shawn-na-Middogue*, "you all know why we are here. Unfortunate Granua Davoren has disappeared, and I have brought you together that we may set about the task of recovering her, whether she is living or dead. Even her heart-broken parents would feel it a consolation to have her corpse in order that they might give it Christian burial. It will be a shame and a disgrace to us if she is not found, as I said, living or dead. Will you all promise to rest neither night nor day till she is found? In that case swear it on your skeans."

In a moment every skean was out, and, with one voice, they said, "By the contents of this blessed iron, that has been sharpened for the hearts of our oppressors, we will

never rest, either by night or by day, till we find her, living or dead"—every man then crossed himself and kissed his skean—"and, what is more," they added, "we will take vengeance upon the villain that ruined her."

"Hould," said Shawn; "do you know who he is?"

"By all accounts," they replied, "the man that you struck."

"No!" exclaimed Shawn, "I struck the wrong man; and poor Granua was right when she screamed out that I had murdered the innocent. But now," he added, "why am *I* here among you? I will tell you, although I suppose the most of you know it already: it was good and generous Mr. Lindsay's she-devil of a wife that did it; and it was her he-devil of a son, Harry Woodward, that ruined Granua Davoren. My mother happened to say that she was a heartless and tyrannical woman, that she had the Evil Eye, and that a devil, under the name of *Shan-dhinne-dhuv*, belonged to her family, and put her up to every kind of wickedness. This, which was only the common report, reached her ears, and the consequence was that because we were behind in the rent only a single gale, she sent in her bailiffs without the knowledge of her husband, who was from home at the time, and left neither a bed under us nor a roof over us. At all events, it is well for her that she *is* a woman; but she has a son born in her own image, so far, at least, as a bad heart is concerned; that son is the destroyer of Granua Davoren; but not a man of you must raise his hand to him: he must be left to my vengeance. Caterine Collins has told me much more about him, but it is useless to mention it. The Evil Spirit I spoke of, the *Shan-dhinne-dhuv*, and he have been often seen together; but no matter for that; he'll find the same spirit badly able to protect him; so, as I said before, he must be left to my vengeance."

"You mentioned Caterine Collins?" said one of them. "Caterine has friends here, Shawn. What is your opinion of her?"

"Yes," observed another, "she has friends here; but, then, she has enemies too; men who have a good right to hate the ground she walks on."

"Whatever my opinion of Caterine Collins may be," said Shawn, "I will keep it to myself; I only say, that the man who injures her is no friend of mine. Isn't she a woman? And, surely, we are not to quarrel with, or injure a defenceless woman."

By this piece of policy Shawn gained considerable advantage. His purpose was to preserve such an ascendency over that cunning and treacherous woman as might enable him to make her useful in working out his own designs, his object being, not only on that account, but for the sake of his own personal safety, to stand well with both her friends and her enemies.

Other matters were discussed, and plans of vengeance proposed and assented to, the details of which would afford our readers but slight gratification. After their projects had been arranged, this wild and savage, but melancholy group, dispersed, and so intimately were they acquainted with the intricacies of cover and retreat which then characterized the surface of the country, that in a few minutes they seemed rather to have vanished like spectres than to have disappeared like living men. Shawn, however, remained behind in order to hold some private conversation with Barney Casey.

"Barney," said he, "I wish to speak to you about that villain Woodward."

"I don't at all doubt," replied this honest and manly peasant, "that he is a villain: but at the same time, Shawn, you must remember that I am not a tory, and that I will neither aid nor assist you in your designs of murdher upon him. I received betther principles from my father and the mother who bore me; and indeed I think the same thing may be said of yourself, Shawn. Still and all, there is no doubt but that, unlike that self-willed brother of mine, you had heavy provocation to join the life you did."

"Well, Barney," replied Shawn, in a melancholy tone of voice, "if the same oppressions were to come on us again, I think I would take another course. My die, however, is cast, and I must abide by it. What I wanted to say to you, however, is this:—You are livin' in the same house with Woodward; keep your eye on him—watch him well and closely; he is plotting evil for somebody."

"Why," said Barney, "how do you know that?"

"I have it," replied Shawn, "from good authority. He has paid three or four midnight visits to Sol, the herb doctor, and you know that a greater old scoundrel than he is doesn't breathe the breath of life. It has been long suspected that he is a poisoner, and they say that in spite of the poverty he takes on him, he is rich and full of money. It can be for no good, then, that Woodward consults him at such unseasonable hours."

"Ay; but who the devil could he think of poisoning?" said Barney. "I see nobody he could wish to poison."

"Maybe, for all that, the deed is done," replied Shawn. "Where, for instance, is unfortunate *Granua?* Who can tell that he hasn't dosed *her?*"

"I believe him villain enough to do it," re-

turned the other; "but still I don't think he did. He was at home to my own knowledge the night she disappeared, and could know nothing of what became of her. I think that's a sure case."

"Well," said Shawn, "it may be so; but in the manetime his stolen visits to the ould herb docthor are not for nothing. I end, then, as I began—keep your eye on him; watch him closely—and now, good night."

These hints were not thrown away upon Barney, who was naturally of an observant turn; and accordingly he kept a stricter eye than ever upon the motions of Harry Woodward. This accomplished gentleman, like every villain of his class, was crafty and secret in everything he did and said; that is to say, his object was always to lead those with whom he held intercourse, to draw the wrong inference from his words and actions. Even his mother, as the reader will learn, was not in his full confidence. Such men, however, are so completely absorbed in the management of their own plans, that the latent principle or motive occasionally becomes apparent, without any consciousness of its exhibition on their part. Barney soon had an opportunity of suspecting this. His brother Charles, after what appeared to be a satisfactory convalescence, began to relapse, and a fresh fever to set in. The first person to communicate the melancholy intelligence to Woodward happened to be Barney himself, who, on meeting him early in the morning, said,—

"I am sorry, Mr. Woodward, to tell you that Masther Charles is a great deal worse; he spent a bad night, and it seems has got very feverish."

A gleam of satisfaction—short and transient, but which, however, was too significant to be misunderstood by such a sagacious observer as Barney—flashed across his countenance—but only for a moment. He recomposed his features, and assuming a look expressive of the deepest sorrow, said,—

"Good heavens, Casey, do you tell me that my poor brother is worse, and we all in such excellent spirits at what we considered his certain but gradual recovery?"

"He is much worse, sir; and the masther this morning has strong doubts of his recovery. He's in great affliction about him, and so are they all. His loss would be felt in the neighborhood, for, indeed, it's he that was well beloved by all who knew him."

"He certainly was a most amiable and affectionate young fellow," said Woodward, "and, for my part, if he goes from us through the means of that murdering blow, I shall hunt *Shawn-na-Middogue* to the death."

"Will you take a friend's advice?" replied Barney: "we all of us wish, of coorse, to die a Christian death upon our beds, that we may think of the sins we have committed, and ask the pardon of our Saviour and inthersessor for them. I say, then, if you wish to die such a death, and to have time to repent of your sins, avoid coming across *Shawn-na-Middogue* above all men in the world. I tell you this as a friend, and now you're warned."

Woodward paused, and his face became black with a spirit of vengeance.

"How does it happen, Casey," he asked, "that you are able to give me such a warning? You must have some particular information on the subject."

"The only information I have on the subject is this—that you are set down among most people as the man who destroyed Grace Davoren, and not your brother; Shawn believes this, and on that account, I say, it will be well for you to avoid him. He believes, too, that you have her concealed somewhere—although I don't think so; but if you have, Mr. Woodward, it would be an act of great kindness—an act becomin' both a gentleman and a Christian—to restore the unfortunate girl to her parents."

"I know no more about her than you do, Casey. How could *I*? Perhaps my poor brother, when he is capable of it, may be able to afford us some information on the subject. As it is I know nothing of it, but I shall leave nothing undone to recover her if she be alive, or if the thing can be accomplished. In the meantime all I can think of is the relapse of my poor brother. Until he gets better I shall not be able to fix my mind upon anything else. What is Grace Davoren or *Shawn-na-Middogue*—the accursed scoundrel—to me, so long as my dear Charles is in a state of danger?"

"Now," said he, when they parted "now to work earth and hell to secure *Shawn-na-Middogue*. He has got my secret concerning the girl Davoren, and I feel that while he is at large I cannot be safe. There is a reward for his head, whether alive or dead, but that I scorn. In the meantime, I shall not lose an hour in getting together a band who will scour the country along with myself, until we secure him. After that I shall be at perfect liberty to work out my plans without either fear of, or danger from, this murdering ruffian."

CHAPTER XVIII.

The Toir, or Tory Hunt.

Harry Woodward now began to apprehend that, as the reader sees, either his star or that of *Shawn-na-Middogue* must be in the ascen-

dant. He accordingly set to work with all his skill and craft to secure his person and offer him up as a victim to the outraged laws of his country, and to a government that had set a price upon his head, as the leader of the outlaws; or, what came nearer to his wish, either to shoot him down with his own hand, or have him shot by those who were on the alert for such persons. The first individual to whom he applied upon the subject was his benevolent step-father, who he knew was a magistrate, and whose duty was to have the wretched class of whom we write arrested or shot as best they might.

"Sir," said he, "I think after what has befallen my dear brother Charles that this murdering villain, *Shawn-na-Middogue*, who is at the head of the tories and outlaws, ought to be shot, or taken up and handed over to government."

"Why," asked Mr. Lindsay, "what has happened in connection with *Shawn-na-Middogue* and your brother?"

"Why, that it was from his hand he received the wound that may be his death. That, I think, is sufficient to make you exert yourself; and indeed it is, in my opinion, both a shame and a scandal that the subject has not been taken up with more energy by the magistracy of the country."

"But who can tell," replied Lindsay, "whether it was *Shawn-na-Middogue* that stabbed Charles? Charles himself does not know the individual who stabbed him."

"The language of the girl, I think," replied Woodward, "might indicate it. He was once her lover——"

"But she named nobody," replied the other; "and as for lovers, she had enough of them. If *Shawn-na-Middogue* is an outlaw *now*, I know who made him so. I remember when there wasn't a better conducted boy on your mother's property. He was a credit to his family and the neighborhood; but they were turned out in my absence by your unfeeling mother there, Harry; and the fine young fellow had nothing else for it but the life of an outlaw. Confound me if I can much blame him."

"Thank you, Lindsay," replied his wife; "as kind as ever to the woman who brought you that property. But you forget what the young scoundrel's mother said of me—do you? that I had the Evil Eye, and that there was a familiar or devil connected with me and my family?"

"Egad! and I'm much of her opinion," replied her husband; "and if she said it, I give you my honor it is only what every one who knows you says, and what I, who know you best, say as well as they. Begone, madam—leave the room; it was your damned oppression made the boy a tory. Begone, I say—I will bear with your insolence no longer."

He stood up as he spoke—his eye flashed, and the stamp of his foot made the floor shake. Mrs. Lindsay knew her husband well, and without a single syllable in reply she arose and left the room.

"Harry," proceeded his stepfather, "I shall take no proceedings against that unfortunate young man—tory though he be; I would resign my magistracy sooner. Do not, therefore, count on me."

"Well, sir," said he, with a calm but black expression of countenance, "I will not enter into domestic quarrels; but I am my mother's son."

"You are," replied Lindsay, looking closely at him—"and I regret it. I do not like the expression of your face—it is bad; worse I have seldom seen."

"Be that expression what it may, sir," replied Woodward, "by the heavens above me I shall rest neither night nor day until I put an end to *Shawn-na-Middogue*."

"In the meantime you shall have no assistance from me, Harry; and it ill becomes your mother's son—the woman whose cruelty to the family made him what he is—to attempt to hunt him down. On the contrary, I tell you as a friend to let him pass; the young man is desperate, and his vengeance, or that of his followers, may come on you when you least expect it. It is not his death that will secure you. If he dies through your means, he will leave those behind him who will afford you but short space to settle your last account."

"Be the consequences what they may," replied Woodward, "either he or I shall fall."

He left the room after expressing this determination, and his step-father said,—

"I'm afraid, Maria, we don't properly understand Master Harry. I am much troubled by what has occurred just now. I fear he is a hypocrite in morals, and without a single atom of honorable principle. Did you observe the expression of his face? Curse me if I think the devil himself has so bad a one. Besides, I have heard something about him that I don't like—something which I am not going to mention to you; but I say that in future we must beware of him."

"I was sorry, papa, to see the expression of his face," replied Maria; "it was fearful; and above all things the expression of his eye. It made me feel weak whenever he turned it on me."

"Egad, and it had something of the same effect on myself," replied her father. "There

is some damned expression in it that takes away one's strength. Well, as I said, we must beware of him."

Woodward's next step was to pay a visit to Lord Cockletown, who, as he had gained his title in consequence of his success in tory-hunting, and capturing the most troublesome and distinguished outlaws of that day, was, he thought, the best and most experienced person to whom he could apply for information as to the most successful means of accomplishing his object. He accordingly waited on his lordship, to whom he thought, very naturally, that this exploit would recommend him. His lordship was in the garden, where Woodward found him in hobnailed shoes, digging himself into what he called his daily perspirations.

"Don't be surprised, Mr. Woodward," said he, "at my employment; I am taking my every-day sweat, because I feel that I could not drink as I do and get on without it. Well, what do you want with me? Is it anything about Tom? Egad, Tom says she rather likes you than otherwise; and if you can satisfy me as to property settlements, and all that, I won't stand in your way; but, in the meantime, what do you want with me now? If it's Tom's affair, the state of your property comes first."

"No, my lord, I shall leave all dealings of business between you and my mother. This is a different affair, and one on which I wish to have your lordship's advice and direction."

"Ay, but what is it? Confound it, come to the point."

"It is a tory-hunt, my lord."

"Who is the tory, or who are the tories? Come, I'm at home here. What's your plan?"

"Why, simple pursuit. We have the *posse comitatus*."

"The *posse comitatus!*—the posse devil; what do the tories care about the *posse comitatus?* Have you bloodhounds?"

"No, my lord, but I think we can procure them."

"Because," proceeded his lordship, "to go hunt a tory without bloodhounds is like looking for your grandmother's needle in a bottle of straw."

"I am thankful to your lordship for that hint," replied Harry Woodward; "but the truth is, I have been almost since my infancy out of the country, and am, consequently, very ignorant of its usages."

"What particular tory are you going to hunt?"

"A fellow named *Shawn-na-Middogue*."

"Ah! *Shawn-na-Middogue*, your mother's victim? Don't hunt *him*. If you're wise you'll keep your distance from that young fellow. I tell you, Mr. Woodward, there will be more danger to yourself in the hunt than there will be to him. It's a well-known fact that it was your mother's severity to his family that made a tory of him; and, as I said before, I would strongly recommend you to avoid him. How many bloodhounds have you got?"

"Why, I think we can muster half a dozen."

"Ay, but do you know how to hunt them?"

"Not exactly; but I suppose we may depend upon the instinct of the dogs."

"No, sir, you may not, unless to a very limited extent. Those tories always, when pursued by bloodhounds, go down the wind whenever it is possible, and, consequently, leave very little trail behind them. Your object will be, of course, to hunt them *against* the wind; they will consequently have little chance of escape, unless, as they are often in the habit of doing, they administer a sop."

"What is a sop, my lord?"

"A piece of raw beef or mutton, kept for twenty-four hours under the armpit until it becomes saturated with the moisture of the body; after this, administer it to the dog, and instead of attacking he will follow you over the world. The other sop resorted to by these fellows is the *middogue*, or skean, and, as they contrive to manage its application, it is the surer of the two. Should you like to see Tom?"

"Unquestionably, my lord. I intended before going to have requested the honor of a short interview."

"Ay, of course, to make love. Well, I tell you that Tom, like her uncle, has her wits about her. Go up, then, you will find her in the withdrawing-room; and listen—I desire that you will tell her of your tory-hunting project, and ask her opinion upon it. Now, don't forget that, because I will make inquiries about it."

Woodward certainly found her in what was then termed the withdrawing-room. She was in the act of embroidering, and received him with much courtesy and kindness.

"I hope your mother and family are all well, Mr. Woodward," she said; "as for your sister Maria she is quite a stay-at-home. Does she ever visit any one at all?"

"Very rarely, indeed, Miss Riddle; but I think she will soon do herself the pleasure of calling upon you."

"I shall feel much obliged, Mr. Woodward. From what I have heard, and the little I have seen of her, a most amiable girl. You have had a chat with my kind-hearted, but eccentric uncle?"

"AH! *Shawn-na-Middogue*, YOUR MOTHER'S VICTIM? DONT HUNT *him*. IF YOU'RE WISE YOU'LL KEEP YOUR DISTANCE FROM THAT YOUNG FELLOW"—*Evil Eye*, chap. xviii, *p.* 736.

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"I have; and he imposed it on me as a condition that I should mention to you an enterprise on which I am bent."

"An enterprise! Pray, what is it?"

"Why, a tory-hunt; I am going to hunt down *Shawn-na-Middogue*, as he is called, and I think it will be rendering the country a service to get rid of him."

Miss Riddle's face got pale as ashes; and she looked earnestly and solemnly into Woodward's face.

"Mr. Woodward," said she, "would you oblige me with one simple request? Do not hunt down *Shawn-na-Middogue:* my uncle and I owe him our lives."

"How is that, Miss Riddle?"

"Do you not know that my uncle was a tory hunter?"

"I have certainly heard so," replied Woodward; "and I am, besides, aware of it from the admirable instructions which he gave me concerning the best method of hunting them down."

"Yes, but did he encourage you in your determination of hunting down *Shawn-na-Middogue?*"

"No, certainly; but, on the contrary, advised me to pass him by—to have nothing to do with him."

"Did he state his reasons for giving you such advice?"

"He mentioned something with reference to certain legal proceedings taken by my mother against the family of *Shawn-na-Middogue*. But I presume my mother had her own rights to vindicate, and beyond that I know nothing of it. He nearly stabbed my brother to death, and I will leave no earthly means unattempted to shoot the villain down, or otherwise secure him."

"Well, you are aware that my uncle was the most successful and celebrated tory-hunter of his day, and rendered important services to the government in that capacity — services which have been liberally rewarded."

"I am aware of it, Miss Riddle."

"But you are *not* aware, as I am, that this same *Shawn-na-Middogue* saved my uncle's life and mine on the night before last?"

"How could I, Miss Riddle?"

"It is a fact, though, and I beg you to mark it; and I trust that if you respect my uncle and myself, you will not engage in this cruel and inhuman expedition."

"But your uncle mentioned nothing of this to me, Miss Riddle."

"He does not know it yet. I have been all yesterday thinking over the circumstance, with a view of getting his lordship to interfere with the government for this unfortunate youth; but I felt myself placed in circumstances of great difficulty and delicacy with respect to your family and ours. I hope you understand me, Mr. Woodward. I allude to the circumstances which forced him to become an outlaw and a tory, and it struck me that my uncle could not urge any application in his favor without adverting to them."

"O, Miss Riddle, if you feel an interest in his favor, he shall experience no molestation from me."

"The only interest which I feel in him is that of humanity, and gratitude, Mr. Woodward; but, indeed, I should rather say that the gratitude should *not* be common to a man who saved my uncle's life and mine."

"And pray may I ask how that came about? At all events he has made me his friend forever."

"My uncle and I were returning home from dinner,—we had dined at Squire Dawson's,—and on coming to a lonely part of the road we found our carriage surrounded by a party of the outlaws, who shouted out, 'This is the old tory-hunter, who got his wealth and title by persecuting us, and now we will pay him home for all,' 'Ay,' observed another, 'and his niece is with him, and we will have her off to the mountains.' The carriage was immediately surrounded, and I know not to what an extent their violence and revenge might have proceeded, when Shawn same bounding among them with the air of a man who possessed authority over them.

"'Stop,' said he; 'on this occasion they must go free, and on every occasion. Lord Cockletown, let him be what he may before, is of late a good landlord, and a friend to the people. His niece, too, is——' He then complimented me upon some trifling acts of kindness I had paid to his family when—hem—ahem—in fact, when they stood much in need of it."

This was a delicate evasion of any allusion to the cruel conduct of his mother towards the outlaw's family.

"When," she went on, "he had succeeded in restraining the meditated violence of the tories, he approached me—for they had already dragged me out, and indeed it was my screaming that brought him with such haste to the spot. 'Now, Miss Riddle,' said he, in a low whisper which my uncle could not hear, 'one good act deserves another; you were kind to my family when they stood sorely in need of it. You and your uncle are safe, and, what is more, will be safe: I will take care of that; but forget *Shawn-na Middogue*, the outlaw and tory, or if ever you mention his name, let it be in a spirit of

mercy and forgiveness.' Mr. Woodward, you will not hunt down this generous young man?"

"I would as soon hunt down my father, Miss Riddle, if he were alive. I trust you don't imagine that I can be insensible to such noble conduct."

"I do not think you are, Mr. Woodward; and I hope you will allow the unfortunate youth to remain unmolested until my uncle, to whom I shall mention this circumstance this day, may strive to have him restored to society."

We need scarcely assure our readers that Woodward pledged himself in accordance with her wishes, after which he went home and prepared such a mask for his face, and such a disguise of dress for his person, as, when assumed, rendered it impossible for any one to recognize him. Such was the spirit in which he kept his promise to Miss Riddle, and such the honor of every word that proceeded from his hypocritical lips.

In the meantime the preparations for the chase were made with the most extraordinary energy and caution. Woodward had other persons engaged in it, on whom he had now made up his mind to devolve the consequences of the whole proceedings. The sheriff and the *posse comitatus*, together with assistance from other quarters, had all been engaged; and as some vague intelligence of *Shawn-na-Middogue's* retreat had been obtained, Woodward proceeded in complete disguise before daybreak with a party, not one of whom was able to recognize him, well armed, to have what was, in those days, called a tory-hunt.

The next morning was dark and gloomy. Gray, heavy mists lay upon the mountain-tops, from which, as the light of the rising sun fell upon them, they retreated in broken masses to the valleys and lower grounds beneath them. A cold, chilly aspect lay upon the surface of the earth, and the white mists that had descended from the mountain-tops, or were drawn up from the ground by the influence of the sun, were, although more condensed, beginning to get a warmer look.

Notwithstanding the secrecy with which this enterprise was projected it had taken wind, and many of those who had suffered by the depredations of the tories were found joining the band of pursuers, and many others who were friendly to them, or who had relations among them, also made their appearance, but contrived to keep somewhat aloof from the main body, though not at such a distance as might seem to render them suspected; their object being to afford whatever assistance they could, with safety to themselves and without incurring any suspicion of affinity to the unfortunate tories.

The country was of intricate passage and full of thick woods. At this distance of time, now that it is cleared and cultivated, our readers could form no conception of its appearance then. In the fastnesses and close brakes of those woods lay the hiding-places and retreats of the tories — "the wood kernes" of Spenser's day. A tory-hunt at that time, or at any time, was a pastime of no common danger. Those ferocious and determined banditti had little to render life desirable. They consequently set but a slight value upon it. The result was that the pursuits after them by foreign soldiers, and other persons but slightly acquainted with the country, generally ended in disaster and death to several of the pursuers.

On the morning in question the tory-hunters literally beat the woods as if they had been in the pursuit of game, but for a considerable time with little effect. Not the appearance of a single tory was anywhere visible; but, notwithstanding this, it so happened that some one of their enemies occasionally dropped, either dead or wounded, by a shot from the intricacies and covers of the woods, which, upon being searched and examined, afforded no trace whatsoever of those who did the mischief. This was harassing and provocative of vengeance to the military and such wretched police as existed in that day. No search could discover a single trace of a tory, and many of those in the pursuit were obliged to withdraw from it—not unreluctantly, indeed—in order to bear back the dead and wounded to the town of Rathfillan.

As they were entering an open space that lay between two wooded enclosures, a white hare started across their path, to the utter consternation of those who were in pursuit. Woodward, now disguised and in his mask, had been for a considerable time looking behind him, but this circumstance did not escape his notice, and he felt, to say the least of it, startled at her second appearance. It reminded him, however, of the precautions which he had taken; and he looked back from time to time, as we have said, in expectation of something appertaining to the pursuit. At length he exclaimed,—

"Where are the party with the blood-hounds? Why have they not joined us and come up with us?"

"They have started a wolf," replied one of them, "and the dogs are after him; and some of them have gone back upon the trail of the wounded men."

"Return for them," said he; "without their assistance we can never find the trail

of these accursed tories; but, above all, of *Shawn-na-Middogue.*"

In due time the dogs were brought up, but the trails were so various that they separated mostly into single hunts, and went at such a rapid speed that they were lost in the woods.

At length two of them who came up first, gave tongue, and the body of pursuers concentrated themselves on the newly-discovered trail, keeping as close to the dogs as they could. Those two had quartered the woods and returned to the party again when they fell upon the slot of some unfortunate victim who had recently escaped from the place. The pursuit now became energetic and full of interest, if we could forget the melancholy and murderous fact that the game pursued were human victims, who had nothing more nor less to expect from their pursuers than the savage wolves which then infested the forests—a price having been laid upon the heads of each.

After some time the party arrived at the outskirts of the wood, and an individual was seen bounding along in the direction of the mountains—the two dogs in full pursuit of him. The noise, the animation, and the tumult of the pursuit were now astounding, and rang long and loud over the surface of the excited and awakened neighborhood, whilst the wild echoes of their inhuman enjoyment were giving back their terrible responses from the hills and valleys around them. The shouting, the urging on of the dogs by ferocious cries of encouragement, were loud, incessant, and full of a spirit which, at this day, it is terrible to reflect upon. The whole country was alive; and the loud, vociferous agitation which disturbed it, resembled the influence of one of those storms which lash the quiet sea into madness. Fresh crowds joined them, as we have said, and the tumult still became louder and stronger. In the meantime, *Shawn-na-Middogue's* case—it was he—became hopeless—for it was the speed of the fleetest runner that ever lived to that of two powerful bloodhounds, animated, as they were, by their ferocious instincts. Indeed, the interest of the chase was heightened by the manner and conduct of the dogs, which, when they came upon the trail of the individual, in question, yelped aloud with an ecstatic delight that gave fresh courage to the vociferous band of pursuers.

"Who can that man be?" asked one of them; "he seems to have wings to his feet."

"By the sacred light of day," exclaimed another, "it is no other than the famous *Shawn-na-Middogue* himself. I know him well; and even if I did not, who could mistake him by his speed of foot?"

"Is that he?" said the mask; "then fifty pounds in addition to the government reward to the man who will shoot him down, or secure him, living or dead: only let him be taken."

Just then four or five persons, friends of course to the unfortunate outlaw, came in before the dogs across the trail, in consequence of which the animals became puzzled, and lost considerable time in regaining it, whilst Shawn, in the meantime, was fast making his way to the mountains.

The reward, however, offered by the man in the black mask—for it was a black one—accelerated the speed of the pursuers, between whom a competition of terrible energy and action arose as to which of them should secure the public reward and the premium that were offered for his blood. Shawn, however, had been evidently exhausted, and sat down considerably in advance of them, on the mountain side, to take breath, in order to better the chance of effecting his escape; but whilst seated, panting after his race, the dogs gained rapidly upon him. Having put his hand over his eyes, and looked keenly down—for he had the sight of an eagle—the approach of the dogs did not seem at all to alarm him.

"Ah, thank God, they will have him soon," said the mask, "and it is a pity that we cannot give them the reward. Who owns those noble dogs?"

"You will see that very soon, sir," replied a man beside him; "you will see it very soon—you may see it now."

As he uttered the words the dogs sprang upon Shawn, wagged their tails as if in a state of most ecstatic delight, and began to caress him and lick his face.

"Finn, my brave Finn!" he exclaimed, patting him affectionately, "and is this you? and Oonah, my darling Oonah, did the villains think that my best friends would pursue *me* for *my blood?* Come now," said he, "follow me, and we will lead them a chase."

During this brief rest, however, four of the most active of his pursuers, who knew what is called the *lie* of the country, succeeded, by passing through the skirt of the wood in a direction where it was impossible to observe them, in coming up behind the spot where he had sat, and consequently, when he and his dogs, or those which had been once his, ascended its flat summit, the four men pounced upon him. Four against one would, in ordinary cases, be fearful odds; but Shawn knew that he had two stanch and faithful friends to support him. Quick as lightning his middogue was into one of

their hearts, and almost as quickly were two more of them seized by the throats and dragged down by the powerful animals that defended him. The fourth man was as rapidly despatched by a single blow, whilst the dogs were literally tearing out the throats of their victims. In the course of about ten minutes, what between Shawn's middogue and the terrible fangs and strength of those dreadful animals, the four men lay there four corpses. Shawn's danger, however, notwithstanding his success, was only increasing. His pursuers had now gained upon him, and when he looked around he found himself hemmed in, or nearly so. Speed of foot was everything; but, what was worst of all, with reference to his ultimate escape, four other dogs were making their way up the mountains—dogs to which he was a stranger, and he knew right well that they would hunt him with all the deadly instincts of blood. They were, however, far in the distance, and he felt little apprehension from *them*. Be this as it may, he bounded off accompanied by his faithful friends, and not less than twenty shots were fired after him, none of which touched him. The number of his pursuers, dogs included, almost made his heart sink; and would have done so, but that he was probably desperate and reckless of life. He saw himself almost encompassed; he heard the bullets whistling about him, and perceived at a glance that the chances of his escape were a thousand to one against him. With a rapid sweep of his eye he marked the locality. It also was all against him. There was a shoreless lake, abrupt and deep to the very edge, except a slip at the opposite side, lying at his feet. It was oblong, but at each end of it there was nothing like a pass for at least two or three miles. If he could swim across this he knew that he was safe, and that he could do so he felt certain, provided he escaped the bullets and the dogs of the pursuers. At all events he dashed down and plunged in, accompanied by his faithful attendants. Shot after shot was sent after him; and so closely did some of them reach him, that he was obliged to dive and swim under water from time to time, in order to save himself from their aim. The strange bloodhounds, however, which had entered the lake, were gaining rapidly on him, and on looking back he saw them within a dozen yards of him. He was now, however, beyond the reach of their bullets, unless it might be a longer shot than ordinary, but the four dogs were upon him, and in the extremity of despair he shouted out,—

"Finn and Oonah, won't you save me?"

Shame upon the friendship and attachment of man! In a moment two of the most powerful of the strange dogs were in something that resembled a death struggle with his brave and gallant defenders. The other two, however, were upon himself; but by a stab of his middogue he despatched one of them, and the other he pressed under water until he was drowned.

In the meantime, whilst the four other dogs were fighting furiously in the water, Shawn, having felt exhausted, was obliged to lie on his back and float, in order to regain his strength.

A little before this contest commenced, the black mask and a number of the pursuing party were standing on the edge of the lake looking on, conscious of the impossibility of their interference.

"Is there no stout man and good swimmer present," exclaimed the mask, "who will earn the fifty pounds I have offered for the capture of that man?"

"Here am I," said a powerful young fellow, the best swimmer, with the exception of *Shawn-na-Middogue*, in the province. "I am like a duck in the water; but upon my sowl, so is he. If I take him, you will give me the fifty pounds?"

"Unquestionably; but you know you will have the government reward besides."

"Well, then, here goes. I cannot bring my carbine with me; but even so—we will have a tug for it with my skean."

He threw off his coat and barrad, and immediately plunged in and swam with astonishing rapidity towards the spot where Shawn and the dogs—the latter still engaged in their ferocious contest—were in the lake. Shawn now had regained considerable strength, and was about to despatch the enemies of his brave defenders, when, on looking back to the spot on the margin of the lake where his pursuers stood, he saw the powerful young swimmer within a few yards of him. It was well for him that he had regained his strength, and such was his natural courage that he felt rather gratified at the appearance of only a single individual.

"*Shawn-na-Middogue*," said the young fellow, "I come to make you a prisoner. Will you fight me fairly in the water?"

"I am a hunted outlaw—a tory," replied Shawn, "and will fight you the best way I can. If we were on firm earth I would fight you on your own terms. If there is to be a fight between us, remember that you are fighting for the government reward, and I for my life."

"Will you fight me," said the man, "without using your middogue?"

"I saw you take a skean from between your teeth as I turned round," replied

Shawn, "and I know now that you are a villain and a treacherous ruffian, who would take a cowardly advantage of me if you could."

The fellow made a plunge at Shawn, who was somewhat taken by surprise. They met and grappled in the water, and the contest between them was, probably, one of the fiercest and most original that ever occurred between man and man. It was distinctly visible to the spectators on the shore, and the interest which it excited in them can scarcely be described. A terrible grapple ensued, but as neither of them wished to die by drowning, or, in fact, to die under such peculiar circumstances at all, there was a degree of caution in the contest which required great skill and power on both sides. Notwithstanding this caution, however, still, when we consider the unsubstantial element on which the battle between them raged—for rage it did—there were frightful alternatives of plunging and sinking between them.

Shawn's opponent was the stronger of the two, but Shawn possessed in activity what the other possessed in strength. The waters of the lake were agitated by their struggles and foamed white about them, whilst, at the same time, the four bloodhounds tearing each other beside them added to the agitation. Shawn and his opponent clasped each other and frequently disappeared for a very brief space, but the necessity to breathe and rise to the air forced them to relax the grasps and seek the surface of the water; so was it with the dogs. At length, Shawn, feeling that his middogue had got entangled in his dress, which the water had closely contracted about it, rendering it difficult, distracted as he was by the contest, to extricate it, turned round and swam several strokes from his enemy, who, however, pursued him with the ferocity of one of the bloodhounds beside them. This *ruse* was to enable Shawn to disengage his middogue, which he did. In the meantime this expedient of Shawn's afforded his opponent time to bring out his skean,—two weapons which differed very little except in name. They once more approached one another, each with the armed hand up,—the left,—and a fiercer and more terrible contest was renewed. The instability of the element, however, on which they fought, prevented them from using their weapons with effect. At all events they played about each other, offering and warding off the blows, when Shawn exclaimed,—having grasped his opponent with his right arm,—

"I am tired of this; it must be now sink or swim between us. To die here is better than to die on the gallows."

As he spoke both sank, and for about half a minute became invisible. The spectators from the shore now gave them both over for lost; one of them only emerged with the fatal middogue in his hand, but his opponent appeared not, and for the best reason in the world: he was on his way to the bottom of the lake. Shawn's exhaustion after such a struggle now rendered his situation hopeless. He was on the point of going down when he exclaimed:

"It is all in vain now; I am sinking, and me so near the only slip that is in the lake. Finn and Oonah, save me; I am drowning."

The words were scarcely out of his lips when he felt the two faithful, powerful, and noble animals, one at each side of him—seeing as they did, his sinking state—seizing him by his dress, and dragging him forward to the slip we have mentioned. With great difficulty he got upon land, but, having done so, he sat down; and when his dogs, in the gambols of their joy at his safety, caressed him, he wept like an infant—this proscribed outlaw and tory. He was now safe, however, and his pursuers returned in a spirit of sullen and bitter disappointment, finding that it was useless to continue the hunt any longer.

CHAPTER XIX.

Plans and Negotiations.

We have already said that Woodward was a man of personal conrage, and without fear of anything either living or dead, yet, notwithstanding all this, he felt a terror of *Shawn-na-Middogue* which he could not overcome. The escape—the extraordinary escape of that celebrated young tory—depressed and vexed him to the heart. He was conscious, however, of his own villany and of his conduct to Grace Davoren, whom Shawn had loved, and, as Shakespeare says, "conscience makes cowards of us all." One thing, however, afforded him some consolation, which was that his disguise prevented him from from being known as the principal person engaged in the attempt to hunt down the outlaw. He knew that after the solemn promise he had given Miss Riddle, any knowledge on her part of his participation in the pursuit of that generous but unfortunate young man would have so completely sunk him in her opinion, as an individual professing to be a man of honor, that she would have treated his proposals with contempt, and rejected him with disdain. At all events, his chief object now was to lose

no time in prosecuting his suit with her. For this purpose he urged his mother to pay Lord Cockletown another visit, in order to make a formal proposal for the hand of his niece in his name, with a view of bringing the matter to an issue with as little delay as might be. His brother, who had relapsed, was in a very precarious condition, but still slightly on the recovery, a circumstance which filled him with alarm. He only went out at night occasionally, but still he went out, and, as before, did not return until about twelve, but much more frequently one, two, and sometimes three o'clock. Nobody in the house could understand the mystery of these midnight excursions, and the servants of the family, who were well aware of them, began to look on him with a certain undefined terror as a man whose unaccountable movements were associated with something that was evil and supernatural. They felt occasionally that the power of his eye was dreadful; and as it began to be whispered about that it was by its evil influence he had brought Alice Goodwin to the very verge of the grave for the purpose of getting at the property, which was to revert to him in case she should die without issue, there was not one of them who, on meeting him, either in or about the house, would run the risk of looking him in the face. In fact, they experienced that kind of fear of him which a person might be supposed to feel in the case of a spirit; and this is not surprising when we consider the period in which they lived.

Be this as it may, his mother got up the old carriage once more and set out on her journey to Cockle Hall—her head filled with many an iniquitous design, and her heart with fraud and deceit. On reaching Cockle Hall she was ushered to the withdrawing-room, where she found his lordship in the self-same costume which we have already described. Miss Riddle was in her own room, so that she had the coast clear—which was precisely what she wanted.

"Well, Mrs. Lindsay, I'm glad to see you. How do you do, madam? Is your son with you?" he added, shaking hands with her.

"No, my lord."

"O! an embassadress, then?"

"Something in that capacity, my lord."

"Then I must be on my sharps, for I am told you are a keen one. But tell me—do you sleep with one eye open, as I do?"

"Indeed, my lord," she replied, laughing, "I sleep as other people do, with both eyes shut."

"Well, then, what's your proposal?—and, mark me, I'm wide awake."

"By all accounts, my lord, you have seldom been otherwise. How could you have played your cards so well and so successfully if you had not?"

"Come, that's not bad—just what I expected, and I like to deal with clever people. Did you put yourself on the whetstone before you came here? I'll go bail you did."

"If I did not I would have little chance in dealing with your lordship," replied Mrs. Lindsay.

"Come, I like that, too;—well said, and nothing but the truth. In fact it will be diamond cut diamond between us—eh?"

"Precisely, my lord. You will find me as sharp as your lordship, for the life of you."

"Come, confound me, I like that best of all—a touch of my own candor;—we're kindred spirits, Mrs. Lindsay."

"I think so, my lord. We should have been man and wife."

"Egad, if we had I shouldn't have played second fiddle, as I'm told poor Lindsay does; however, no matter about that—even a good second is not so bad. But now about the negotiations — come, give a specimen of your talents. Let us come to the point."

"Well, then, I am here, my lord, to propose, in the name of my son Woodward, for the hand of Miss Riddle, your niece."

"I see; no regard for the property she is to have, eh?"

"Do you think me a fool, my lord? Do you imagine that any one of common sense would or should overlook such an element between parties who propose to marry? Whatever my son may do—who is deeply attached to Miss Riddle—I am sure I do not, nor will not, overlook it; you may rest assured of that, my lord."

Old Cockletown looked keenly at her, and their eyes met; but, after a long and steady gaze, the eyes of the old peer quailed, and he felt, when put to an encounter with hers, that to which was attributed such extraordinary influence. There sparkled in her steady black orb a venomous exultation, mingled with a spirit of strong and contemptuous derision, which made the eccentric old nobleman feel rather uncomfortable. *His* eye fell, and, considering his age, it was decidedly a keen one. He fidgeted upon the chair—he coughed, hemmed, then looked about the room, and at length exclaimed, rather in a soliloquy,—

"Second fiddle! egad, I'm afraid had we been man and wife I should never have got beyond it. Poor Lindsay! It's confoundedly odd, though."

"Well, Mrs. Lindsay—ahem—pray proceed, madam; let us come to the property. How does your son stand in that respect?"

"He will have twelve hundred a year, my lord."

"I told you before, Mrs. Lindsay, that I don't like the future tense—the present for me. What *has* he?"

"It can scarcely be called the future tense, my lord, which you seem to abhor so much. Nothing stands between him and it but a dying girl."

"How is that, madam?"

"Why, my lord, his Uncle Hamilton, my brother, had a daughter, an only child, who died of decline, as her mother before her did. This foolish child was inveigled into an unaccountable affection for the daughter of Mr. Goodwin—a deep, designing, artful girl—who contrived to gain a complete ascendency over both father and daughter. For months before my niece's death this cunning girl, prompted by her designing family, remained at her sick bed, tended her, nursed her, and would scarcely allow a single individual to approach her except herself. In short, she gained such an undue and iniquitous influence over both parent and child, that her diabolical object was accomplished."

"Diabolical! Well, I can see nothing diabolical in it, for so far. Affection and sympathy on the one hand, and gratitude on the other—that seems much more like the thing. But proceed, madam."

"Why, my poor brother, who became silly and enfeebled in intellect by the loss of his child, was prevailed on by Miss Goodwin and her family to adopt her as his daughter, and by a series of the most artful and selfish manœuvres they succeeded in getting the poor imbecile and besotted old man to make a will in her favor; and the consequence was that he left her twelve hundred a year, both to her and her issue, should she marry and have any; but in case she should have no issue, then, after her death, it was to revert to my son Woodward for whom it was originally intended by my brother. It was a most unprincipled and shameful transaction on the part of these Goodwins. Providence, however, would seem to have punished them for their iniquity, for Miss Goodwin is dying—at least, beyond all hope. The property, of course, will soon be in my son's possession, where it ought to have been ever since his uncle's death. Am I not right, then, in calculating on that property as his?"

"Why, the circumstances you speak of are recent; I remember them well enough. There was a lawsuit about the will?"

"There was, my lord."

"And the instrument was proved strictly legal and valid?"

"The suit was certainly determined against us."

"I'll tell you what, Mrs. Lindsay; I am certain that I myself would have acted precisely as your brother did. I know the Goodwins, too, and I know, besides, that they are incapable of reverting to either fraud or undue influence of any kind. All that you have told me, then, is, with great respect to you, nothing but mere rigmarole. I am sorry, however, to hear that the daughter, poor girl, is dying. I hope in God she will recover."

"There is no earthly probability—nay, possibility of it—which is a stronger word—I know, my lord, she will die, and that very soon."

"You know, madam! How the deuce can *you* know? It is all in the hands of God. I hope she will live to enjoy her property."

"My lord, I visited the girl in her illness, and life was barely in her; I have, besides, the opinion of the physician who attended her, and of another who was called in to consult upon her state, and both have informed me that her recovery is hopeless."

"And what opinion does your son, Woodward, entertain upon the subject?"

"One, my lord, in complete keeping with his generous character. He is as anxious for her recovery as your lordship."

"Well, I like that, at all events; it is a good point in him. Yes, I like that—but, in the meantime, here are you calculating upon a contingency that may never happen. The calculation is, I grant, not overburdened with delicacy of feeling; but still it may proceed from anxiety for the settlement and welfare of your son. Not an improbable thing on the part of a mother, I grant that."

"Well, then, my lord," asked Mrs. Lindsay, "what is to be done? Come to the point, as you very properly say yourself."

"In the first place bring me the written opinions of those two doctors. They ought to know her state of health best, and whether she is likely to recover or not. I know I am an old scoundrel in entering into a matrimonial negotiation upon a principle so inhuman as the poor lady's death; but still, if her demise is a certain thing, I don't see why men of the world should not avail themselves of such a circumstance. Now, I wish to see poor Tom settled before I die; and, above all things, united to a gentleman. Your son Woodward, Mrs. Lindsay, is a gentleman, and what is more, I have reason to believe Tommy likes him. She speaks well of him, and there is a great deal in that; because I know that if she disliked him she would not

conceal the fact. She has, occasionally, much of her old uncle's bluntness about her, and will not say one thing and think another; unless, indeed, when she has a design in it, and then she is inscrutable."

"My own opinion is this, my lord: let my son wait upon Miss Riddle—let him propose for her—and if she consents, why the marriage settlements may be drawn up at once and the ceremony performed."

"Let me see," he replied. "That won't do. I will never marry off poor Tommy upon a speculation which may never after all be realized. No, no—I'm awake there; but I'll tell you what—produce me those letters from the physician or physicians who attended her; then, should Tom give her consent, the settlements may be drawn up, and they can lie unsigned until the girl dies—and then let them be married. Curse me, I'm an old scoundrel again; however, as to that the whole world is nothing but one great and universal scoundrel, and it is nothing but to see Tom the wife of a gentleman in feeling, manners, and bearing, that I consent even to this conditional arrangement."

"Well," replied the lady, "be it so; it is as much as either of us can do under the circumstances."

"Ay, and more than we ought to do. I never was without a conscience; but of all the poor pitiful scoundrels of a conscience that ever existed, it was the greatest. But why should I blame it? It loved me too well; for, after some gentle rebukes when I was about to do a rascally act, it quietly withdrew all opposition and left me to my own will."

"Ah, we all know you too well, my lord, to take your own report of your own character. However, I am glad that matters have proceeded so far. I shall do what your lordship wishes as to the opinions of the medical men. The lawyers, with our assistance, will manage the settlements."

"Yes; but this arrangement must be kept a secret from Tom, because if she knew of it she would knock up the whole project."

"She shall not from me, my lord."

"Nor from me, I promise you that. But now for another topic. I am glad your son had nothing to do with the dreadful chase of that unfortunate *Shawn-na-Middogue;* he pledged his honor to Tom that he would rather protect than injure him."

"So, my lord, he would, ever since his conversation with Miss Riddle on the subject."

This, indeed, was very honestly said, inasmuch as it was she herself who had furnished him with the mask and other of the disguises.

"Well, I think so; and I believe him to be a gentleman, certainly. This unfortunate tory saved Tom's life and mine the other night; but, independently of that, Mrs. Lindsay, no son of *yours* should have anything to do in his pursuit or capture. You understand me. It is my intention to try what I can do to get him a pardon from government, and rescue him from the wild and lawless life he is leading."

Mrs. Lindsay merely said,—

"If my son Woodward could render you any assistance, I am sure he would feel great pleasure in doing so, notwithstanding that it was this same *Shawn-na-Middogue* who, perhaps, has murdered his brother, for he is, by no means out of danger."

"What—he? *Shawn-na-Middogue!* Have you any proof of that?"

"Not positive or legal proof, my lord, but at least a strong moral certainty. However, it is a subject on which I do not wish to speak."

"By the way, I am very stupid; but no wonder. When a man approaches seventy he can't be expected to remember everything. You will excuse me for not inquiring after your son's health; how is he?"

"Indeed, my lord, we know not what to say; neither does the doctor who attends him—the same, by the way, who attended Miss Goodwin. At present he can say neither yes or no to his recovery."

"No, nor will not as long as he can; I know those gentry well. Curse the thing on earth frightens one of them so much as any appearance of convalescence in a patient. I had during my life about half a dozen fits of illness, and whenever they found that I was on the recovery, they always contrived to throw me back with their damned nostrums, for a month or six weeks together, that they might squeeze all they could out of me. O, devilish rogues! devilish rogues!"

Mrs. Lindsay now asked to see his niece, and the peer said he would send her down, after which he shook hands with her, and once more cautioned her against alluding to the arrangement into which they had entered touching the matrimonial affairs already discussed. It is not our intention to give the conversation between the two ladies, which was, indeed, not one of long duration. Mrs. Lindsay simply stated that she had been deputed by her son, Woodward, to have the honor of making a proposal in his name to her uncle, in which proposal she, Miss Riddle, was deeply concerned, but that her son himself would soon have the greater honor of pleading his own cause with the fair object of his most enthusiastic affection. To this Miss Riddle said neither yes nor no; and, after a further

chat upon indifferent topics, the matron took her departure, much satisfied, however, with the apparent suavity of the worthy peer's fair niece.

It matters not how hard and iniquitous the hearts of mothers may be, it is a difficult thing to extinguish in them the sacred principle of maternal affection. Mrs. Lindsay, during her son Charles's illness, and whilst laboring under the apprehension that she was about to lose him, went to his sick room after her return from Lord Cockletown's, and, finding he was but slightly improving,—if improving at all,—she felt herself much moved, and asked him how he felt.

"Indeed, my dear mother," he replied, "I can scarcely say; I hardly know whether I am better or worse."

Harry was in the room at the time, having gone up to ascertain his condition.

"O, come, Charles," said she, "you were always an affectionate son, and you must strive and recover. If it may give you strength and hope, I now tell you that the property which I intended to leave to Harry here, I shall leave to you. Harry will not require it; he will be well off—much better than you imagine. He will have back that twelve hundred a year when that puny girl dies. She is, probably, dead by this time, and he will, besides, become a wealthy man by marriage."

"But I think, my dear mother, that Harry has the best claim to it; he is your first-born, and your eldest son."

"He will not require it," replied his mother; "he is about to be married to Miss Riddle, the niece of Lord Cockletown."

"Are you quite sure of that, mother?" asked Harry, with a brow as black as midnight.

"There is an arrangement made," she replied; "the marriage settlements are to be drawn up, but left unsigned until the death of Alice Goodwin."

Charles here gave a groan of agony, which, for the life of him, he could not suppress.

"She will not die, I hope," said he; "and, mother, as for the property, leave it to Harry. I don't think you ought to change your contemplated arrangements on my account, even should I recover."

"Yes, Charles, but I will—only contrive and live; you are my son, and as sure as I have life you will be heir to my property."

"But Maria, mother," replied the generous young man; "Maria——" and he looked imploringly and affectionately into her face.

"Maria will have an ample portion; I have taken care of that. I will not leave my property to those who are strangers to my blood, as a son-in-law must be. No, Charles, you shall have my property. As for Harry, as I said before, he won't stand in need of it."

"Of course you saw Miss Riddle to-day, mother?" asked Harry.

"I did."

"Of course, too, you mentioned the matter to her?"

"To be sure I did."

"And what did she say?"

"Why, I think she acted just as every delicate-minded girl ought. I told her you would have the honor of proposing to herself in person. She heard me, and did not utter a syllable either for or against you. What else should any lady do? You would not have her jump at you, would you? Nothing, however, could be kinder or more gracious than the reception she gave me."

"Certainly not, mother; to give her consent before she was solicited would not be exactly the thing; but the uncle is willing?"

"Upon the conditions I said; but his niece is to know nothing of these conditions: so be cautious when you see her."

"I don't know how it is," replied Harry; "I have been thinking our last interview over; but it strikes me there is, notwithstanding her courtesy of manner, a hard, dry air about her which it is difficult to penetrate. It seems to me as if it were no easy task to ascertain whether she is in jest or earnest. Her eye is too calm and reflecting for my taste."

"But," replied his mother, "those, surely, are two good qualities in any woman, especially in her whom you expect to become your wife."

"Perhaps so," said he; "but she is not my wife yet, my dear mother."

"I wish she was, Harry," observed his brother, "for by all accounts she is an excellent girl, and remarkable for her charity and humanity to the poor."

His mother and Harry then left the room, and both went to her own apartment, where the following conversation took place between them:

"Harry," said she, "I hope you are not angry at the determination I expressed to leave my property to Charles should he recover?"

"Why should I, my dear mother?" he replied; "your property is your own, and of course you may leave it to whomsoever you wish. At all events, it will remain in your own family, and won't go to strangers, like that of my scoundrel old uncle."

"Don't speak so, Harry, of my brother;

silly, besotted, and overreached he was when he acted as he did; but he never was a scoundrel, Harry."

"Well, well, let that pass," replied her son; "but the question now is, What am I to do? What step should I first take?"

"I don't understand you."

"Why, I mean whether should I start directly for Ballyspellan and put this puling girl out of pain, or go in a day or two and put the question at once to Miss Riddle, against whom, somehow, I feel a strong antipathy."

"Ah, Harry, that's your grandfather all over; but, indeed, our family were full of strong antipathies and bitter resentments. Why do you feel an antipathy against the girl?"

"Who can account for antipathies, mother? I cannot account for this."

"And perhaps on her part the poor girl is attached to you."

"Well, but you have not answered my question. How am I to act? Which step should I take first—the *quietus* of 'curds-and-whey,' or the courtship? The sooner matters come to a conclusion the better. I wish, if possible, to know what is before me: I cannot bear uncertainty in this or anything else."

"I scarcely know how to advise you," she replied; "both steps are of the deepest importance, but certainly which to take first is a necessary consideration. I am of opinion that our best plan is simply to take a day or two to think it over, after which we will compare notes and come to a conclusion:" and so it was determined.

We need scarcely assure our readers that honest and affectionate Barney Casey felt a deep interest in the recovery of the generous and kind-hearted Charles Lindsay, nor that he allowed a single day to pass without going, at least two or three times, to ascertain whether there was any appearance of his convalescence. On the day following that on which Mrs. Lindsay had declared the future disposition of her property he went to see Charles as usual, when the latter, after having stated to him that he felt much better, and the fever abating, he said,—

"Casey, I have rather strange news for you."

"Be it good, bad, or indifferent, sir," replied Barney, "you could tell me no news that would plaise me half so much as that there is a certainty of your gettin' well again."

"Well, I think there is, Barney. I feel much better to-day than I have done for a long while—but the news, are you not anxious to hear it?"

"Why, I hope I'll hear it soon, Masther Charles, especially if it's good; but if it's not good I'm jack-indifferent about it."

"It *is* good, Barney, to me at least, but not so to my brother Woodward."

Barney's ears, if possible, opened and expanded themselves on hearing this. To him it was a double gratification: first, because it was favorable to the invalid, to whom he was so sincerely attached; and secondly, because it was not so to Woodward, whom he detested.

"My mother yesterday told me that she has made up her mind to leave me all her property if I recover, instead of to Harry, for whom she had originally intended it."

Barney, on hearing this intelligence, was commencing to dance an Irish jig to his own music, and would have done so were it not that the delicate state of the patient prevented him.

"Blood alive, Masther Charles!" he exclaimed, snapping his fingers in a kind of wild triumph, "what are you lying there for? Bounce to your feet like a two-year ould. O, holy Moses, and Melchisedek the divine, ay, and Solomon, the son of St. Pether, in all his glory, but that is news!"

"She told my brother Woodward, face to face, that such was her fixed determination."

"Good again; and what did *he* say?"

"Nothing particular, but that he was glad it was to stay in the family, and not go to strangers, like our uncle's—alluding, of course, to his will in favor of dear Alice Goodwin."

"Ay, but how did he look?" asked Barney.

"I didn't observe, I was rather in pain at the time; but, from a passing glimpse I got, I thought his countenance darkened a little; but I may be mistaken."

"Well, I hope so," said Barney. "I hope so—but—well, I am glad to find you are betther, Masther Charles, and to hear the good piece of fortune you have mentioned. I trust in God your mother will keep her word—that's all."

"As to myself," said Charles, "I am indifferent about the property; all that presses upon my heart is my anxiety for Miss Goodwin's recovery."

"Don't be alarmed on that account," said Casey! "they say the waters of Ballyspellan would bring the dead to life. Now, good-by, Masther Charles; don't be cast down—keep up your spirits, for something tells me that's there's luck before you, and good luck, too."

After leaving him Barney began to ruminate. He had remarked an extraordinary

change in the countenance and deportment of Harry Woodward during the evening before and the earlier part of that day. The plausible serenity of his manner was replaced by unusual gloom, and that abstraction which is produced by deep and absorbing thought. He seemed so completely wrapped up in constant meditation upon some particular subject, that he absolutely forgot to guard himself against observation or remark, by his usual artifice of manner. He walked alone in the garden, a thing he was not accustomed to do; and during these walks he would stop and pause, then go on slowly and musingly, and stop and pause again. Barney, as we have said before, was a keen observer, and having watched him from a remote corner of the garden in which he was temporarily engaged among some flowers, he came at once to the conclusion that Woodward's mind was burdened with something which heavily depressed his spirits, and occupied his whole attention.

"Ah," exclaimed Barney, "the villain is brewing mischief for some one, but I will watch his motions if I should pass sleepless nights for it. He requires a sharp eye after him, and it will go hard with me or I shall know what his midnight wanderings mean; but in the meantime I must keep calm and quiet, and not seem to watch him."

Whilst Barney, who was unseen by Woodward, having been separated from him by a fruit hedge over which he occasionally peeped, indulged in this soliloquy, the latter, in the same deep and moody meditation, extended his walk, his brows contracted, and dark as midnight.

"The damned hag," said he, speaking unconsciously aloud, "is this the affection which she professed to bear me? Is this the proof she gives of the preference which she often expressed for her favorite son? To leave her property to that miserable milksop, my half-brother! What devil could have tempted her to this? Not Lindsay, certainly, for I know he would scorn to exercise any control over her in the disposition of her property, and as for Maria, I know *she* would not. It must then have been the milksop himself in some puling fit of pain or illness; and ably must the beggarly knave have managed it when he succeeded in changing the stern and flinty heart of such a she-devil. Yes, unquestionably that must be the true meaning of it; but, be it so for the present; the future is a different question. My plans are laid, and I will put them into operation according as circumstances may guide me."

Whatever those plans were, he seemed to have completed them in his own mind. The darkness departed from his brow; his face assumed its usual expression; and, having satisfied himself by the contemplation of his future course of action, he walked at his usual pace out of the garden.

"Egad," thought Barney, "I'm half a prophet, but I can say no more than I've said. There's mischief in the wind; but whether against Masther Charles or his mother, is a puzzle to me. What a dutiful son, too! A she-devil! Well, upon my sowl, if he weren't her son I could forgive him for *that*, because it hits her off to a hair —but from the lips of a son! O, the blasted scoundrel! Well, no matther, there's a sharp pair of eyes upon him; and that's *all* I can say at present."

When the medical attendant called that day to see his patient he found, on examining Charles, and feeling his pulse, that he was decidedly and rapidly on the recovery. On his way down stairs he was met by Woodward, who said,—

"Well, doctor, is there any chance of my dear brother's recovery?"

"It is beyond a chance now, Mr. Woodward; he is out of danger; and although his convalescence will be slow, it will be sure."

"Thank God," said the cold-blooded hypocrite; "I have never heard intelligence more gratifying. My mother is in the withdrawing-room, and desired me to say that she wishes to speak with you. Of course it is about my brother; and I am glad that you can make so favorable a report of him."

On going down he found Mrs. Lindsay alone, and having taken a seat and made his daily report, she addressed him as follows:

"Doctor, you have taken a great weight off my mind by your account of my son's certain recovery."

"I can say with confidence, as I have already said to his anxious brother, madam, that it is certain, although it will be slow. He is out of danger at last. The wound is beginning to cicatrize, and generates *laudable pus*. His fever, too, is gone; but he is very weak still,—quite emaciated,—and it will require time to place him once more on his legs. Still, the great fact is, that his recovery is certain. Nothing unless agitation of mind can retard it; and I do not see anything which can occasion that."

"Nothing, indeed, doctor; but, doctor, I wish to speak to you on another subject. You have been attending Miss Goodwin during her very strange and severe illness. You have visited her, too, at Ballyspellan."

"I have, madam. She went there by my directions."

How long is it since you have seen her?"

"I saw her three days ago."

"And how was she?"

"I am afraid beyond hope, madam. She is certainly not better, and I can scarcely say she is worse, because worse she cannot be. The complaint is on her mind; and in that case we all know how difficult it is for a physician to minister to a mind diseased."

"You think, then, she is past recovery?"

"Indeed, madam, I am certain of it, and I deeply regret it, not only for her own sake, but for that of her heart-broken parents."

"My dear doctor—O, by the way, here is your fee; do not be surprised at its amount, for, although your fees have been regularly paid——"

"And liberally, madam."

"Well, in consequence of the favorable and gratifying report which you have this day made, you must pardon an affectionate mother for the compensation which she now offers you. It is far beneath the value of your skill, your anxiety for my son's recovery, and the punctuality of your attendance."

"What! fifty pounds, madam! I cannot accept it," said he, exhibiting it in his hand as he spoke.

"O, but you must, my dear doctor; nor shall the liberality of the mother rest here. Come, doctor, no remonstrance; put it in your pocket, and now hear me. You say Miss Goodwin is past all hope. Would you have any objection to write me a short note stating that fact?"

"How could I, madam?" replied the good-natured, easy man, who, of course, could never dream of her design in asking him the question. Still, it seemed singular and unusual, and quite out of the range of his experience. This consideration startled him into reflection, and something like a curiosity to ascertain why she, who, he felt aware, was of late at bitter feud with Miss Goodwin and her family—the cause of which was well known throughout the country—should wish to obtain such a document from him.

"Pardon me, madam; pray, may I inquire for what purpose you ask me to furnish such a document?"

"Why, the truth is, doctor, that there are secrets in all families, and, although this is not, strictly speaking, a secret, yet it is a thing that I should not wish to be mentioned out of doors."

"Madam, you cannot for a moment do me such injustice as to imagine that I am capable of violating professional confidence. I consider the confidence you now repose in me, in the capacity of your family physician, as coming under that head."

"You will have no objection, then, to write the note I ask of you?"

"Certainly not, madam."

"But there is Dr. Lendrum, who joined you in consultation in my son's case, as well, I believe, as in Miss Goodwin's. Do you think you could get him to write a note to me in accordance with yours? Speak to him, and tell him that I don't think he has been sufficiently remunerated for his trouble in the consultations you have had with him here."

"I shall do so, madam, and I think he will do himself the pleasure of seeing you in the course of to-morrow."

Both doctors could, with a very good conscience, furnish Mrs. Lindsay with the opinions which she required. She saw the other medical gentleman on the following day, and, after handing him a handsome *douceur*, he felt no hesitation in corroborating the opinion of his brother physician.

Having procured the documents in question, she transmitted them, enclosed in a letter, to Lord Cockletown, stating that her son Woodward, who had been seized by a pleuritic attack, would not be able, she feared, to pay his intended visit to Miss Riddle so soon as he had expected; but, in the meantime, she had the honor of enclosing him the documents she alluded to on the occasion of her last visit. And this she did with the hope of satisfying his lordship on the subject they had been discussing, and with a further hope that he might become an advocate for her son, at least until he should be able to plead his own cause with the lady herself, which nothing but indisposition prevented him from doing. The doctor, she added, had advised him to try the waters of the *Spa* of Ballyspellan for a short time, as he had little doubt that they would restore him to perfect health. She sent her love to dear Miss Riddle, and hoped ere long to have the pleasure of clasping her to her heart as a daughter.

CHAPTER XX.

Woodward's Visit to Ballyspellan.

After a consultation with his mother our worthy hero prepared for his journey to this once celebrated *Spa*, which possessed even then a certain local celebrity, that subsequently widened to an ampler range. The little village was filled with invalids of all classes; and even the farmers' houses in the vicinity were occupied with individuals in quest of health. The family of the Goodwins, however, were still in deep affliction,

although Alice, for the last few days, was progressing favorably. Still, such was her weakness, that she was unable to walk unless supported by two persons, usually her maid and her mother or her father. The terrible influence of the Evil Eye had made too deep and deadly an impression ever, she feared, to be effaced; for, although removed from Woodward's blighting gaze, that eye was perpetually upon her, through the medium of her strong but diseased imagination. And who is there who does not know how strongly the force of imagination acts? On this subject she had now become a perfect hypochondriac. She could not shake it off, it haunted her night and day; and even the influence of society could scarcely banish the dread image of that mysterious and fearful look for a moment.

The society at Ballyspellan was, as the society in such places usually is, very much mixed and heterogeneous. Many gentry were there—gentlemen attempting to repair constitutions broken down by dissipation and profligacy; and ladies afflicted with a disease peculiar, in those days, to both sexes, called the *spleen*—a malady which, under that name, has long since disappeared, and is now known by the title of nervous affection. There was a large public room, in imitation of the more celebrated English watering-places, where the more respectable portion of the company met and became acquainted, and where, also, balls and dinners were occasionally held. Not a wreck of this edifice is now standing, although, down to the days of Swift and Delany, it possessed considerable celebrity, as is evident from the ingenious verses written by his friend to the Dean upon this subject.

The principal individuals assembled at it on this occasion were Squire Manifold, whose complaint, as was evident by his three chins, consisted in a rapid tendency to obesity, which his physician had told him might be checked, if he could prevail on himself to eat and drink with a less gluttonous appetite, and take more exercise. He had already had a fit of apoplexy, and it was the apprehension of another, with which he was threatened, that brought him to the *Spa*. The next was Parson Topertoe, whose great enemy was the gout, brought on, of course, by an ascetic and apostolic life. The third was Captain Culverin, whose constitution had suffered severely in the wars, but which he attempted to reinvigorate by a course of hard drinking, in which he found, to his cost, that the remedy was worse than the disease. There were also a great variety of others, among whom were several widows whose healthy complexions were anything but a justification for their presence there, especially in the character of invalids. Mr. Goodwin, his wife, and daughter, we need not enumerate. They lodged in the house of a respectable farmer, who lived convenient to the village, where they found themselves exceedingly snug and comfortable. In the next house to them lodged a Father Mulrenin, a friar, who, although he attended the room and drank the waters, was an admirable specimen of comic humor and robust health. There was also a Miss Rosebud, accompanied by her mother, a blooming widow, who had married old Rosebud, a wealthy bachelor, when he was near sixty. The mother's complaint was also the spleen, or vapors; indeed, to tell the truth, she was moved by an unconquerable and heroic determination to replace poor old Rosebud by a second husband. The last whom we shall enumerate, although not the least, was a very remarkable character of that day, being no other than Cooke, the Pythagorean, from the county of Waterford. He held, of course, the doctrines of Pythagoras, and believed in the transmigration of souls. He lived upon a vegetable diet, and wore no clothing which had been taken or made from the wool or skins of animals, because he knew that they must have been killed before these *exuviæ* could be applied to human use. His dress, consequently, during the inclemency of winter and the heats of summer, consisted altogether of linen, and even his shoes were of vegetable fabric. Our readers, consequently, need not feel surprised at the complaint of the philosopher, which was a chronic and most excruciating rheumatism that racked every bone in his Pythagorean body. He was, however, like a certain distinguished teetotaler and peace preserver of our own city and our own day, a mild and benevolent man, whose monomania affected nobody but himself, and him it did affect through every bone of his body. He was attended by his own servants, especially by his own cook—for he was a man of wealth and considerable rank in the country—in order that he could rely upon their fidelity in seeing that nothing contrary to his principles might be foisted upon him. He had his carriage, in which he drove out every day, and into which and out of which his servants assisted him. We need scarcely assure our readers that he was the lion of the place, or that no individual there excited either so much interest or curiosity. Of the many others of various, but subordinate classes we shall not speak. Wealthy farmers, professional men, among whom, however, we cannot omit Counsellor Puzzlewell, who, by the way, had one eye upon

Miss Rosebud and another upon the comely widow herself, together with several minor grades down to the very paupers of society, were all there.

About this period it was resolved to have a dinner, to be followed by a ball in the latter part of the evening. This was the project of Squire Manifold, whose physician attended him like, or very unlike, his shadow, for he was a small thin man, with sharp eyes and keen features, and so slight that if put into the scale against the shadow he would scarcely weigh it up. The squire's wife, who was a cripple, insisted that he should accompany her husband, in order to see that he might not gorge himself into the apoplectic fit with which he was threatened. His first had a peculiar and melancholy, though, to spectators, a ludicrous effect upon him. He was now so stupid, and made such blunders in conversation, that the comic effect of them was irresistible; especially to to those who were not aware of the cause of it, but looked upon the whole thing as his natural manner. He had been, ever since his arrival at the accursed *Spa*, kept by Doctor Doolittle upon short commons, both as to food and drink; and what with the effect of the waters, and severe purgatives administered by the doctor, he felt himself in a state little short of purgatory itself. The meagre regimen to which he was so mercilessly subjected gave him the appetite of a shark. Indeed, the bill of fare prescribed for him was scarcely sufficient to sustain a boy of twelve years of age. In consequence of this he had got it into his head that the season was a season of famine, and on this calamitous dispensation of Providence he kept harping from morning to night. The idea of the dinner, however, was hailed by them all as a very agreeable project, for which the squire, who only thought of the opportunity it would give himself to enjoy a surfeit, was highly complimented. It was to be in the shape of a modern *table d'hote:* every gentleman was to pay for himself and such of his party as accompanied him to it. Even the Pythagorean relished the proposal, for although peculiar in his opinions, he was sufficiently liberal, and too much of a gentleman, to quarrel with those who differed from him. Mr. Goodwin, too, was a consenting party, and mentioned the subject to Alice in a cheerful spirit, and with a hope that she might be able to rally and attend it. She promised to do so if she could; but said it chiefly depended on the state of health in which she might find herself. Indeed, if ever a beautiful and interesting girl was to be pitied, she, most unquestionably, was an object of the deepest compassion. It was not merely what she had to suffer from the Evil Eye of the demon Woodward, but from the fact which had reached her ears of what she considered the profligate conduct of his brother Charles, once her betrothed lover. This latter reflection, associated with the probability of his death, when joined to the terrible malady which Woodward had inflicted on her, may enable our readers to perceive what the poor girl had to suffer. Still she told her father that she would be present if her health permitted her, "especially," she added, "as there was no possibility of Woodward being among the guests."

"Why, my dear child," said her father, "what could put such an absurd apprehension into your head?"

"Because, papa, I don't think he will ever let me out of his power until he kills me. I don't think he will come here; but I dread to return home, because I fear that if I do he will obtrude himself on me; and I feel that another gaze of his eye would occasion my death."

"I would call him out," replied the father, "and shoot him like a dog, to which honest and faithful animal it is a sin to compare the villain."

"And then I might be left fatherless!" she exclaimed. "O, papa, promise me that you never will have recourse to that dreadful alternative."

"But my darling, I only said so upon the supposition of your death by him."

"But mamma!"

"Come, come, Alice, get up your spirits, and be able to attend this dinner. It will cheer you and do you good. We have been discussing soap bubbles. Give up thinking of the scoundrel, and you will soon feel yourself well enough. In about another month we will start for Killarney, and see the lakes and the magnificent scenery by which they are surrounded."

"Well, dear papa, I shall go to this dinner if I am at all able; but indeed I do not expect to be able."

In the meantime every preparation was made for the forthcoming banquet. It was to be on a large scale, and many of the neighboring gentry and their families were asked to it. The knowledge that Cooke, the Pythagorean, was at the Well had taken wind, and a strong curiosity had gone abroad to see him. This eccentric gentleman's appearance was exceedingly original, if not startling. He was, at least, six feet two, but so thin, fleshless, and attenuated, that he resembled a living skeleton. This was the more strange, inasmuch as in his earlier days he had been robust and stout, ap-

proaching even to corpulency. His dress was as remarkable as his person, if not more so. It consisted of bleached linen, and was exceedingly white; and so particular was he in point of cleanliness, that he put on a fresh dress every day. He wore a pair of long pantaloons that, unfortunately for his symmetry, adhered to his legs and thighs as closely as the skin; and as the aforesaid legs and thighs were skeletonic, nothing could be more ludicrous than his appearance in them. His vest was equally close; and as the hanging cloak which he wore over it did not reach far enough down his back, it was impossible to view him behind without convulsive laughter. His shoes were made of some description of foreign bark, which had by some chemical process been tanned into toughness, and on his head he wore a turban of linen, made of the same material which furnished his other garments. Altogether, a more ludicrous figure could not be seen, especially if a person happened to stand behind him when he bowed. Notwithstanding all this, however, he possessed the manners and bearing of a gentleman; the only thing remarkable about him, beyond what we have described, being a peculiar wildness of the eyes, accompanied, however, by an unquestionable expression of great benignity.

We leave the company at the Well preparing for the forthcoming dinner and return to Rathfillan House, where Harry Woodward is making arrangements for his journey to Ballyspellan, which now we believe goes by the name of Johnstown. Under every circumstance of his life he was a plotter and a planner, and had at all times some private speculation in view. On the present occasion, in addition to his murderous design upon Miss Goodwin, he resolved to become a wife-hunter, for, being well acquainted, as he was, with the tone and temper of English society at its most celebrated watering places, and the matrimonial projects and intrigues which abound at them, he took it for granted that he might stand a chance of making a successful hit with a view to matrimony. One thing struck him, however, which was, that he had no horse, and could not go there mounted, as a gentleman ought. It is true his step-father had several horses, but not one of them beyond the character of a common hack. He resolved, therefore, to purchase a becoming nag for his journey, and with this object he called upon a neighboring farmer, named Murray, who possessed a very beautiful animal, rising four, and which he learned was to be disposed of.

"Mr. Murray," said he, "I understand you have a young horse for sale."

"I have, sir," replied Murray; "and a better piece of flesh is not in the country he stands in."

"Could I see him?"

"Certainly, sir, and try him, too. He is not flesh and bone at all, sir—devil a thing he is but quicksilver. Here, Paudeen, saddle Brien Boro for this gentleman. You won't require wings, Mr. Woodward; Brien Boro will show you how to fly without them."

"Well," replied Woodward, "trial's all; but at any rate, I'm willing to prefer good flesh and bone to quicksilver."

In a few minutes the horse was brought out, saddled and bridled, and Woodward, who certainly was an excellent horseman, mounted him and tried his paces.

"Well, sir," said Murray, "how do you like him?"

"I like him well," said Woodward. "His temper is good, I know, by his docility to the bit."

"Yes, but you haven't tried him at a ditch; follow me and I'll show you as pretty a one as ever a horse crossed, and you may take my word it isn't every horse could cross *it*. You have a good firm seat, sir; and I know you will both do it in sportsman-like style."

Having reached the ditch, which certainly was a rasper, Woodward reined round the animal, who crossed it like a swallow.

"Now," said Murray, "unless you wish to ride half a mile in order to get back, you must cross it again."

This was accordingly done in admirable style, both by man and horse; and Woodward, having ridden him back to the farmyard, dismounted, highly satisfied with the animal's action and powers.

"Now, Mr. Murray," said he, "what's his price?"

"Fifty guineas, sir; neither more nor less."

"Say thirty and we'll deal."

"I don't want money, sir," replied the sturdy farmer, "and I won't part with the horse under his value. I will get what I ask for him."

"Say thirty-five."

"Not a cross under the round half hundred; and I'm glad it is not your mother that is buying him."

"Why so?" asked Woodward; and his eye darkly sparkled with its malignant influence.

"Why, sir, because if I didn't sell him to her at her own terms, he would be worth very little in a few days afterwards."

The observation was certainly an offensive one, especially when made to her son.

"Will you take forty for him?" asked Woodward, coolly.

"Not a penny, sir, under what I said. You are clearly a good judge of a horse, Mr. Woodward, and I wonder that a gentleman like you would offer me less than I ask, because you cannot but know that it is under his value."

"I will give no more," replied Woodward; "so there is an end to it. Let me see the horse's eyes."

He placed himself before the animal, and looked steadily into his eyes for about five minutes, after which he said,—

"I think, Mr. Murray, you would have acted more prudently had you taken my offer. I bade you full value for the horse."

To Murray's astonishment the animal began to tremble excessively; the perspiration was seen to flow from him in torrents; he appeared feeble and collapsed; and seemed scarcely able to stand on his limbs, which were shaking as if with terror under him.

"Why, Mr. Murray," said Woodward, "I am very glad I did not buy him; the beast is ill, and will be for the dogs of the neighborhood in three days' time."

"Until the last five minutes, sir, there wasn't a sounder horse in Europe."

"Look at him now, then," said Woodward; "do you call that a sound horse? Take him into the stable; before the expiration of three days you will be flaying him."

His words were prophetic. In three days' time the fine and healthy animal was a carcass.

"Ah!" said the farmer, when he saw the horse lying dead before him, "this fellow is his mother's son. From the time he looked into the horse's eyes the poor beast sank so rapidly that he didn't pass the third day alive. And there are fifty guineas out of my pocket. The curse of God on him wherever he goes!"

Woodward provided himself, however, with another horse, and in due time set out for the *Spa* at Ballyspellan.

The dinner was now fixed for a certain day, and Squire Manifold felt himself in high spirits as often as he could recollect the circumstance—which, indeed, was but rarely, the worthy epicure's memory having nearly abandoned him. Topertoe, of the gout, and he were old acquaintances and companions, and had spent many a merry night together — both, as the proverb has it, being tarred with the same stick. Topertoe was as great a glutton as the other, but without his desperate voracity in food, whilst in drink he equalled if he did not surpass him. Manifold would have forgotten every thing about the dinner had he not from time to time been reminded of it by his companion.

"Manifold, we will have a great day on Thursday."

"Great!" exclaimed Manifold, who in addition to his other stupidities, was as deaf as a post; "great—eh? What size will it be?"

"What size will it be? Why, confound it, man, don't you know what I'm saying?"

No, I don't—yes, I do—you are talking about something great. O, I know now—your toe you mean—where the gout lies. They say, it begins at the great toe, and goes up to the stomach. I suppose Alexander the Great was gouty and got his name from that."

"I'm talking of the great dinner we're to have on Thursday," shouted Topertoe. "We'll have a splendid feed then, my famous old trencherman, and I'll take care that Doctor Doolittle shall not stint you."

"There won't be any toast and water—eh?"

"Devil a mouthful; and we are to have the celebrated Cooke, the Pythagorean."

"Ay, but is he a good cook?"

"He's the celebrated Pythagorean, I tell you."

"Pythagorean—what's that? I thought you said he was a cook. Does he understand venison properly? O, good Lord! what a life I'm leading! Toast and water—toast and water. But it's all the result of this famine. And yet they know I'm wealthy. I say, what's this your name is?"

"Never mind that—an old acquaintance. Hell and torments! what's this? O!"

"The weather's pleasant, Topertoe. I say, Topertoe, what's this your name is?"

"O! O!" exclaimed Topertoe, who felt one or two desperate twinges of his prevailing malady; "curse me, Manifold, but I think I would exchange with you; your complaint is an easy one compared to mine. You are a mere block, and will pop off without pain, instead of being racked like a soul in perdition as I am."

"Your soul in perdition—well I suppose it will. But don't groan and scream so—you are not there yet; when you are you will have plenty of time to groan and scream. As for myself, I will be likely to sleep it out there. I think, by the way, I had the pleasure of knowing you before; your face is familiar to me. What's this you call the man that attends sick people?"

"A doctor. O! O! Hell and torments! what is this? Yes, a doctor. O! O!"

"Ay, a doctor. Confound me, but I think my head's going around like a top. Yes, a —a—a—a doctor. Well, the doctor says

that I and Parson Topertoe led a nice life of it—one a glutton and the other a drunkard. Do you know Topertoe? Because if you don't I do. He is a damned scoundrel, and squeezed his tithes out of the people with pincers of blood."

"Manifold, your gluttony has brought you to a fine pass. Are you alive or not?"

"Eh? Curse all dry toast and water! But it's all the consequence of this year of famine. Pray, sir, what do you eat?"

"Beef, mutton, venison, fowl, ham, turbot, salmon, black sole, with all the proper and corresponding sauces and condiments."

"O Lord! and no toast and water, beef tea, and oatmeal gruel? Heavens! how I wish this year of famine was past. It will be the death of me. I say, what's this your name is? Your face is familiar to me somehow. Could you aid me in poisoning the—the—what you call him—ay, the doctor?"

"Nothing more easily done, my dear Manifold. Contrive to let him take one of his own doses, and he's done for."

"Wouldn't ratsbane do? I often think he's a rat."

"In face and eyes he certainly looks very like one."

"Are you aware, sir, that my wife's a cripple? She's paralyzed in her lower limbs."

"I am perfectly aware of that melancholy fact."

"Are you aware that she's jealous of me?"

"No, not that she's jealous of you *now;* but perfectly aware that she *had* good cause to be so."

"Ay, but the devil of it is that the paralysis you speak of never reached her tongue."

"*I* speak of—'twas yourself spoke of it."

"She sent me here because it happens to be a year of famine—what is commonly called a hard season—and she stitched the little blasted doctor to me that I might die legitimately under medical advice. Isn't that very like murder—isn't it?"

"Ah, my dear friend, thank God that you are not a parson, having a handsome wife and a handsome curate, with the gout to support you and keep you comfortable. You would then feel that there are other twinges worse than those of the gout."

"Ay, but is there anything wrong about your head?"

"Heaven knows. About a twelvemonth ago I felt as if there were two sprouts budding out of my forehead, but on putting up my hand I could feel nothing. It was as smooth as ever. It must have been hypochondriasis. The curate, though, is a handsome dog, and, like yourself, it was my wife sent me here."

"Is your wife a cripple?"

"Faith, anything but that."

"How is her tongue? No paralysis in that quarter?"

"On the contrary, she is calm and soft-spoken, and perfectly sweet and angelic in her manner."

"But was it in consequence of the famine she sent you here? Toast and water!—toast and water! O Lord!"

This dialogue took place in Manifold's lodgings, where Topertoe, aided by a crutch and his servant, was in the habit of visiting him. To Manifold, indeed, this was a penal settlement, in consequence of the reasons which we have already stated.

The Pythagorean, as well as Topertoe, was also occasionally forced to the use of crutches; and it was certainly a strange and remarkable thing to witness two men, each at the extreme point of social indulgence, and each departing from reason and common-sense, suffering from the consequences of their respective errors; Manifold, a most voracious fellow, knocked on the head by an attack of apoplexy, and Cooke, the philosopher, suffering the tortures of the damned from a most violent rheumatism, produced by a monomania which compelled him to decline the simple enjoyment of reasonable food and dress. Cooke's monomania, however, was a rare one. In *Blackwood's Magazine* there appeared, several years ago, an admirable writer, whose name we now forget, under the title of a modern Pythagorean; but that was merely a *nom de guerre*, adopted, probably, to excite a stronger interest in the perusal of his productions. Here, however, was a man in whom the principle existed upon what he considered rational and philosophic grounds. He had gotten the philosophical blockhead's crotchet into his head, and carried the principle, in a practical point of view, much further than ever the old fool himself did in his life.

CHAPTER XXI.

The Dinner at Ballyspellan.—The Appearance of Woodward.—Valentine Greatrakes.

The Thursday appointed for the dinner at length arrived. The little village was all alive with stir and bustle, inasmuch as for several months no such important event had taken place. It was, in fact, a gala day; and the poorer inhabitants crowded about the

inn to watch the guests arriving, and the paupers to solicit their alms. Twelve or one was then the usual hour for dinner, but in consequence of the large scale on which it was to take place and the unusual preparations necessary, it was not until the hour of two that the guests sat down to table. Some of the principal names we have already mentioned—all the males, of course, invalids—but, as we have said, there were a good number of the surrounding gentry, their wives and daughters, so that the *fête* was expected to come off with great *éclat*. Topertoe was dressed, as was then the custom, in full canonical costume, with his silk cassock and bands, for he was a doctor of divinity; and Manifold was habited in the usual dress of the day—his falling collar exhibiting a neck whose thickness took away all surprise as to his tendency to apoplexy. The lengthy figure of the unsubstantial Pythagorean was cased in linen garments, almost snow-white, through which his anatomy might be read as distinctly as if his living skeleton was naked before them. Mrs. Rosebud was blooming and expanded into full flower, whilst Miss Rosebud was just in that interesting state when the leaves are apparently in the act of bursting out and bestowing their beauty and fragrance on the gratified senses of the beholder. Dr. Doolittle, who was a regular wag—indeed too much so ever to succeed in his profession—entered the room with his three-cocked hat under his arm, and the usual gold-headed cane in his hand; and, after saluting the company, looked about after Manifold, his patient. He saluted the Pythagorean, and complimented him upon his philosophy, and the healthful habits engendered by a vegetable diet, and so primitive a linen dress—a dress, he said, which, in addition to its other advantages, ought to be generally adopted, if only for the sake of its capacity for showing off the symmetry of the figure. He was himself a warm admirer of the principle, and begged to have the honor of shaking hands with the gentleman who had the courage to carry it out against all the prejudices of a besotted world. He accordingly seized the philosopher's hand, which was then in a desperately rheumatic state, as the little scoundrel well knew, and gave it such a squeeze of respect and admiration that the Pythagorean emitted a yell which astonished and alarmed the whole room.

"Death and torture, sir—why did you squeeze my rheumatic hand in such a manner?"

"Pardon me, Mr. Cooke—respect and admiration for your principles."

"Well, sir, I will thank you to express what you may feel in plain language, but not in such damnable squeezes as that."

"Pardon me, again, sir; I was ignorant that the rheumatism was in your hand; you know I am not your physician; perhaps if I were you could bear a friendly shake of it without all that agony. I very much regret the pain I unconsciously, and from motives of the highest respect, have put you to."

"It is gone—do not mention it," said the benevolent philosopher. "Perhaps I may try your skill some of these days."

"I assure you, sir," said Doolittle, "that I am forcing Mr. Manifold here to avail himself of your system—a simple vegetable diet."

"O Lord!" exclaimed Manifold, in a soliloquy—for he was perfectly unconscious of what was going on—"toast and water, toast and water! That and a season of famine—what a prospect is before me! Doolittle is a rat, and I will hire somebody to give him ratsbane. Nothing but a vegetable diet, and be hanged to him! What's ratsbane an ounce?"

"You hear, sir," said Doolittle, addressing the Pythagorean; "you perceive that I am adopting your system?"

"Mr. Doolittle," replied Cooke, "from this day forth you are my physician—I intrust you with the management of my rheumatism; but, in the meantime, I think the room is devilishly cold."

Captain Culverin now entered, swathed up, and, as was evident, somewhat tipsy.

"Eh! confound me, philosopher, your hand," he exclaimed, putting out his own to shake hands with him.

"I can't, sir," replied Cooke; "I am afflicted with rheumatism. You seem unwell, captain; but if you gave up spirituous liquors—such as wine and usquebaugh—you would find yourself the better for it."

"What does all this mean?" asked Manifold. "At all events Doolittle's a rat. A vegetable diet, a year of famine, toast, and water—O Lord!"

Dinner, however, came, and the little waggish doctor could not, for the life of him, avoid his jokes. Cooke's dish of vegetables was placed for him at a particular part of the table; but the doctor, taking Manifold by the hand, placed him in the philosopher's seat, whom he afterwards set before a magnificent sirloin of beef—for, truth to speak, the little man acted as a kind of master of the ceremonies to the company at Ballyspellan.

"What's this?" exclaimed Manifold. "Perdition! here is nothing but a dish of asparagus before me! What kind of treatment is this? Were we not to have a great dinner, Topertoe? Alexander the Great!"

"And who placed me before a sirloin of beef?" asked the philosopher; "I, who follow the principles of the Great Pythagorean. I am nearly sick already with the fume of it. Good heavens! a sirloin of beef before a vegetarian."

Of course Manifold and the philosopher exchanged places, and the dinner proceeded. Mr. and Mrs. Goodwin were present, but Alice was unable to come, although anxious to do so in order to oblige her parents. It is unnecessary to describe the gastric feats of Manifold and Topertoe. The voracity of the former was astonishing, nor was that of the latter much less; and when the dishes were removed and the tables cleared for their compotations, the faces of both gentlemen appeared as if they were about to explode. The table was now supplied with every variety of liquor, and the conversation began to assume that convivial tone peculiar to such assemblies. The little doctor was placed between Manifold and the Pythagorean, who, by the way, was exceedingly short-sighted; and on the other side of him sat Parson Topertoe, who seemed to feel something like a reprieve from his gout. When the liquor was placed on the table, after dinner, the Pythagorean got to his feet, filled a large glass of water, and taking a gulp of it, leaving it about half full, he proceeded as follows:

"Gentlemen: considering the state of morals in our unfortunate country, arising as it does from the use of intoxicating liquors and the flesh of animals, I feel myself called upon to impress upon the consciences of this respectable auditory the necessity of studying the admirable principles of the great philosopher whose simplicity of life in food and drink I humbly endeavor to imitate. Modern society, my friends, is all wrong, and, of course, is proceeding upon an erroneous and pernicious system—that of eating the flesh of animals and indulging in the use, or rather the abuse, of liquors, that heat the blood and intoxicate the brain into the indulgence of passion and the commission of crime."

Here the little doctor threw a glass of usquebaugh—now called whiskey—into the half-emptied cup which stood before Cooke.

"A vegetable diet, gentlemen, is that which was appointed for us by Providence, and water like this our drink. And, indeed, water like this is delicious drink. The *Spa* of Ballyspellan stands unrivalled for strength and flavor, and its capacity of exhilarating the animal spirits is extraordinary. You see, gentlemen, how copiously I drink it; servant, fill my glass again—thank you."

In the meantime, and before he touched it, the doctor whipped another glass of whiskey into it—an act which the Pythagorean, who was, as we have said, unusually tall, and kept his eye upon the company, could neither suspect nor see.

"It has been ignorantly said that the structure of the human mouth is an argument against me as to the quality of our food, and that the growth of grapes is a proof that wine was ordained to be drank by men. It is perfectly well known that a man may eat a bushel of grapes without getting drunk; because the pure vegetable possesses no intoxicating power any more than the water which I am now drinking—and delicious water it is!"

Here the doctor dug his elbow into the fat ribs of Topertoe, whose face, in the meantime, seemed in a blaze of indignation.

"I tell you what, philosopher, curse me, but you are an infidel."

"I have the honor, sir," he replied, "to be an infidel—as every philosopher is. The truth of what I am stating to you has been tested by philosophers, and it has been ascertained that no quantity of grapes eaten by an individual could make him drunk."

The doctor gave the parson another dig, and winked at him to keep quiet.

"Sir," said the parson, unable, however, to restrain himself, "confound me if ever I heard such infidel opinions expressed in my life. Damn your philosophy; it is cursed nonsense, and nothing else."

"A vegetable diet," proceeded Cooke, "is a guarantee for health and long life——O Lord!" he exclaimed, "this accursed rheumatism will be the death of me."

"What is he saying?" asked Manifold.

"He is talking philosophy," replied the doctor, with a comic grin, "and recommending a vegetable diet and pure water."

"A devilish scoundrel," said Manifold. "He's a rat, too. Doolittle's a rat; but I'll poison him; yes, I'll dose him with ratsbane, and then I can eat, drink, and swill away. Is the philosopher's wife a cripple?"

"He has no wife," replied Doolittle.

"And what the devil, then, is he a philosopher for? What on earth challenges philosophy in a husband so much as a wife,—especially if she's a cripple and has the use of her tongue?"

"Not being a married man myself," replied the doctor, "I can give you no information on the subject; or rather I could if I would, but it would not be for your comfort:—ask Manifold."

"Ay; but he says there's something wrong about his head—sprouts pressing up, or something that way. Ask Mrs. Rosebud will she hob or nob with me. Mrs. Rosebud,"

he proceeded, addressing the widow, "hob or nob?"

Mrs. Rosebud, knowing that he was nothing more nor less than a gouty old parson, bowed to him very coldly, but accepted his challenge, notwithstanding.

"Mrs. Rosebud," he added, "what kind of a man was old Rosebud?"

"His family name," replied the widow, "was not Rosebud but Yellowboy; and, indeed, to speak the truth, my dear old Rosebud had all the marks and tokens of the original family name upon him, for he was as thin as the philosopher there, and as yellow as saffron. His mother, however, the night before he was born, dreamed that she was presented with a rosebud, and the name, being somewhat poetical, was adopted by himself and the family as a kind of set-off against the duck-foot color of the ancestral skin."

The philosopher, in the meantime, finding himself interrupted, stood, with a complacent countenance, awaiting a pause in which he might proceed. At length he got an opportunity of resuming.

"The world," he added, "knows but little of the great founder of so many systems and theories connected with human life and philosophy. It was he who invented the multiplication table, and solved the forty-seventh proposition of the first book of Euclid. It was he who, from his profound knowledge of music, first discovered the music of the spheres—a divine harmony, which, from its unbroken continuity, and incessant play in the heavenly bodies, we are incapable of hearing."

"Where the deuce, then, is the use of it?" cried Captain Culverin; "it must be a very odd kind of music which we cannot hear."

"The great Samian, sir, could hear it; but only in his heart and intellect, and after he had discovered the truthful doctrine of the *metempsychosis*, or transmigration of souls."

"The transmigration of *soles;* why, my dear sir, doesn't every fishwoman understand that?" observed the captain. "Was the fellow a fisherman?"

"His great discovery, however, if mankind would only adopt it, was the healthful one of a vegetable diet, carried out by a fixed determination not to wear any dress made up from the skins or fleeces of animals that have been slain by man, but philosophically to confine himself to plain linen as I do. O Lord! this rheumatism will be the death of me. Pythagoras was one of the greatest philosophers."

Here the doctor threw another glass of usquebaugh into the cup which stood before the Pythagorean, which act, in consequence of his great height and short sight, he did not perceive, but imagined that he was drinking the well water.

"Philosopher," said Captain Culverin, "hob or nob, a glass with you."

"With pleasure, captain," said the Pythagorean, "only I wish you would adopt my principles—a vegetable diet and *aqua pura*."

"Upon my credit," observed Father Mulrenin, "I think the *aqua pura* is the best of it. It is blessed water, this well water, and it ought to be so, because the parson consecrated it. Hob or nob with me, Mr. Cooke."

"With pleasure, sir," replied Mr. Cooke, again; "and I do assure you, Father Mulrenin, that I think the parson's consecration has improved the water."

"Sorra doubt of it," replied the friar; "and I am sure the doctor there will support me in the article of the parson's consecration."

"The great Samian," proceeded Cooke, "the great Samian——"

"My dear philosopher," said the facetious friar, "never mind your great Samian, but follow up your principles and drink your water."

The mischievous doctor had thrown another glass into his cup: "Drink your water, and set us all a philosophical example of sobriety."

"That I always do," said the philospher, staggering a little; "that I always do: the water is delicious, and I think my rheumatism has departed from me. Mr. Manifold, hob or nob!"

"No," replied Manifold, "confound me if I will. You are the fellow that eats nothing but vegetables, and drinks nothing but water. Do you think I will hob or nob with a water-drinking rascal like you? Do you think I will put my wine against your paltry water?"

"Don't call it paltry," replied the Pythagorean; "it is delicious. You know not how it elevates the spirits and, so to speak, philosophizes the whole system of man. I am beginning to feel extremely happy."

"I think so," replied the friar; "but wasn't it a fact, as a proof of your *metempsychosis*, that the great author of your doctrine was at the siege of Troy some centuries before he came into the world as the philosopher Pythagoras?"

"Yes, sir," replied his follower, "he fought for the Greeks in the character of Euphorbus, in the Trojan war, was Hermatynus, and afterwards a fisherman; his next transformation having been into the body of Pythagoras."

"What an extraordinary memory he must have had," said the friar. "Now, can you yourself remember all the bodies your soul has passed through?—but before I expect you to answer me,—hob or nob again,—this is famous water, my dear philosopher."

"It is famous water, Father Mulrenin; and the parson's consecration has given it a power of exhilaration which is astonishing." The doctor had thrown another glass of usquebaugh into his cup, of course unobserved.

"Why," said the friar, "if I'm not much mistaken, you will feel the benefit of it. It is purely philosophical water, and fit for a philosopher like you to drink."

The company now were divided into little knots, and the worthy philosopher found it necessary to take his seat. He felt himself in a state of mind which he could not understand; but the delicious flavor of the water still clung to him, and, owing to his shortness of sight, and the doctor's wicked wit,—if wit it could be called,—he continued drinking spirits and water until he became perfectly—or, in the ordinary phrase—blind drunk, and was obliged to be carried to bed.

In the meantime, a new individual had arrived; and, having ascertained from the servants that there was a great dinner on that day, he inquired if Mr. Goodwin and his family were present at it. He was informed that Mr. Goodwin and Mrs. Goodwin were there, but that Miss Goodwin was unable to come. He asked where Mr. Goodwin and Mrs. Goodwin resided, and, having been informed on this point, he immediately passed to the farmer's house where they lodged.

Now, it so happened that there was a neat garden attached to the house, in which was an arbor of willows where Miss Goodwin was in the habit of sitting, and amusing herself by the perusal of a book. It contained an arm-chair, in which she frequently reclined, sometimes after the slight exertion of walking; it also happened that she occasionally fell asleep. There were two modes of approach to the farmer's house—one by the ordinary pathway, and another much shorter, which led by a gate that opened into the garden. By this last the guide who pointed out the house to Woodward directed him to proceed, and he did so. On passing through, his eye caught the summer house, and he saw at a glance that Alice Goodwin was there, and asleep. She was, indeed, asleep, but it was a troubled sleep, for the demon gaze of the terrible eye which she dreaded, and which had almost blasted her out of life, she imagined was one more fixed upon her. Woodward approached with a stealthy step, and saw that, even although asleep, she was deeply agitated, as was evident by her moanings. He contemplated her features for a brief space.

"Ah," he said to himself, "I have done my work. Although beautiful, the stamp of death is upon her. One last gaze and it will all be over. I am before her in her dream. My eye is upon her in her morbid and diseased imagination, but what will the consequence be when she awakens and finds it upon her in reality?"

As those thoughts passed through his mind, she gave a scream, and exclaimed,—

"O, take him away! take him away! he is killing me!" and as she uttered the words she awoke.

Now, thought he, to secure my twelve hundred a year; now, for one glance, with the power of hell in its blighting influence, and all is over; my twelve hundred is safe to me and mine forever.

On awakening from her terrible dream, the first object that presented itself to her was the fixed gaze of that terrific eye. It was now wrought up to such a concentration of malignity as surpassed all that even her imagination had ever formed of it. Fixed—diabolical in its aspect, and steady as fate itself—it poured upon the weak and alarmed girl such a flood of venomous and prostrating influence that her shrieks were too feeble to reach the house when calling for assistance. She seemed to have been fascinated to her own destruction. There the eye was fastened upon her, and she felt herself deprived of the power of removing her own from his.

"O my God!" she exlaimed, "I am lost—help, help; the murderous eye is upon me!"

"It is enough," said Woodward; "good by, Miss Goodwin. I was simply contemplating your beauty, and I am sorry to see that you are in so weak a state. Present my compliments to your father and mother; and think of me as a man whose affection you have indignantly spurned—a man, however, whose eye, whatever his heart may be, is not to be trifled with."

He then made her a low bow, and took his departure back through the garden.

"It is over," said he; "*finitum est*, the property is mine; she cannot be saved now; I have taken her life; but no one can say that I have shed her blood. My precious mother will be delighted to hear this. Now, we will be free to act with old Cockletown and his niece; and if she does not turn out a good wife—if she crosses me in my amours—for amours I will have,—I shall let her,

too, feel what my eye can do." Alice's screams, after his departure from the garden, brought out Sarah Sullivan, who, aided by another servant, assisted her between them to reach the house, where she was put to bed in such a state of weakness, alarm, and terror as cannot be described. Her father and mother were immediately sent for, and, on arriving at her bedside, found her apparently in a dying state. All she could find voice to utter was,—

"He was here—his eye was upon me in the summer house. I feel I am dying."

Doctor Doolittle and Father Mulrenin were both sent for, but she had fallen into an exhausted slumber, and it was deemed better not to disturb her until she might gain some strength by sleep. Her parents, who felt so anxious about her health, and the faint hopes of her recovery, now made fainter by the incident which had just occurred, did not return to the assembly, and the consequence was that Woodward and they did not meet.

When the hour for the dance, however, arrived, the tables for refreshments were placed in other and smaller rooms, and the larger one in which they had dined was cleared out for the ball. The simple-hearted Pythagorean had slept himself sober, without being aware of the cause of his break-down at the dinner, and he now appeared among them in a gala dress of snow-white linen. He was no enemy to healthy amusements, for he could not forget that the great philosopher whom he followed had won public prizes at the Olympic games. He consequently frisked about in the dance with an awkwardness and a disregard of the graces of motion, which, especially in the jigs, convulsed the whole assembly, nor did any one among them laugh more loudly than he did himself. He especially addressed himself too, and danced with, Mrs. Rosebud, who, as she was short, fat, and plump, exhibited as ludicrous a contrast with the almost naked anatomical structure which frisked before her as the imagination could conceive.

"Upon my credit," observed the friar, "I see that extremes may meet. Look at the pilosopher, how he trebles and capers it before the widow. Faith, I should not feel surprised if he made Mrs. Pythagoras of her before long."

This, however, was not the worst of it, for what or who but the devil himself should tempt the parson, with his gout strong upon him, to select Miss Rosebud for a dance, whilst the philosophic rheumatist was frisking it as well as he could with her mother? The room was in an uproar. Miss Rosebud, who possessed much wicked humor, having, as the lady always has, the privilege, called for one of the liveliest tunes then known. The parson's attempt to keep time made the uproar still greater; but at length it ceased, for neither the philosopher nor the parson could hold out any longer, and each retired in a state of torture to his seat. The mirth having now subsided, a gentleman entered the room, admirably dressed, on whom the attention of the whole company was turned. He was tall, elegantly formed, and at a first glance was handsome. The expression of his eyes, however, was striking—startling. It was good—brilliant; it was bad and strange, and, to those who examined it closely, such as they had never witnessed before. Still he was evidently a gentleman: there could be no mistake about that. His manner, his dress, and his whole bearing, made them all feel that he was entitled to respect and courtesy. Little did they imagine that he was a murderer, and that he entered the room under the gratifying impression of his having killed Alice Goodwin. It was Harry Woodward. The evening was now advanced, but, after his introduction to the company, he joined in their amusements, and had the pleasure of dancing with both Mrs. Rosebud and her daughter; and after having concluded his dance with the latter, some tidings reached the room, which struck the whole company with a feeling of awe. It was at first whispered about, but it at length became the general topic of conversation. Alice Goodwin was dying, and her parents were in a state of distraction. Nobody could tell why, but it appeared she was at the last gasp, and that there was some mystery in her malady. Many speculations were broached upon the subject. Woodward preserved silence for a time, but just as he was about to make some observations with reference to her illness, a tall, handsome gentleman entered the room and bowed with much grace to the company.

Father Mulrenin started up, and, shaking hands with him, said,—

"I know now, sir, that you have got my letter."

"I have got it," replied the other, "and I am here accordingly."

As he spoke, his eye glanced around the room, the most distinguished figure in which, beyond comparison, was that of Woodward, who instantly recognized him as the gentleman whom he had met on the morning of his departure from the hospitable roof of Mr. Goodwin, on his return home, and, we may add, between whom and himself that extraordinary trial of the power of *will*, as manifested by the power of the eye, took

place so completely to his own discomfiture. They were both gentlemen, and bowed to each other very courteously, after which they approached and shook hands, and whilst the stranger held Woodward's hand in his during their short but friendly chat, it was observed that Woodward's face got as pale as death, and he almost immediately tottered towards a seat from weakness.

"Don't be alarmed," said the stranger; "you now *feel* that the principle of *good* is always able to overcome the principle of *evil*."

"Who or what are you?" asked Woodward, faintly.

"I am a plain country gentleman, sir; and something more, a man of wealth and distinction; but who, unlike my friend Cooke here, do not make myself ridiculous by absurd eccentricities, and the adoption of the nonsensical doctrines of Pythagoras, so utterly at variance with reason and Christian truth. You know, my dear Cooke, I could have cured you of your rheumatism had you possessed common-sense; but who could cure any man who guards his person against the elements by such a ludicrous and unsubstantial dress as yours?"

"I am in torture," replied Cooke; "I was tempted to dance with a pretty woman, and now I am suffering for it."

"As for me," exclaimed Topertoe, "I am a match, and more than a match, for you in suffering. O, this accursed gout!"

"I suppose you brought it on by hard drinking, sir," said the stranger. "If that be so, I shall not undertake to cure you unless you give up hard drinking."

"I will do anything," replied Topertoe, "provided you can allay my pain. I also was tempted to dance as well as the philosopher; and now the Christian parson and the pagan Pythagorean are both suffering for it."

"What is all this about?" exclaimed Manifold. "O Lord! is he going to put them on a vegetable diet, relieved by toast and water—toast and water?"

The stranger paid but little attention to Manifold, because he saw by his face and the number of his chins that he was past hope; but turning towards Topertoe and the Pythagorean, he requested them both to sit beside each other before him. He then asked Topertoe where his gout affected him, and having been informed that it was principally in his great toe and right foot, he deliberately stripped the foot, and having pressed his hands upon it for about the space of ten minutes, he desired his patient to rise up and walk. This he did, and to his utter astonishment, without the slightest symptom or sensation of pain.

"Why, bless my soul!" exclaimed the parson, "I am cured; the pain is altogether gone. Let me have a bumper of claret."

"That will do," observed the stranger. "You are incurable. You will plunge once more into a life of intemperance and luxury, and once more your complaint, from which you are now free, will return to you. You will not deny yourself the gratification of your irrational and senseless indulgences, and yet you expect to be cured. As for me, I can only remove the malady of such persons as you for the present, or time being; but, so long as you return to the exciting cause of it, no earthly skill or power in man can effect a permanent cure. Now, Cooke, I will relieve you of your rheumatism; but unless you exchange this flimsy stuff for apparel suited to your climate and condition, I feel that I am incapable of rendering you anything but a temporary relief."

He passed his hands over those parts of his limbs most affected by his complaint, and in a short time he (the philosopher) found himself completely free from his pains.

During those two most extraordinary processes Woodward looked on with a degree of wonder and of interest that might be truly termed intense. What the operations which took place before him could mean he knew not, but when the stranger turned round to the friar and said,—"Now bring me to this unhappy girl," Woodward seized his hat, feeling a presentiment that he was going to the relief of Alice Goodwin, and with hasty steps proceeded to the farm house in which she and her parents lodged. He was now desperate, and resolved, if courtesy failed, to force one more annihilating glance upon her before the mysterious stranger should arrive. We need scarcely inform our readers that he was indignantly repulsed by the family; but he was furious, and in spite of all opposition forced his way into her bedroom, to which he was led by her groans—dying groans they were considered by all around her. He rushed into her bed-room, and fixed his eye upon her with something like the fury of hell in it. The poor girl on seeing him a second time fell back and moaned as if she had expired. The villain stood looking over her in a spirit of the most malignant triumph.

"It is done now," said he; "there she lies—a corpse—and I am now master of my twelve hundred a year."

He had scarcely uttered the words when he felt a powerful hand grasp him by the shoulder, and send him with dreadful violence to the other side of the room. On turning round to see who the person was who had actually twirled him about like an infant, he

found the large, but benevolent-looking stranger standing at Alice's bedside, his finger upon the pulse and his eyes intently fixed upon her apparently lifeless features. He then turned round to Woodward, and exclaimed in a voice of thunder,—

"She is *not* dead, villain, and will not die on this occasion: begone, and leave the room."

"Villain!" replied Woodward, putting his hand to his sword: "I allow no man to call me villain unpunished."

The stranger contemptuously and indignantly waved his hand to him, as much as to say—presently, presently, but not now. The truth is, the loud tones of his voice had caused Alice to open her eyes, and instead of finding the dreaded being before her, there stood the symbol of benevolence and moral power, with his mild, but clear and benignant eye smiling upon her.

"My dear child," said he, "look upon me and give me your hands. You shall, with the assistance of that God who has so mysteriously gifted me, soon be well, and free from the evil and diabolical influence which has been for such selfish and accursed purposes exercised over you."

He then took her beautiful but emaciated hands into his own, which were also soft and beautiful, and keeping his eyes fixed upon hers, he then, with that necessary freedom which physicians exercise with their patients, pressed his hands after a time upon her temples, her head, her eyes, and her heart, the whole family being present, servants and all. The effect was miraculous. In the course of twenty minutes the girl was recovered; her spirits—her health had returned to her. Her eyes smiled as she turned them with delight upon her father and mother.

"O, papa!" she exclaimed, smiling, "O, dear mamma, what can this mean? I am cured, and what is more, I am no longer afraid of that vile, bad man. May the God of heaven be praised for this! but how will we thank—how can we thank the benevolent gentleman who has rescued me from death?"

"More thanks are due," replied the stranger, smiling, "to Father Mulrenin here, who acquainted me in a letter, not only with your melancholy condition, but with the supposed cause of it. However, let your thanks be first returned to God, whose mysterious instrument I only am. Now, sir," said he, turning to Woodward, "you laid your hand upon your sword. I also wear a sword, not for aggression but defence. You know we met before. I was not then aware of your personal history, but I am now. I have just returned from London, where I was at the court of his Majesty Charles the Second. While in London I met your granduncle, and from him I learned your history, and a bad one it is. Now, sir, I beg to inform you that your malignant and diabolical influence over the person of this young lady has ceased forever. As to the future, she is free from that influence; but if I ever hear that you attempt to intrude yourself into her presence, or to annoy her family, I will have you secured in the jail of Waterford in forty-eight hours afterwards, for other crimes that render you liable to the law."

"And pray who are you?" asked Woodward, with a blank and crestfallen countenance, but still with a strong feeling of enmity and bitterness—a feeling which he could not repress. "Who are you who presume to dictate to me upon my conduct and course of life?"

"Who am I?" replied the stranger, assuming an air of incredible dignity. "Sir, my name is Valentine Greatrakes, a person on whom God has bestowed powers which, apart from inspiration, have seldom for centuries ever been vouchsafed to man."

Woodward got pale again. He had heard of his extraordinary powers of curing almost every description of malady peculiar to the human frame, and without another word slunk out of the room. On hearing his name Mr. and Mrs. Goodwin rushed to him, seized his hands, and with the enthusiasm of grateful hearts each absolutely wept upon his broad and ample bosom. He was at this period about forty-six; but seeing Alice's face lit up with joy and delight, he stooped down and kissed her as a father would a daughter who had recovered from the death struggle. "My dear child," he said, "you are now saved; but you must remain here for some time longer, because I do not wish to part with you until I shall have completely confirmed the sanative influence with which God has enabled me to reinvigorate you and others. As for your selfish persecutor, he will trouble you no more. He knows now what the consequences would be should he attempt it."

CHAPTER XXII.

History of the Black Spectre.

Woodward returned to the public room, where he was soon followed by Father Mulrenin and Greatrakes, who were shortly joined by Mr. Goodwin; Mrs. Goodwin having remained at home with Alice. The dancing went on with great animation, and when the hour of supper arrived there was a

full and merry table. The friar was in great glee, but from time to time kept his eye closely fixed upon Woodward, whose countenance and conduct he watched closely. It might have been about the hour of midnight, if not later, when, after a short lull in the conversation, Father Mulrenin addressed Mr. Goodwin as follows :—

"Mr. Goodwin, is there not a family in your neighborhood named Lindsay?"

"There is," replied Goodwin; "and a very respectable family, too."

"By the way, there is a very curious tradition, or legend, connected with the family of Mr. Lindsay's wife: have you ever heard of it?"

"That such a tradition, or legend, exists, I believe," he replied, "but there are many versions of it—although I have never heard any of them distinctly; something I did hear about what is termed the *Shan-dhinne-dhuv*, or *the Black Spectre*."

"Well, then," proceeded the friar, "if the company has no objection to hear an authentic account of this fearful apparition, I will indulge them with a slight sketch of the narrative:

"When Essex was over here in the Elizabethan wars—and a nice hand he made of them; not, God knows, that we ought to regret it, but I like a good general whether he is for us or against us—devil a doubt of that: well, when Essex was over here conducting them (with reverence be it spoken) it so happened that he had a scoundrel with him by name Hamilton—and a thorough scoundrel was he. O Lord! if I had lived in those days, and wasn't in Orders to tie my hands up—but no matter; this same scoundrel was one of the handsomest vagabonds in the English camp. Well and good; but, indeed, to tell God's truth, it was neither well nor good, because, as I said, the man was a first-rate, tiptop scoundrel; but you will find that he was a devilish sight more so before I have put a period to my little narration. Mr. Woodward, will you hob or nob? I think your name is Woodward?"

"With great pleasure, sir," replied Woodward; "and you are right, my name is Woodward; but proceed with your narrative, for, I assure you, I feel very much interested in it, especially in that portion of it which relates to the *Black Spectre*. Though not a believer in supernatural appearances, I feel much gratification in listening to accounts of them. Pray proceed, sir."

"Well sir, it so happened that this Hamilton, who had been originally a Scotch Redshank, became privately acquainted with a beautiful and wealthy orphan girl, a relation of the O'Neils; and it so happened again, that whether they made a throw on the dice for it or not, he *won* her affections. So far, however, there was nothing very particularly obnoxious in it, because we know that intermarriages between Catholics and Protestants may disarm the parties of their religious prejudices against each other; and although I cannot affirm the truth of what I am about to say from my own experience, still, I think I have been able to smell out the fact that little Cupid is of no particular religion, and can be claimed by no particular church; or rather I should say that he is claimed by all churches and all creeds. This Hamilton, as I said, was exceedingly handsome, but it seems from the tradition that it was by the beauty of his eyes that Eva O'Neil was conquered, just as the first Eve was by the eyes and tongue of the serpent. Not, God knows, that the great Eve was any great shakes, for she left the world in a nice plight by falling in love with a serpent; but upon my credit she was not the first woman, excuse the blunder, who fell in love with a serpent, and suffered accordingly. I appale to Pythagoras there."

"It is an allegory," replied the Pythagorean, "and simply means that we are innocent so long as we are young, and that when we come to maturity we are corrupted and depraved by our passions."

"How the sorra can you say that," replied the friar, "when you know that Adam and Eve were created full-grown?"

"Pray go on with your tradition," said Greatrakes, "and let us hear the history of the *Black Spectre*. I am not myself an infidel in the history of supernatural appearances, and I wish to hear you out."

"Well, then," replied the friar, "you shall. The villain proposed marriage to this beautiful young orphan, and as he was a handsome vagabone, as I have stated, he was accepted; but his eyes, above all things, were irresistible. They were married by a Protestant clergyman, and immediately afterwards by a Catholic priest, who was far advanced in years. The lady would submit to no marriage but a legal one. The marriage, however, was private; for Hamilton knew that Essex was aware of his having been during this event a married man, and that his wife, who was a distant relation of the Earl's, was still living. The marriage, however, came to Essex's ears, and Hamilton was called to account. He denied the marriage, the old priest having been now dead, and none but the Protestant clergyman of the parish being alive to bear testimony to the fact of the marriage. He endeavored to prevail upon the clergyman also to deny the marriage, which he refused to do, whereupon he was

found murdered. His wife by this marriage having learned from Essex that Hamilton had most treacherously deceived her, fell into premature labor and died; but her last words were an awful curse upon him, and his children after him, to the last generation.

"'May the Eye that lured me to destruction,' she said, 'become a curse to you and your descendants forever! May it blight and kill all those whom it looks upon, and render it dreadful and dreaded to all those who will place confidence in you or your descendants!"

"God knows I couldn't much blame her; it was her last Christian benediction to the villain who had destroyed her, and, setting charity aside, I don't see how she could have spoken otherwise.

"When the proofs of the marriage, however, were about to be brought against him, the Protestant clergyman, who, on discovering his iniquity, was too honest to conceal it, and who felt bitterly the fraud that had been practised on him, was found murdered, as I have said, because he was now the only evidence left against Hamilton's crime. The latter did not, however, get rid of him by that atrocious and inhuman act. The spirit of that man haunts the family from that day to this; it is always a messenger of evil to them whenever he appears, and it matters not where they go or where they live, he is sure to follow them, and to fasten upon some of the family, generally the wickedest, of course, as his victim. Now, Mr. Woodward, what do you think of that family tradition?"

"I think of it," replied Woodward, "with contempt, as I do of everything that proceeds from the lips of an ignorant and illiterate Roman Catholic priest."

"Sir," replied the friar, "I am not the inventor of this family tradition, nor of the crime which is said—however justly I know not—to have given rise to it; but this I do know, that no man having claims to the character of a gentleman would use such language to a defenceless man as you have just used to me. The legend is traditionary in your family, and I have only given it as I have heard it. If I were not a clergyman I would chastise you for your insolence; but my hands are bound up, and you well know it."

"Friar," said Greatrakes, "when you know that your hands are bound up, you should have avoided insulting any man. You should not have related a piece of family history—perhaps false from beginning to end—in the presence of a gentleman so intimately connected with that family as you knew him to be. It was no topic for a common room like this, and it was quite unjustifiable in you to have introduced it."

"I feel, sir, that you are perfectly right," replied the good-natured friar, "and I ask Mr. Woodward's pardon for having, without the slightest intention of offence to him, done so. You will recollect that he himself expressed an anxiety to hear it."

"All I say upon the subject," observed the Pythagorean, "is simply this, that Pythagoras himself could not have cured me of the rheumatism as my friend Valentine Greatrakes has done."

"You will require no cure, and, what is better, no necessity for cure," replied Greatrakes, smiling, "if you will have only common sense, my dear Cooke. Clothe yourself in warm and comfortable garments, and feed your miserable carcass with good beef and mutton, and, in addition to which, like myself and the friar here, take a warm tumbler of good usquebaugh punch to promote digestion."

"I will never abandon my principles," replied the philosopher. "Linen and vegetable diet forever."

Manifold was asleep after his gorge,—a sleep from which he never awoke,—but Doctor Doolittle, anxious to secure Cooke as a patient, became quite eloquent upon the advantages of a vegetable diet, and of the Pythagorean system in general; after which the conversation of the night closed, and the guests departed to their respective lodgings.

The night was still an beautiful. The moon was about to sink, but still she emitted that faint and shadowy light which lends such calm, but picturesque beauty to the nocturnal landscape. Wooodward was alone; but it would be difficult to find language in which to describe the bitterness of his feelings and the frightful sense of his disappointment on finding, not only that his infamous design upon the life of Alice Goodwin had been frustrated, but on feeling certain that she had been restored to perfect health before his eyes. This, however, was not the worst of it. He had calculated on killing her, and consequently of securing the twelve hundred a year, on the strength of which he and his mother could confidently negotiate with the old nobleman, who always slept with one eye open. In the venom and dark malignity of his heart he cursed Alice Goodwin, he cursed Valentine Greatrakes, he cursed the world, and he cursed God, or rather would have cursed him had he believed in the existence of such a being.

In this mood of mind he was proceeding to his lodgings, when he espied before him

the *Shan-dhinne-dhuv*, or *Black Spectre* with the middogue in his hand. He stood and looked at it steadily.

"What is this?" said he, addressing the figure before him. "What pranks are you playing now? Do you think me a fool? What brought you here? and what do you mean by this pantomimic nonsense, Mr. Conjurer?"

The figure, of course, made no reply, except by gesture. It brandished the middogue, or dagger, however, and pointed it three times at his heart. The spot upon which this strange interview occurred was perfectly clear of anything that could conceal an individual. In fact it was an open common. Woodward, consequently, led astray by circumstances with which the reader will become subsequently acquainted, started forward with the intention of reaching the individual whom he suspected of indulging himself in playing with his fears, or rather with jocularly intending to excite them. He sprang forward, we say, and reached the spot on which the *Black Spectre* had stood, but our readers may judge of his surprise when he found that the spectre, or whatever it was, had disappeared, and was nowhere, or any longer, visible. Place of concealment there was none. He examined the ground about him. It was firm and compact, and without a fissure in which a rat could conceal itself.

There is no power in human nature which enables the heart of man, under similar circumstances, to bear the occurrence of such a scene as we have described, unmoved. The man was hardened—an infidel, an atheist; but, notwithstanding all this, a sense of awe, wonder, and even, in some degree, of terror, came over his heart, which nearly unnerved him. Most atheists, however, are utter profligates, as he was; or silly philosophers, who, because they take their own reason for their guide, will come to no other conclusion than that to which it leads them.

"It is simply a hallucination," said he to himself, "and merely the result of having heard the absurd nonsense of what that ignorant and credulous old friar related to-night concerning my family. Still it is strange, because I am cool and sober, and in the perfect use of my senses. This is the same appearance which I saw before near the Haunted House, and of which I never could get any account. What if there should be——?"

He checked himself and proceeded to his lodgings, with an intention of returning home the next morning; which he did, after having failed in the murderous mission which he undertook to accomplish.

"Mother," said he, after his return home, "all is lost: Alice Goodwin has been restored to perfect health by Valentine Greatrakes, and my twelve hundred a year is gone for ever. How can we enter into negotiations with that sharp old scoundrel, Lord Cockletown, now? I assure you I had her at the last gasp, when Greatrakes came in and restored her to perfect health before my face. But, setting that aside for the present, is there such a being as what is termed the *Black Spectre*, mysteriously connected, if I may say so, with our family?"

His mother's face got pale as death.

"Why do you ask, Harry?" said she.

"Because," he replied, "I have reason t think that I have seen it twice."

"Alas! alas!" she exclaimed, "then th doom of the curse is upon *you*. It select only one of every generation on which to worl its vengeance. The third appearance of i will be fatal to you."

"This is all contemptible absurdity, my dear mother. I don't care if I saw it a thousand times. How can it interfere with my fate?"

"It does not interfere," she replied, "it only intimates it, and whatever the nature of the individual's death among our family may be, it shadows it out. What signs did it make to you?"

"It brandished what is called in this country a middogue, or Irish dagger, at my heart."

His mother got pale again.

"Harry," said she, "I would recommend you to leave the kingdom. Avoid the third warning!"

"Mother," he replied, "this certainly is sad nonsense. I have no notion of leaving the kingdom in consequence of such superstitions stuff as this; all these things are soap bubbles; put your finger on them and they dissolve into nothing. How is Charles? for I have not yet seen him."

"Improving very much, although not able yet to leave his room."

Woodward walked about and seemed absorbed in thought.

"It is a painful thing, mother," said he, "that Charles is so long recovering. Do you know that I am half inclined to think he will never recover? His wound was a dreadful one, and its consequences on his constitution will, I fear, be fatal."

"I hope not, Harry," she replied, "for ever since his illness I have found that my heart gathers about him with an affection that I have never felt for him before."

"Your resolution, then, is fixed, I suppose, to leave him your property?"

"It is fixed; there is, or can be, no doubt

about it. Once I come to a determination I am immovable. We shall be able to wheedle Lord Cockletown and his niece."

Harry paused a moment, then passed out of the room, and retired to his own apartment.

Here he remained for hours. At the close of the evening he appeared in the withdrawing-room, but still in a silent and gloomy state.

The perfect cure of Miss Goodwin had spread like wildfire, and reached the whole country.

Greatrake's reputation was then at its highest, and the number of his cures was the theme of all conversation. Barney Casey had well marked Woodward since his return from Ballyspellan, and having heard, in connection with others, that Miss Goodwin had been cured by Greatrakes, he resolved to keep his eye upon him, and, indeed, as the event will prove, it was well he did so.

That night, about the hour of twelve o'clock, Barney, who had suspected that he (Woodward) had either murdered Grace Davoren in order to conceal his own guilt, or kept her in some secret place for the most unjustifiable purposes, remarked that, as was generally usual with him, he did not go to bed at the period peculiar to the habits of the family.

"There is something on my mind this night," said Barney; "I can't tell what it is; but I think he is bent on some villainous scheme that ought to be watched, and in the name of God I will watch him."

Woodward went out of the house more stealthily than usual, and took his way towards the town of Rathfillan. A good way in the distance behind him might be discovered another figure dogging his footsteps, that figure being no other than the honest figure of Barney Casey. On went Woodward unsuspicious that he was watched, until he reached the indescribable cabin of Sol Donnel, the old herbalist. The night had become dark, and Barney was able, without being seen, to come near enough to Woodward to hear his words and observe his actions. He tapped at the old man's window, which, after some delay and a good deal of grumbling, was at length opened to him. The hut consisted of only one room—a fact which Barney well knew.

"Who is there?" said the old herbalist. "Why do you come at this hour to deprive me of my rest? Nobody comes for any good purpose at such an hour as this."

"Open your door, you hypocritical old sinner, and I will speak to you. Open your door instantly."

"Wait, then; I will open it; to be sure I will open it; because I know whoever you are that if there was not something extraordinary in it, it isn't at this hour you'd be coming to me."

"Open the door I say, and then I shall speak to you."

The window, which the old herbalist had opened, and, in the hurry of the moment, left unshut, remained unshut, and Barney, after Woodward had entered, stood close to it in order to hear the conversation which might pass between them.

"Now," said Woodward, after he had entered the hut, "I want a dose from you. One of my dogs, I fear, is seized with incipient symptoms of hydrophobia, and I wish to dose him to death."

"And what hour is this to come for such a purpose?" asked Sol Donnel. "It isn't at midnight that a man comes to me to ask for a dose of poison for a dog."

"You are very right in that," replied Woodward; "but the truth is, that I had an assignation with a girl in the town, and I thought that I might as well call upon you now as at any other time."

The eye of the old sinner glistened, for he knew perfectly well that the malady of the dog was a fable.

"Well," said he, "I can give you the dose, but what's to be the recompense?"

"What do you ask?" replied the other.

"I will dose nothing under five pounds."

"Are you certain that your dose will be sure to effect its purpose?" asked Woodward.

"As sure as I am of life," replied the old sinner; "one glass of it would settle a man as soon as it would a dog;" and as he spoke he fastened his keen, glittering eyes upon Woodward. The glance seemed to say, I understand you, and I know that the dog you are about to give the dose to walks upon two legs instead of four.

"Now," said Woodward after having secured the bottle, "here are your five pounds, and *mark me*——" he looked sternly in the face of the herbalist, but added not another word.

The herbalist, having secured the money and deposited it in his pocket, said, with a malicious grin,—

"Couldn't you, Mr. Woodward, have prevented yourself from going to the expense of five pounds for poisoning a dog, that you could have shot without all this expense?"

Woodward looked at him. "Your life," said he, "will not be worth a day's purchase if you breathe a syllable of what took place between us this night. Sol Donnel, I am a desperate man, otherwise I would not have come to you. Keep the secret between us,

for, if you divulge it, you may take my word for it that you will not survive it twenty-four hours. Now, be warned, for I am both resolute and serious."

The herbalist felt the energy of his language and was subdued.

"No," he replied, "I shall never breathe it; kill your dog in your own way; all I can say is, that half a glass of it would kill the strongest horse in your stable; only let me remark that I gave you the bottle to kill *a dog!*"

"Now," thought Barney Casey, "what can all this mean? There is none of the dogs wrong. He is at some devil's work, but what it is I do not know; I shall watch him well, however, and it will go hard or I shall find out his purpose."

As Woodward was about to depart he mused for a time, and at length addressed the herbalist.

"Suppose," said he, "that I wish to kill this dog by slow degrees, would it not be a good plan to give him a little of it every day, and let him die, as it were, by inches?"

"That my bed may be made in heaven but it is a good thought, and by far the safest plan," replied the herbalist, "and the very one I would recommend you. A small spoonful every day put into his coffee or her coffee, as the case may be, will, in the course of a fortnight or three weeks, make a complete cure."

"Why, you old scoundrel, who ever heard of a dog drinking coffee?"

"I did," replied the old villain, with another grin, "and many a time it is newly sweetened for them, too, and they take it until they fall asleep; but they forget to waken somehow. Taste that yourself, and you'll find that it is beautifully sweetened; because if it was given to the dog in its natural bitter state he might refuse to take it at all, or, what would be worse and more dangerous still, he might suspect the reason why it was given to him."

The two persons looked each other in the face, and it would, indeed, be difficult to witness such an expression as the countenance of each betrayed. That of the herbalist lay principally in his ferret eyes. It was cruel, selfish, cunning, and avaricious. The eye of the other was dark, significant, vindictive, and terrible. In his handsome features there was, when contrasted with those of the herbalist, a demoniacal elevation, a satanic intellectuality of expression, which rendered the contrast striking beyond belief. The one appeared with the power of Apollyon, the god of destruction, conscious of that power; the other as his mere contemptible agent of evil—subordinate, low, villanous, and wicked.

Woodward, after a significant look, bade him good night, and took his way home.

Barney Casey, however, still dogged him stealthily, because he knew not whether the dose was intended for Grace Davoren or his brother Charles. Mrs. Lindsay had made no secret of her intention to leave her property to the latter, whose danger, and the state of whose health, had awakened all those affections of the mother which had lain dormant in her heart so long. The revivification of her affections for him was one of those capricious manifestations of feeling which can emanate from no other source but the heart of a mother. Independently of this, there was in the mind of Mrs. Lindsay a principle of conscious guilt, of hardness of heart, of all want of common humanity, that sometimes startled her into terror. She knew the villany of her son Woodward, and, after all, the heart of a woman and a mother is not like the heart of a man. There is a tendency to recuperation in a woman's and a mother's heart, which can be found nowhere else; and the contrast which she felt herself forced to institute between the generous character of her son Charles and the villany of Woodward broke down the hard propensities of her spirit, and subdued her very wickedness into something like humanity. Virtue and goodness, after all, will work their way, especially where a mother's feelings, conscious of the evil and conscious of the good, are forced to strike the balance between them. This consideration it was which determined Mrs. Lindsay, in addition to other considerations already alluded to, to come to the resolution of leaving her property to her son Charles. There is, besides, a want of confidence and of mutual affection in villany which reacts upon the heart, precisely as it did upon that of Mrs. Lindsay. She knew that her eldest son was in intention a murderer; and there is a terrible summons in conscience which sometimes awakens the soul into a sense of virtue and truth.

Be this as it may, Barney Casey's vigilance was ineffectual. From the night on which Woodward got the bottle from the herbalist, Charles Lindsay began gradually and slowly to decline. Barney's situation in the family was that of a general servant, in fact, a man of all work, and the necessary consequence was, that he could not contravene the conduct of Harry Woodward, although he saw clearly that, notwithstanding Charles's wound was nearly healed, his general health was getting worse.

Now, the benevolence and singular power of Valentine Greatrakes are historical facts which cannot be contradicted. After about

a month from the time he cured Alice Goodwin he came to the town of Rathfillan, with several objects in view, one of which was to see Alice Goodwin, and to ascertain that her health was perfectly reëstablished. But the other and greater one was that which we shall describe. Mr. Lindsay, having perceived that his son Charles's health was gradually becoming worse, though his wound was healed, and on finding that the physician who attended him could neither do anything for his malady, nor even account for it, or pronounce a diagnosis upon its character, bethought him of the man who had so completely cured Alice Goodwin. Accordingly, on Greatrakes's visit to Rathfillan, he waited upon him, and requested, as a personal favor, that he would come and see his dying son, for indeed Charles at that time was apparently not many days from death. This distinguished and wealthy gentleman at once assented, and told Mr. Lindsay that he would visit his son the next day.

"I may not cure him," said he, "because there are certain complaints which cannot be cured. Such complaints I never attempt to cure; and even in others that *are* curable I sometimes fail. But wherever there is a possibility of cure I rarely fail. I am not proud of this gift; on the contrary, it has subdued my heart into a sense of piety and gratitude to God, who, in his mercy, has been pleased to make me the instrument of so much good to my fellow-creatures."

Mr Lindsay returned home to his family in high spirits, and on his way to the house observed his stepson Woodward and Barney Casey at the door of the dog-kennel.

"I maintain the dog is wrong," said Woodward, "and to me it seems an incipitent case of hydrophobia."

"And to me," replied Barney, "it appears that his complaint is hunger, and that you have simply deprived him of his necessary food."

At this moment Mr. Lindsay approached them, and exclaimed,—

"Harry, let your honest and affectionate heart cheer up. Valentine Greatrakes will be here to-morrow, and will cure Charles, as he cured Alice Goodwin, and then we will have them married; for if he recovers I am determined on it, and will abide no opposition from any quarter. Indeed, Harry, your mother is now willing that they should be married, and is sorry that she ever opposed it. Your mother, thank God, is a changed woman, and thank God the change is one that makes my very heart rejoice."

"God be praised," exclaimed Barney, "that *is* good news, and makes my heart rejoice nearly as much as yours."

"Father," said Woodward, "you have taken a heavy load off my mind. Charles is certainly very ill, and until Greatrakes comes I shall make it a point to watch and nurse tend him myself."

"It is just what I would expect from your kind and affectionate heart, Harry," replied Lindsay, rather slowly though, who then passed into the house to communicate the gratifying intelligence to his wife and daughter.

The intensity of Woodward's malignity and villany was such that, as we have mentioned before, on some occasions he forgot himself into such a state of mind, and, what was worse, into such an expression of countenance, as, especially to Barney Casey, who so deeply suspected him, challenged observation. After Lindsay had gone he put his hand to his chin, and said, still with caution,—

"Yes, poor fellow, I will watch him myself this night; for if he happened to die before Greatrakes comes to-morrow what an affliction would it not be to the family, and especially to myself, who love him so well. Yes, in order to sustain and support him, I will watch him and act as his nurse this night."

There was, however, such an expression on his countenance as could not be mistaken even by a common observer, much less by such an acute one as Barney Casey, who had his eye upon him for such a length of time! His countenance, Barney saw plainly, was as dark as hell, and seemed to catch its inspiration from that damnable region.

"Barney," said he, "I shall watch the sick bed, and nurse my brother Charles to-night, in order, if possible, to sustain him until Greatrakes cures him to-morrow."

"Ah, it's you that is the affectionate brother," replied Barney, who had read deliberate murder in his countenance. "But," he exclaimed, after Woodward had gone, "if you watch *him* this night, I will watch *you*. You know now that he stands between you and your mother's property, and you will put him out of the way if you can. Yes, I will watch you well *this* night."

The minute poisoned doses which he had contrived to administer to his brother were always followed by an excessive thirst. Now, Barney had, as we have often said, strong suspicions; but on this occasion he was determined to place himself in a position from which he could watch every movement of Woodward without being suspected himself. His usual sleeping place was in a low gallery below stairs; but it so happened that there was a closet beside Charles's bed in which there was neither bed

nor furniture of any kind, with the exception of a single chair. The door between them had, as is usual, two panes of glass in it, through which any person in the dark could see what happened in the room in which Charles slept.

Barney locked the door on the inside, and it was well that he did so, for in a short time Woodward came in, with a guilty and a stealthy pace, and having looked, like a murderer, about the room, he approached the closet door and tried to open it; but finding that it was locked his apprehensions vanished, and he deliberately, on seeing that his brother was asleep, took a bottle out of his pocket, and having poured about a wine-glassful of the poison into the small jug which contained the usual drink of the patient, he left the room, satisfied that, as soon as his brother awoke, he would take the deadly draught. When he departed, Barney came out, and having substituted another for it—for there was a variety of potions on the sick table—he, too, stealthily descended the stairs, and going to the dog-kennel deliberately administered the pernicious draught to the dog which Woodward had insisted was unwell. He happily escaped all observation, and accomplished his plan without either notice or suspicion. He stayed in the kennel in order to watch the effects of the potion upon the dog, who died in the course of about fifteen minutes after having received it.

"Now," said Barney, "I think I have my thumb upon him, and it will go hard with me or I will make him suffer for this hellish intention to murder his brother. Mr. Greatrakes is a man of great wealth and high rank; he is, besides, a magistrate of the county, and, please God, I will disclose to him all that I have seen and suspect."

Barney, under the influence of these feelings, went to bed, satisfied that he had saved the life of Charles Lindsay, at least for that night, but at the same time resolved to bring his murderous brother to an account for his conduct.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Greatrakes at Work—Dénouement.

Greatrakes was on his way from Birch Grove to Rathfillan House the next day when he was met by Barney Casey, who had been on the lookout for him. Barney, who knew not his person, was not capable of determining whether he was the individual whom he wanted or not. At all events he resolved at once to ascertain that fact. Accordingly, putting his hand to his hat, he said, with a respectful manner,—

"Pray, sir, are you the great Valentine Great Rooke, who prevents the people from dyin'?"

"I am Valentine Greatrakes," he replied, with a smile; "but I cannot prevent the people from dying."

"Begad, but you can prevent them from being sick, at any rate. I am myself sometimes subject to a colic, bad luck to it—(this was a lie, got up for the purpose of arresting the attention of Greatrakes)—and maybe if you would be kind enough to rub me down you would drive the wind out of me and cure me of it, for at least, by all accounts through the whole parish, it's a windy colic that haunts me."

Greatrakes, who was a man of great good-nature, and strongly susceptible of humor, laughed very heartily at Barney's account of his miserable state of health.

"Well," said he, "my good friend, let me tell you that the colic you speak of is one of the most healthy diseases we have. Don't, if you regard your constitution, and your health, ever attempt to get rid of it. Your constitution is a windy constitution, and that is the reason why you are graciously afflicted with a windy colic."

It was, in fact, diamond cut diamond between the two. Barney, who had never had a colic in his life, shrugged his shoulders very dolefully at the miserable character of the sympathy which was expressed for him; and Greatrakes, from his great powers of observation, saw that every word Barney uttered with respect to his besetting malady was a lie.

At length Barney's countenance assumed an expression of such honest sincerity and feeling that Greatrakes was at once struck by it, and he kept his eye steadily fixed upon him.

"Sir," said Barney, "I understand you are a distinguished gentleman and a magistrate besides?"

"I am certainly a magistrate," replied Greatrakes; "but what is your object in asking the question, my good fellow?"

"I understand you are going to cure Masther Charles Lindsay. Now, I wish to give you a hint or two concerning him. His brother—he of the Evil Eye—according to my most solemn and serious opinion, is poisoning him by degrees. I think he has been dosing him upon a small scale, so as to make him die off by the effects of poison, without any suspicion being raised against himself; but when his father told him yesterday that you were to come this day to cure him, his brother insisted that he

should sit up with him, and nurse-tend him himself. I was aware of this, and from a conversation I heard him have with an old herbalist, named Sol Donnel, I had suspicions of his design against his brother's life. He strove to kill Miss Goodwin by the damnable force and power of his Evil Eye, and would have done so had not you cured her."

"And are you sure," replied Greatrakes, "that it is not his Evil Eye that is killing his brother?"

"I don't know that," replied Barney; "perhaps it may be so."

"No," replied Greatrakes, "from all I have read and heard of its influence it cannot act upon persons within a certain degree of consanguinity."

"I would take my oath," said honest Barney, "that it is the poison that acts in this instance."

He then gave him a description of Woodward's having poured the poison—or at least what he suspected to be such—into the drink which was usually left at the bedside of his brother, and of its effect upon the dog.

Greatrakes, on hearing this, drew up his horse, and looking Barney sternly in the face, asked him,—

"Pray, my good fellow, did Mr. Woodward ever injure or offend you?"

"No, sir," replied Barney, "never in any instance; but what I say I say from my love for his brother, whose life, I can swear, he is tampering with. It is a weak word, I know, but I will use a stronger, for I say he is bent upon his murder by poison."

"Well," said Greatrakes, "keep your counsel for the present. I will study this matter, and examine into it; and I shall most certainly receive your informations against him; but I must have better opportunities for making myself acquainted with the facts. In the meantime keep your own secret, and leave the rest to me."

When Greatrakes reached Rathfillan House the whole family attended him to the sick bed of Charles. Woodward was there, and appeared to feel a deep interest in the fate of his brother. Greatrakes, on looking at him, said, before he applied the sanative power which God had placed in his constitution,—

"This young man is dying of a slow and subtle poison, which some person under the roof of this house has been administering to him in small doses."

As he uttered these words he fixed his eyes upon Woodward, whose face quailed and blanched under the power and significance of his gaze.

"Sir," replied Lindsay, "with the greatest respect for you, there is not a single individual under this roof who would injure him. He is beloved by every one. The sympathy felt for him through the whole parish is wonderful—but by none more than by his brother Woodward."

This explanation, however, came too late. Greatrakes's impressions were unchanged.

"I think I will cure him," he proceeded; "but after his recovery let him be cautious in taking any drink unless from the hands of his mother or his father."

He then placed his hands over his face and chest, which he kept rubbing for at least a quarter of an hour, when, to their utter astonishment, Charles pronounced himself in as good health as he had ever enjoyed in his life.

"This, sir," said he, "is wonderful; why, I am perfectly restored to health. As I live, this man must have the power of God about him to be able to effect such an extraordinary cure: and he has also cured my darling Alice. What can I say? Father, give him a hundred—five hundred pounds."

Greatrakes smiled.

"You don't know, it seems," he replied, "that I do not receive remuneration for any cures I may effect. I am wealthy and independent, and I fear that if I were to make the wonderful gift which God has bestowed on me the object of mercenary gain, it might be withdrawn from me altogether. My principle is one of humanity and benevolence. I will remain in Rathfillan for a fortnight, and shall see you again," he added, addressing himself to Charles. "Now," he proceeded, "mark me, you will require neither drinks nor medicine of any description. Whatever drinks you take, take them at the common table of the family. There are circumstances connected with your case which, as a magistrate of the county, I am resolved to investigate."

He looked sternly at Woodward as he uttered the last words, and then took his departure to Rathfillan, having first told Barney Casey to call on him the next day.

After Greatrakes had gone, Woodward repaired to the room of his mother, in a state of agitation which we cannot describe.

"Mother," said he, "unless we can manage that old peer and his niece, I am a lost man."

"Do not be uneasy," replied his mother; "whilst you were at Ballyspellan I contrived to manage that. Ask me nothing about it; but every arrangement is made, and you are to be married this day week. Keep yourself prepared for a settled case."

What the mother's arguments in behalf of

the match may have been, we cannot pretend to say. We believe that Miss Riddle's attachment to his handsome person and gentlemanly manners overcame all objections on the part of her uncle, and nothing now remained to stand in the way of their union.

The next day Barney Casey waited upon Greatrakes, according to appointment, when the following conversation took place between them :—

"Now," said Greatrakes, solemnly, "what is your name?"

As he put the question with a stern and magisterial air, his tablets and pencil in hand, which he did with the intention of awing Barney into a full confession of the exact truth—a precaution which Barney's romance of the windy colic induced him to take,—"I say," he repeated, "what's your name?"

Barney, seeing the pencil and tablets in hand, and besides not being much, or at all, acquainted with magisterial investigations, felt rather blank, and somewhat puzzled at this query.

He accordingly resorted to the usage of the country, and commenced scratching a rather round bullet head.

"My name, your honor," he replied; "my name, couldn't you pass that by, sir?"

"No," said Greatrakes, "I cannot pass it by. In this business it is essential that I should know it."

"Ay," replied Barney, "but maybe you have some treacherous design in it, and that you are goin' to take the part of the wealthy scoundrel against the poor man; and even if you did, you wouldn't be the first magistrate who did it."

Greatrakes looked keenly at him. The observation he expressed was precisely in accordance with the liberality of his own feelings.

"Don't be alarmed," he added; "if you knew my character, which it is evident you do not, you would know that I never take the part of the rich man against the poor man, unless when there is justice on the part of the wealthy man, and crime, unjustifiable and cruel crime, on the part of the poor man, which, I am sorry to say, is not an unfrequent case. Now, I must insist, as a magistrate, that you give me your name."

"Well, then," replied the other, "I'm one Barney Casey, sir, who lives in Rathfillan House, as a servant to Mr. Lindsay, stepfather to that murtherin' blackguard."

Greatrakes then examined him closely, and made him promise to come to Rathfillan that night, in order that he might accompany him to the hut of old Sol Donnel, the herbalist.

"I am resolved," said he, "to investigate this matter, and in my capacity of a magistrate to bring the guilty to justice."

"Faith, sir," replied Barney, "and I'm not the boy who is going to stand in your way in such a business as that. You know that it was I that put you up to it, and any assistance I can give you in it you may reckon on. Although not a magistrate, as you are, maybe I'm just as fond of justice as yourself. Of coorse I'll attend you to-night, and show you the devil's nest in which Sol Donnel and his blessed babe of a niece, by name Caterine Collins, live."

Greatrakes took down the name of Caterine Collins, and after having arranged the hour at which Barney was to conduct him to Sol Donnel's hut, they separated.

About eleven o'clock that night Barney and Greatrakes reached the miserable-looking residence in which this old viper lived.

"Now," said Greatrakes, addressing the herbalist, "my business with you is this: I have a bitter enemy who wants to establish a claim upon my property, and I wish to put him out of my way. Do you understand me? I am a wealthy man, and can reward you well."

"I never talk of these things in the presence of a third party," replied the herbalist, looking significantly at Barney, whom he well knew.

"Well," replied the other, "I dare say you are right. Casey, go out and leave us to ourselves."

There was a little hall in the house, which hall was in complete obscurity. Barney availed himself of this circumstance, opened the door and clapped it to as if he had gone out, but remained at the same time in the inside.

"No, sir," replied Sol Donnel, ignorant of the trick which Barney had played upon him, "I never allow a third person to be present at any of those conversations about the strength and power of my herbs. Now, tell me, what it is that you want me to do for you."

"Why, to tell you the truth," replied Greatrakes, "I never heard of your name until within a few days ago, that you were mentioned to me by Mr. Henry Woodward, who told me that you gave him a dose to settle a dog that was laboring under the first symptoms of hydrophobia. Well, the dog is dead by the influence of the bottle you gave him; but now that we are by ourselves I tell you at once that I want a dose for a man who is likely, if he lives, to cut me out of a large property."

"O, *Cheernah!*" exclaimed the old villain,

"do you think that I who lives by curin' the poor for nothing, or next to nothing, could lend myself to sich a thing as that?"

"Very well," replied the other, preparing to take his departure, "you have lost fifty pounds by the affair at all events."

"Fifty pounds!" exclaimed the other, whilst his keen and diabolical eyes gleamed with the united spirit of avarice and villany. "Fifty pounds! well how simple and foolish some people are. Why now, if you had a dog, say a setter or a pointer, that from fear of madness you wished to get rid of, and that you had mentioned it to me, I could give you a bottle that would soon settle it; I don't go above a dog or the inferior animals, and no man that has his senses about him ought to ask me to do anything else."

"Well, then, I tell you at once that, as I said, it is *not* for a dog, but for a worse animal, a man, my own cousin, who, unless I absolutely contrive to poison him, will deprive me of six thousand a year. Instead of fifty I shall make the recompense a hundred, after having found that your medicine is successful."

The old villain's eye gleamed again at the prospect of such liberality.

"Well now," said he, "see what it is for a pious man to forget his devotions, even for one day. I forgot to say my *Leadan Wurrah* this mornin', and that is the raison that your temptation has overcome me. You must call then to-morrow night, because I have nothing now, barrin' what 'ud excite the bowels, and it seems that isn't what you want; but if you be down here about this same hour to-morrow night, you shall have what will put your enemy out of the way."

"That will do then," replied Greatrakes, "and I shall depend on you."

"Ay," replied the old villain, "but remember that the act is not mine but your own. I simply furnish you with the necessary means — your own act will be to apply them."

On leaving the hut, Greatrakes was highly gratified on finding that Barney Casey had overheard their whole conversation.

"You will serve as a corroborative evidence," said he.

The herbalist, at all events, was entrapped, and not only his disposition to sell botanical poisons, but his habit of doing so, was clearly proved to the benevolent magistrate.

On the next night he got the poison, and having consulted with Casey, he said he would not urge the matter for a few days, as he wished, in the most private way possible, to procure further evidence against the guilty parties.

In the meantime, every preparation was made in both families for Woodward's wedding. The old peer, who had cross-examined his niece upon the subject, discovered her attachment to Woodward; and as he wished to see her settled before his death with a gentlemanly and respectable husband — a man who would be capable of taking care of the property which he must necessarily leave her, as she was his favorite and his heiress —and besides, he loved her as a daughter— he was resolved that Woodward and she should be united."

"I don't care a fig," said he, "whether this Woodward has property or not. He is a gentleman, respectably connected, of accomplished manners, handsome in person, and if he has no fortune, why you have; and I think the best thing you can do is to accept him without hesitation. The comical rascal," said he, laughing heartily, "took me in so completely during our first interview, that he became a favorite with me."

"I think well of him," replied his firm-minded niece; "and even I admit that I love him, as far as a girl of such a cold constitution as mine may; but I tell you, uncle, that if I discovered a taint of vice or want of principle in his character, I could fling him off with contempt."

"I wish to heaven," replied the uncle, rather nettled, "that we could have up one of the twelve apostles. I dare say some of them, if they were disposed to marry, might come up to your mark."

"Well, uncle, at all events I like him sufficiently to consent that he should become my husband."

"Well, and is not that enough; bless my heart, could you wish to go beyond it?"

In the meantime, very important matters were proceeding, which bore strongly upon Woodward's destiny. Greatrakes had collected — aided, of course, by Barney Casey, who was the principal, but not the sole, evidence against him—such a series of facts, as, he felt, justified him in receiving informations against him."

At this crisis a discovery was made in connection with the Haunted House, which was privately, through Casey, communicated to Greatrakes, who called a meeting of the neighboring magistrates upon it. This he did by writing to them privately to meet him on a particular day at his little inn in Rathfillan. For obvious reasons, and out of consideration to his feelings, Mr. Lindsay's name was omitted. At all events the night preceding the day of Woodward's marriage with Miss Riddle had arrived, but two circumstances occurred on that evening and on that night which not only frustrated all

his designs upon Miss Riddle, or rather upon her uncle's property, but—however, we shall not anticipate.

It was late in the evening when Miss Riddle was told by a servant that a young man, handsome and of fine proportions, wished to see her for a few minutes.

"Not that I would recommend you to see him," said the serving-woman who delivered the message. "He is, to be sure, very handsome; but, then, he is one of those *wild* people, and armed with a great middogue or dagger, and God knows what his object may be—maybe to take your life. As sure as I live he is a tory."

"That may be," replied Miss Riddle; "but I know, by your description of him, that he is the individual to whose generous spirit I and my dear uncle owe our lives: let him be shown in at once to the front parlor."

In a few minutes she entered, and found Shawn before her.

"O Shawn!" said she, "I am glad to see you. My uncle is using all his interest to get you a pardon—that is, provided you are willing to abandon the wild life to which you have taken."

"I am willing to abandon it," he replied; "but I have one task to perform before I leave it. You have heard of the *toir*, or tory-hunt, which was made after me and others; but chiefly after *me*, for I was the object they wanted to shoot down, or rather that *he*, the villain, wanted to murder under the authority of those cruel laws that *make* us tories."

"Who do you mean by *he?*" asked Miss Riddle.

"I mean Harry Woodward," he replied. "He hunted me, disguised by a black mask."

"But are you sure of that, Shawn?"

"I am sure of it," he replied; "and it was not until yesterday that I discovered his villany. I know the barber in Rathfillan where the black mask was got for him, I believe, by his wicked mother."

Miss Riddle, who was a strong-minded girl, paused, and was silent for a time, after which she said,—

"I am glad you told me this, Shawn. I spoke to him in your favor, and he pledged his honor to me previous to the terrible hunt you allude to, and of which the whole country rang, that he would never take a step to your prejudice, but would rather protect you as far as he could, in consequence of your having generously saved my dear uncle's life and mine."

"The deeper villain he, then. He is upon my trail night and day. He ruined Grace Davoren, who has disappeared, and the belief of the people is that he has murdered her. He possesses the Evil Eye, too, and would by it have murdered Miss Goodwin, of Beech Grove, in order to get back the property which his uncle left her, only for the wonderful power of Squire Greatrakes, who cured her. And, besides, I have raison to know that he will be arrested this very night for attempting to poison his brother. I am a humble young man, Miss Riddle, but I am afeard that if you marry him you will stand but a bad chance for happiness."

"She was again silent, but, after a pause, she said—

"Shawn, do you want money?"

"I thank you, Miss Riddle," he replied. "I don't want money: all I want is, that you will not be desaved by one of the most damnable villains on the face of the earth."

There was an earnestness and force of truth in what the generous young tory said that could not be mistaken. He arose, and was about to take his leave, when he said,—

"Miss Riddle, I understand he is about to be married to you to-morrow. Should he become your husband, he is safe from my hand—and that on *your* account; but as it may not yet be too late to spake, I warn you against his hypocrisy and villany—against the man who destroyed Grace Davoren—who would have killed Miss Goodwin with his Evil Eye, in order to get back the property which his uncle left her, and who would have poisoned his own brother out of his way bekase his mother told him she had changed her mind in leaving it to him (Woodward), and came to the resolution of leaving it to his brother, and that was the raison why he attempted to poison him. All these things have been proved, and I have raison to believe that he will sleep—if sleep he can—in Waterford jail before to-morrow mornin'. But," he added, with a look which was so replete with vengeance and terror, that it perfectly stunned the girl, "perhaps he won't, though. It is likely that the fate of Grace Davoren will prevent him from it."

He did not give her time to reply, but instantly disappeared, and left her in a state of mind which our readers may very well understand.

She immediately went to her uncle's library, where the following brief dialogue occurred:

"Uncle, this marriage must not and shall not take place."

"What!" replied the peer; "then he is none of the twelve apostles."

"You are there mistaken," said she; "he is one of them. Remember Judas."

"Judas! What the deuce are you at, my dear niece?"

"Why, that he is a most treacherous villain: that's what I'm at," and her face became crimson with indignation.

"But what's in the wind? Don't keep me in a state of suspense. Judas! Confound it, what a comparison! Well, I perceive you are not disposed to become Mrs. Judas. You know me, however, well enough: I'm not going to press you to it. Do you think, my dear niece, that Judas was a gentleman?"

"Precisely such a gentleman, perhaps, as Mr. Woodward is."

"And you think he would betray Christ?"

"He would poison his brother, uncle, because he stands between him and his mother's property, which she has recently expressed her intention of leaving to that brother—a fact which awoke something like compassion in my breast for Woodward."

"Well, then, kick him to hell, the scoundrel. I liked the fellow in the beginning, and, indeed, all along, because he had badgered me so beautifully,—which I thought few persons had capacity to,—and in consequence, I entertained a high opinion of his intellect, and be hanged to him; kick him to hell, though."

"Well, my dear lord and uncle, I don't think I would be capable of kicking him so far; nor do I think it will be at all necessary, as my opinion is, that he will be able to reach that region without any assistance."

"Come, that's very well said, at all events—one of your touchers, as I call them. There, then, is an end to the match and marriage, and so be it."

She here detailed at further length, the conversation which she had with *Shawn-na-Middogue;* mentioned the fact, which had somehow become well known, of his having wrought the ruin of Grace Davoren, and concluded by stating that, notwithstanding his gentlemanly manners and deportment, he was unworthy either the notice or regard of any respectable female.

"Well," said the peer, "from all you have told me I must say you have had a narrow escape; I did suspect him to be a fortune-hunter; but then who the deuce can blame a man for striving to advance himself in life? However, let there be an end to it, and you must only wait until a better man comes."

"I assure you, my dear uncle, I am in no hurry; so let that be your comfort so far as I am concerned."

"Well, then," said the peer, "I shall write to him to say that the marriage, in consequence of what we have heard of his character, is off."

"Take whatever steps you please," replied his admirable niece; "for most assuredly, so far as I am concerned, it *is* off. Do you imagine, uncle, that I could for a moment think of marrying a seducer and a poisoner?"

"It would be a very queer thing if you did," replied her uncle; "but was it not a fortunate circumstance that you came to discover his real character in time to prevent you from becoming the wife of such a scoundrel?"

"It was the providence of God," said his niece, "that would not suffer the innocent to become associated with the guilty."

Greatrakes, in the meantime, was hard at work. He and the other magistrates had collected evidence, and received the informations against Woodward, the herbalist, and the mysterious individual who was in the habit of appearing about the Haunted House as the *Shan-dhinne-dhuv*, or the *Black Spectre*. Villany like this cannot be long concealed, and will, in due time, come to light.

During the dusk of the evening preceding Woodward's intended marriage, an individual came to Mr. Lindsay's house and requested to see Mr. Woodward. That gentleman came down, and immediately recognized the person who had, for such a length of time, frightened the neighborhood as the *Shan-dhinne-dhuv* or the *Black Spectre*. He was shown into the parlor, and, as there was no one present, the following dialogue took place, freely and confidentially, between them:—

"You must fly," said the Spectre, or, in other words, the conjurer, whom we have already described,—"you must fly, for you are to be arrested this night. Our establishment for the forgery of bad notes must also be given up, and the Haunted House must be deserted. The magistrates, somehow, have smelled out the truth, and we must change our lodgings. We dodged them pretty well, but, after all, these things can't last long. On to-morrow night I bid farewell to the neighborhood; but you cannot wait so long, because on this very night you are to be arrested. It is very well that you sent Grace Davoren, at my suggestion, from the Haunted House to what is supposed to be the haunted cottage, in the mountains, where Nannie Morrissy soon joined her. I supplied them with provisions, and had a bed and other articles brought to them, according to your own instructions, and I think that, for the present, the safest place of concealment will be there."

"NOW," SAID HE, "THE PENALTY YOU HAVE PAID FOR YOUR CRIMES HAS TAKEN AWAY THE POLLUTION FROM YOUR LIPS; AND I WILL KISS YOU FOR THE SAKE OF OUR EARLY LOVE."—*Evil Eye*, chap. xviii, p. 774.

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Woodward became terribly alarmed. It was on the eve of his marriage, and the intelligence almost drove him into distraction.

"I will follow your advice," said he, "and will take refuge in what is called the haunted cottage, for this night."

His mysterious friend now left him, and Woodward prepared to seek the haunted cottage in the mountains. Poor Grace Davoren was in a painful and critical condition, but Woodward had engaged Caterine Collins to attend to her: for what object, will soon become evident to our readers.

Woodward, after night had set in,—it was a mild night with faint moonlight,—took his way towards the cottage that was supposed to be haunted, and which, in those days of witchcraft and superstition, nobody would think of entering. We have already described it, and that must suffice for our readers. On entering a dark, but level moor, he was startled by the appearance of the *Black Spectre*, which, as on two occasions before, pointed its middogue three times at his heart. He rushed towards it, but on arriving at the spot he could find nothing. It had vanished, and he was left to meditate on it as best he might.

We now pass to the haunted cottage itself. There lay Grace Davoren, after having given birth to a child; there she lay—the victim of the seducer, on the very eve of dissolution, and beside her, sitting on the bed, the unfortunate Nannie Morrissy, now a confirmed and dying maniac.

"Grace," said Nannie, "you, like me, were ruined."

"I was," replied Grace, in a voice scarcely audible.

"Ay, but you didn't murder your father, though, as I did; that's one advantage I have over you—ha! ha! ha!"

"I'm not so sure of that, Nannie," replied the dying girl; "but where's my baby?"

"O! yes, you have had a baby, but Caterine Collins took it away with her."

"My child! my child! where is my child?" she exclaimed in a low, but husky voice; "where's my child? and besides, ever since I took that bottle she gave me I feel deadly sick."

"Will I go for your father and mother—but above all things for your father? But then if he punished the villain that ruined you and brought disgrace upon your name, he might be hanged as mine was."

"Ah! Nannie," replied poor Grace; "my father won't die of the gallows; but he will of a broken heart."

"Better to be hanged," said the maniac, whose reason, after a lapse of more than a year, was in some degree returning, precisely as life was ebbing out, "bekase, thank God, there's then an end to it."

"I agree with you, Nannie, it might be only a long life of suffering; but I wouldn't wish to see my father hanged."

"Do you know," said Nannie, relapsing into a deeper mood of her mania,—"do you know that when I saw *my* father last he wouldn't nor didn't spake to me? The house was filled with people, and my little brother Frank—why now isn't it strange that I feel somehow as if I will never wash his face again nor comb his white head in order to prepare him for mass?—but whisper, Grace, sure *then I was innocent* and had not met the destroyer."

The two unhappy girls looked at each other, and if ever there was a gaze calculated to wring the human heart with anguish and with pity, it was that gaze. Both of them were, although unconsciously, on the very eve of dissolution, and it would seem as if a kind of presentiment of death had seized upon both at the same time.

"Nannie," said Grace, "do you know that I'm afeard we're both goin' to die?"

"And why are you afeard of it?" asked Nannie. "Many a time I would 'a given the world to die."

"Why," replied Grace, who saw the deep shadows of death upon her wild, pale, but still beautiful countenance,—"why Nannie, you have your wish—you are dying this moment."

Just as Grace spoke the unfortunate girl seemed as if she had been stricken by a spasm of the heart. She gave a slight start—turned up her beautiful, but melancholy eyes to heaven, and exclaimed, as if conscious of the moment that had come,—

"Forgive me, O God!" after which she laid herself calmly down by the side of Grace and expired. Grace, by an effort, put her hand out and felt her heart, but there was no pulsation there—it did not beat, and she saw by the utter lifelessness of her features that she was dead, and had been relieved at last from all her sorrows.

"Nannie," she said, "your start before me won't be long. I do not wish to live to show a shamed face and a ruined character to my family and the world. Nannie, I am coming; but where is my child? Where is that woman who took it away? My child! Where is my child?"

Whilst this melancholy scene was taking place, another of a very different description was occuring near the cottage. Two poachers, who were concealed in a hazel copse on the brow of a little glen beside it, saw a woman advance with an infant, which, by its cries, they felt satisfied was but newly born

Its cries, however, were soon stilled, and they saw her deposit it in a little grave which had evidently been prepared for it. She had covered it slightly with a portion of clay, but ere she had time to proceed further they pounced upon her.

"Hould her fast," said one of them, "she has murdered the infant. At all events, take it up, and I will keep her safe."

This was done, and a handkerchief, the one with which she had strangled it, was found tightly tied about its neck. That she was the instrument of Woodward in this terrible act, who can doubt? In the meantime both she and the dead body of the child were brought back to Rathfillan, where, upon their evidence, she was at once committed to prison, the handkerchief having been kept as a testimony against her, for it was at once discovered to be her own property.

During all this time Grace Davoren lay dying, in a state of the most terrible desolation, with the dead body of Nannie Morrissy on the bed beside her. What had become of her child, and of Caterine Collins, she could not tell. She had, however, other reflections, for the young, but guilty mother was not without strong, and even tender, domestic affections.

"O!" she exclaimed, in her woful solitude and utter desolation, "if I only had the forgiveness of my father and mother I could die happy; but now I feel that death is upon me, and I must die alone."

A footstep was heard, and it relieved her. "Oh! this is Caterine," she said, "with the child."

The door opened, and the young tory, *Shawn-na-Middogue*, entered. He paused for a moment and looked about him.

"What is this?" said he, looking at the body of Nannie Morrissy; "is it death?"

"It *is* death," replied Grace, faintly; "there is *one* death, but, Shawn, there will soon be another. Shawn, forgive me, and kiss me for the sake of our early love."

"I am an outlaw," replied the stern young tory; "but I will never kiss the polluted lips of woman as long as she has breath in her body."

"But Caterine Collins has taken away my child, and has not returned with it."

"No, nor ever will," replied the outlaw. "She was the instrument of your destroyer. But I wish you to be consoled, Grace. Do you see that middogue? It is red with blood. Now listen. I have avenged you; that middogue was reddened in the heart of the villain that wrought your ruin. As far as man can be, I am now satisfied."

"My child!" she faintly said; "my child! where is it?"

Her words were scarcely audible. She closed her eyes and was silent. The outlaw looked closely into her countenance, and perceived at once that death was there. He felt her pulse, her heart, but all was still.

"Now," said he, "the penalty you have paid for your crime has taken away the pollution from your lips, and I *will* kiss you for the sake of our early love."

He then kissed her, and rained showers of tears over her now unconscious features. The two funerals took place upon the same day; and, what was still more particular, they were buried in the same churchyard. Their unhappy fates were similar in more than one point. The selfish and inhuman seducer of each became the victim of his crime; one by the just and righteous vengeance of a heart-broken and indignant father, and the other by the middogue of the brave and noble-minded outlaw. Who the murderer of Harry Woodward, or rather the avenger of Grace Davoren, was, never became known. The only ears to which the outlaw revealed the secret were closed, and her tongue silent for ever.

The body of Woodward was found the next morning lifeless upon the moors; and when death loosened the tongues of the people, and when the melancholy fate of Grace Davoren became known, there was one individual who knew perfectly well, from moral conviction, who the avenger of her ruin was.

"Uncle," said Miss Riddle, while talking with him on the subject, "I *feel* who the avenger of the unfortunate and beautiful Grace Davoren is."

"And who is he, my dear niece?"

"It shall never escape my lips, my lord and uncle."

"Egad, talking of escapes, I think you have had a very narrow one yourself, in escaping from that scoundrel of the Evil Eye."

"I thank God for it," she replied, and this closed their conversation.

There is little now to be added to our narrative. We need scarcely assure our readers that Charles Lindsay and Alice Goodwin were in due time made happy, and that Ferdora O'Connor, who had been long attached to Maria Lindsay, was soon enabled to call her his beloved wife.

The devilish old herbalist, and his equally devilish niece, together with the conjurer and forger, who had assumed the character of the *Black Spectre*, were all hanged, through the instrumentality of Valentine Greatrakes, who had acquired so many testimonies of their villainy and their crimes as enabled him, in conjunction with the other

magistrates of the county, to obtain such a body of evidence against them as no jury could withstand. It was, probably, well for Woodward that the middogue of the outlaw prevented him from sharing the same fate, and dying a death of public disgrace.

Need we say that honest Barney Casey was rewarded by the love of Sarah Sullivan, who, soon after their marriage, was made housekeeper in Mr. Lindsay's family; and that Barney himself was appointed to the comfortable situation of steward over his property?

Lord Cockletown exercised all his influence with the government of the day to procure a pardon for *Shawn-na-Middogue*, but without effect. He furnished him, however, with a liberal sum of money, with which he left the country, but was never heard of more.

Miss Riddle was married to a celebrated barrister who subsequently became a judge.

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